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FOR CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH.

J. MILLER THOMAS,
Associate Editor.

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Bishop Foss' Address,
BEFORE THE BRITISH WESLEYAN CON-
FERENCE.

Mr. President, Fathers and Brethren,
honored and dearly beloved:

If I felt myself fully equal to the duty of this hour, I would esteem it one of the happiest hours of my life; but he would indeed be a bold man who should suppose himself completely competent to voice the heartfelt filial greetings of the largest branch of the great Methodist family, to the revered and beloved "Mother of us all;" and that, too, on this spot, hallowed by memories at once so tender and so august.

During the last quadrennium we have been called many times to mourn with you, and you with us, over the loss of great men in our Israel. Of our own, I will refer only to two. Bishop Simpson will be long and lovingly remembered, as a pre-eminently wise administrator, as a most versatile, delightful man, and, above all, as the uniquely and indescribably eloquent preacher, from whose persuasive lips more persons heard the gospel argument and appeal than from those of any other American. Bishop Wiley was the very ideal of a cultured gentleman, a painstaking missionary, a genial friend, a sagacious organizer, and an exceedingly terse and perspicuous public speaker.

We meet at a critical period in the history of the two great English-speaking nations—how critical, and fraught with issues how august for the coming centuries, no man can yet tell.

A vague forecast of unknown perils has made stout hearts to tremble with the apprehension, that constitutional government has yet to confront the very gravest difficulties. Some sincere patriots have been almost driven back in dismay, upon what has been termed "the physiological philosophy of history, that fatalistic scheme which attempts to construct a philosophy of history omitting God, and which holds, that nations, like individuals, are doomed to a career of birth, infancy, childhood, maturity, decay, senility, and death. Mr. President, I hope BETTER THINGS FOR THE HUMAN RACE.

One of the earliest known maps of the Western world bears the inscription, not America, not Columbia, as it should have done, but all across the unexplored continent, "Terra sanctae crucis." Let America justify that heraldic inscription; let England deserve it; and both are as secure as the kingdom of Christ on earth. A pure Christianity is the salt of the nations.

CHRISTIANITY IS THE ONE GREAT NEED of this sad, because sinful, world. Chalmers defined Methodism, as "Christianity in earnest!"

The best American historian of early Methodism terms it, "The Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century." A "movement" it certainly was, and a pre-eminently religious movement. Its rough-and-ready evangelists went everywhere, as disturbers of the false peace of men, and were glad to welcome as a greeting what their critics meant as a reproach: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." And, then, as compared with all other evangelistic agencies, it surely was "the religious movement of the eighteenth century." The world has come tardily, but at length cordially, to acknowledge this.

Concerning these claims made for Methodism, rather than by it, Mr. Lecky says: "The influence of this movement transformed for a time the whole spirit of the Established Church, and has been more or less felt in every Protestant community speaking the English tongue." Mr. Buckle declares that the effect of Wesleyanism upon the Church of England was scarcely inferior to "the effect of Protestantism in the sixteenth century on the Church of Rome." Dean Stanley utters the same thought in these memorable words: "The Methodist movement * * * has molded the spiritual character of the English-speaking Protestantism of the world." Mr. Lecky further declares, that "the scene which took place in Aldersgate Street (where, under the reading of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, Mr. Wesley felt his heart strangely warmed) formed an epoch in English history."

On our side of the ocean, out-spanning the north temperate zone, and stretching from the equator to the pole, and through sixty degrees of longitude, God had covered a New World from the vision of the Old, until the Old should get ready to plant the New. The art of printing had been discovered for half a century. The human mind had roused itself from the sleep of a thousand years, and was about to inaugurate the world-transforming era of inventive genius. Leviathan was girding himself to plow the ocean, and Pegasus to skim over the land. Steam and lightning were straining at their leashes, eager for the day when they might draw the nations into vicinage, and then help to bring in the grand era of universal peace on earth, good will among men. * * *

At length a handful of

THE BEST SEED CORN

Europe could furnish was planted beside Plymouth Rock.

A hundred and fifty years passed, and thirteen feeble colonies asserted, and in a seven years' agony maintained their independence, and became a nation. One of your fraternal delegates said to our General Conference in Philadelphia two years ago, in words no less graceful than gracious: "England is proud of the independence of her child. Your centennial commemoration of your national independence and autonomy was regarded in England, with universal and unaffected sympathy. In your national triumphs we rejoice with them that do rejoice," as in your national sorrows we know how to weep with them that weep." Let us go back a hundred years.

