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THE  
CHURCHMAN

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AUGUST, 1883.

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ART. I.—SEVEN YEARS' PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF PAROCHIAL WORK IN CAMBRIDGE.

TO enjoy any place where fidelity to duty compels a clergyman, in charge of an overgrown and populous parish, to spend day after day amid parochial entanglements and distractions in almost endless variety, it is necessary that he should become altogether dissociated officially from the daily and hourly anxieties of that sphere of duty, and be released from his professional or parochial responsibilities. One has no time to come to himself, amid the perpetual hum and bustle of the living tide which constantly flows before him, while he occupies the important and onerous position of Vicar or Rector of an extensive and care-producing parish. It is only when such a man has ceased to be officially connected with it, and can calmly look back upon the scene of his former labours, or examine, without anxious thought, the existing condition of his former mission-field, that he can enjoy the retrospect of the past, and feel an honest and sanctified satisfaction in doing so. All happiness to be felt must be interrupted. In the midst of bewildering cares and crosses one has no time to realize the effect of parochial organization. The mind is hampered by the incessant demands arising from the exigencies and requirements of the hour. A feeling of constraint deprives a man of that ease and freedom which can hardly co-exist with a sense of official responsibility. There must be an interruption of the perpetual strain upon the mind in order to allow time for leisurely reflection.

The Duke of Wellington must have experienced greater gladness of heart on the occasion of his visit to the field of Waterloo a few years subsequent to the battle, than on the very day of the eventful fight, when the destiny of Europe lay

on the issue of the combat. It must have been a time of the gravest anxiety to him, and no wonder that his pent-up feelings should find utterance in the recorded saying, "Would that night or Blucher were come!" In hours of peaceful repose from the din of war and its varying fluctuations, as he looked upon the golden grain which then clothed the once red plain with waving abundance, he could calmly survey the episodes of that momentous struggle, and with the felt sense of freedom from every care of present duty, and from the pressure of anxious thought, point out to his distinguished visitors the scenes of those critical assaults which decided the fortune of that great day.

It is in this sense, comparing great things with small, that I propose to review the past period of parochial work in Cambridge, now that I am relieved from the ceaseless care and manifold variety of parochial distraction while Vicar of my old parish.

Many an overworked clergyman, in an overcrowded population, has to endure for years the daily wear and tear of body and mind, amid depressing scenes and surroundings which, though perhaps taken singly in themselves mere nothings, yet in the aggregate are most trying to the spirits and exhaustive of the nervous system. Such a man would do well to change his sphere of duty, rather than grow old before his time, and perhaps break down altogether. Take, for example, such a parish as that of St. Andrew-the-Less, in Cambridge, the scene of these personal recollections, and for many years the springing-ground of missionary hope and enterprise. Every Cambridge man knows the old familiar name of Barnwell. In 1862 I was selected by the Rev. Henry Venn and Canon Hoare to succeed the present Master of St. Catharine's College, who, for a few years, with singular ability, presided over the affairs of the parish, where he had endeared himself to everyone, and has left behind him a souvenir of deep and permanent impression.

Barnwell contained about 12,000 inhabitants at that time. There were two churches—one the Parish Church' called Christ Church, and the other the Abbey Church, which had been restored by the Camden Society. It is the last relic of the old Monastery, whose former dimensions may still be faintly traced from the Newmarket road back to the river.

In the time of King Henry VIII. it was a grand foundation. His Majesty and suite—an expensive train—paid a visit to the Abbot, and judging from the records which have come down to us, they must have had what the Americans call "a good time" of it during the sojourn of the Court there. These old monks were well acquainted with the palpable truth that man

has a divided personality; and that one part of this mysterious union consists in the wonderful mechanism of a material body. These Anchorites thoroughly understood the convenient distinction drawn by the Japanese between the Mikado and the Tychoon, the one the king of the bodies, and the other the king of the souls of men. We see this sort of dual government at the present day among the Carthusian Monks, who are such famous distillers of the exquisitely flavoured liqueur, the Grande Chartreuse. This wonderful elixir is the prerogative of this famous "order," and it belongs to the department of good cheer adapted to the bodies of men. The abstinence and fasting and enforced silence on all but the monk who sells the liqueur are intended for the souls of men. The Barnwell monks were a prosperous community. No man of their day better understood the secrets of the culinary art. They could feast as well as fast, and the scanty details of the rejoicings and festivities on that occasion which have reached us, remind one of Moore's description of

"The O'Ruark's noble feast, which shall ne'er be forgot  
By those who were there, or by those who were not."

The Abbey and all its imposing grandeur has long been a thing of the past. In my time some portion of the ancient edifice was ignominiously used for a cowshed; and some of the larger stones had been applied to the profane use of refitting an old stable. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. The little church which still bears the time-honoured name of "The Abbey" is the only remnant of the former monastic magnificence; and so far as it goes, it is a very useful as well as an ornamental piece of architecture. It is too small for practical purposes, as it can hardly accommodate 120 persons. This was the only place of worship for the inhabitants of Barnwell until Bishop Perry, with his usual energy, undertook the building of Christ Church, which afterwards became, and still continues to be, the Parish Church. It has accommodation for 1,400 persons. If the architecture is not imposing, there is a compensatory adjustment for that defect in the ample space and the convenient situation of the edifice. This was the second church which the Bishop was the means of erecting in Cambridge previous to his leaving England for his distant diocese of Melbourne. The mantle of Charles Simeon had fallen on him and others who were the Bishop's contemporaries, or nearly so. Evangelical religion by their means received active and practical support. They leavened the people with the truths of the simple Gospel—the old, old story of grace; and, as I can abundantly testify, the inhabitants of Barnwell to this day aer living demonstrations of the promise as to "bread cast upon the waters." Venn, Carus, Clayton, Birks, are names of some

of the Evangelical leaders in Cambridge. They did good work in their day, and the seed sown by them has taken root and spread beyond the narrow limits of their original parishes.

There is a shallow notion, and it is to be feared somewhat popular, that the Evangelical party are not favoured by the acquisition of men of high-class scholarship. This is not borne out by the facts with which we are confronted in the history of religious efforts in Cambridge. Bishop Perry, for example, was Senior Wrangler of his year; Henry Venn was Fellow of his College; Canon Clayton was a Double First; Canon Carus was also a Fellow; and Professor Birks was Second Wrangler. These men of note, and many others who bore the heat and burden of the day when Evangelical religion was at a very low ebb in the University, sufficiently demonstrate that, so far as intellectual vigour, high-class culture, and scientific attainments are concerned, the Evangelicals can point to men second to none in every department of successful literary enterprise.

Looking back from the present date to the period when I was instituted to Barnwell, it may be interesting, and perhaps instructive, if I give a brief description of the parish as I found it, and the outcome of the scheme for church extension inaugurated by the local efforts of men of almost every school of thought who were interested in the welfare of that parish. The name of Barnwell was not in the highest repute. It is a fact that when the small district post-office opposite the Vicarage was opened for the accommodation of the neighbourhood a year or two after my incumbency, the friends of my Barnwell parishioners, living at a distance, offered such an objection