GRAVE PERILS

confront the infant Hercules; perils more to be dreaded than Mohammedanism or Romanism—a widespread and blatant infidelity, and an intense greed for material gain, fed by unbounded opportunity. It remains to be seen whether the infant confederacy can be toughened into a nation at all; whether it will not carelessly fling away its magnificent possibilities. The only salt that can preserve it is Christianity, and the terrible struggle of the Revolution had left Christianity at a very low ebb. We must have a simple, pure, practical, aggressive, experimental evangelism, hungering and thirsting for souls. We have seen what Methodism did for England of the last century, but possibly you might somehow have got on without it.

But to America, Methodism was indispensable. Only

AN INTENSE GOSPEL

could purify the fountain of its national life, and keep pace with its enormous and rapidly multiplying needs. None but a saddle-bag ministry could overtake the restless pioneers who swarmed across the Alleghenies, and scattered out through the swamps of the South, and the forests and prairies of the vast West. Only a hot and experimental proclamation of a real and present salvation could win its way beside camp-fires and in log cabins.

And yet right there, foundations of some sort must be promptly laid for a great nation's life. I believe God raised up John Wesley for England. I am sure he raised him up for America. We thank Ireland for Philip Embury and Barbara Heck. We thank you for Boardman and Pillmore, for Ashbury, and many others. Dr. Punshon says that "when, in 1769, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pillmore were sent out to America, the first missionary collection was taken in the British Wesleyan Conference, and forty pounds were put into their hands. On their way a farewell meeting was held at York, and a collection of ten shillings was taken up. Tradition says a special prayer-meeting was called for five o'clock the next morning, to return God thanks for such unexampled liberality.

That was 117 years ago, and now there are 22,582 itinerant ministers connected with the various branches of Methodism in the United States of America, and 4,024,402 communicants.

The following are a few items from the last statistical returns of the Methodist Episcopal Church: Traveling preachers, 11,902; local preachers, 12,516; Sunday-schools, 22,817; officers and teachers, 247,014; scholars, 1,826,778; probationers, 190,698; members, 1,690,610.

Methodism has manifestly wrought out in America the two chief results which it accomplished earlier, here: it has leavened and transformed the spiritual life of the Protestant Churches, and has permeated and uplifted the moral tone of the masses of the people. At the beginning of the century it was an exceedingly rare thing to find in America, outside the Methodist Church, any man who dared say that he knew his sins forgiven. If a young convert ventured to tell the glad story of a new found and conscious salvation, he was quite likely to be taken in hand by some old deacon, after this fashion: "Ah, my child, religion is a very serious business. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. I fear you are in the gulf of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." Methodism emphatically reasserted and successfully vindicated the right of a penitent sinner to obtain and declare the

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION, set forth with such delightful and reiterated emphasis in the epistles of the two great apostles of faith and love. We may, and must, see and lament whatever elements of weakness render Methodism, in point of fact, at all inferior to its grand ideal, as a world-embracing system of evangelical propagandism; but we must not forget to thank God, that His blessing has made it the largest and most effective branch of His church on the American continent, and has

caused its distinctive ideas to overflow its ecclesiastical limits, and leaven every other branch of the church. The Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby, who brought to our General Conference the fraternal greetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1872, said: "I rejoice to believe, that when God sent the Methodist Episcopal Church into America, that Church was called and elected, to conquer this country in order to put fervor and activity into the Presbyterian Church; and it has made its calling and election sure. And I believe further, brethren, that you have in many details of Christian activity taught us very many lessons, which, though we may have been slow to receive, we have been sure to accept in the end."

The Methodist Church in America has always been an exceedingly patriotic Church, and

A CHURCH OF THE PEOPLE,

and has had an incalculable influence in molding our national life. Dr. Rigg, in his excellent article on Methodism in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, says it might fairly be termed "The National Church of the United States." In many parts of the country it flourishes in all ranks of society, from the highest to the lowest. In some states it has more communicants, than all other branches of the Protestant church put together. Everywhere it wins its way where our Lord went first, among those who need it most. Let others taunt us by saying, "Methodism is adapted to work among the poor and ignorant masses." We welcome the taunt, and write it on our banners as our great glory, remembering our Lord's climax of proof of His mission, "to the poor the gospel is preached," and the declaration that "the common people heard Him gladly." Those "masses," as they are sometimes contemptuously called, are the Samson, who can destroy the Philistines, or, if blinded, pull down the temple.

Mr. Whitehead reminded our General Conference that the Methodist Episcopal Church "was the first religious body to recognize the new Republic, and the first to pay homage in the persons of her two Bishops, Coke and Asbury, to its Supreme Magistrate!" So, too, when the nation's sternest trial came, and it was plunged into the agonies of civil war, the Methodist Episcopal Church solemnly pledged its loyalty. Its General Conference planted itself on the platform of the Union of the States, and the abolition of slavery; and sent an address to President Lincoln. This drew forth that ever memorable reply by which the nation was thrilled, and Christian hearts in many lands were profoundly moved: "It is no fault in others, that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any. God bless the Methodist Church! bless all the Churches! and blessed be God who, in this our great trial, giveth us the Churches."

In the work of moral reform, American Methodism has always held a prominent place, and it has long been well understood that, however other ecclesiastical bodies might be divided on great moral questions, the great mass of Methodists were sure to be

FOUND ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

Especially has this been true in the temperance reform. So far as I know, the Methodist Episcopal Church is the

only great branch of the church which has a total abstinence Discipline, and which plants itself squarely on the platform of the total legal abolition of the liquor traffic. We have also the honor of having furnished many of the gifted and successful advocates of the temperance reform, both men and women; and no doubt the Church which, as Lincoln said, sent the most soldiers to the Civil War, has also done the greatest execution in the bloodless battles of the ballot-box, thus winning victories for prohibition in the strongly Methodist states of Iowa and Kansas.

Methodism was born in a renowned university. Consistency, if we had had no higher motive, has always bound us to do our best in the cause of education. Many years ago Edward Everett declared that we had done more than any other Church in America in this behalf. That is true to-day. The pecuniary investments of Methodism in school and college buildings and endowments exceeds fifteen millions of dollars, and the number of students, both collegiate and academic, exceeds those of any other Church. Moreover, the last decade has witnessed an unprecedented outpouring of gifts on the altar of education. The endowment funds of our best institutions have been largely augmented, their buildings and other appliances for better work improved, and their courses of study raised and enlarged. I am most happy to be able to add, that many of them have enjoyed repeated refreshings from on high, and that multitudes of our precious sons and daughters are soundly converted and nourished in grace, during their educational courses. After this

PERPETUALLY RENEWED PENTECOSTAL POWER.

in all its congregations, genuine Methodism must perpetually aspire. The sensitive apprehension that there is a diminution of it anywhere, always raises a note of alarm. During the last winter we had more than 100,000 conversions. I have recently made a tour of episcopal visitation of Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and I have found the same old fire which first warmed John Wesley's heart in Aldersgate Street burning in many hearts in all those lands. It burns by our kindling in Japan also, and in China, India, Bulgaria, Finland, Africa, and in South America. Your torches have lighted it in many places. Let the centers of light and heat be multiplied and raised by the breath of the Spirit to an intenser glow until the globe is wrapped around with the holy conflagration.

"To bring fire on earth Christ came,
Kindled in some hearts it is;
O, that all may feel the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss."

The native Christians of Madagascar, although sadly obstructed by rum and by the French, have given \$400,000 to missionary work in ten years. Those who are saved from their idolatries know how to give and to do for others who are as they were.—*Baltimore Methodist*.

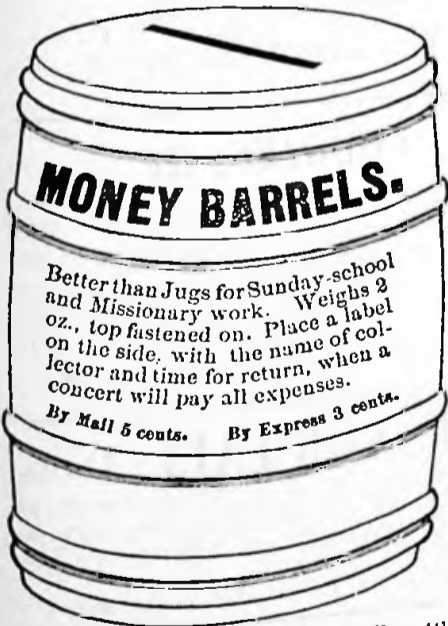
A colporteur, who has been laboring for two years at Seoul, the capital of Corea, reports seventy men desirous of joining a Christian Church, and one in another city reports twenty. The last door closed against the gospel is opening wide in Corea.

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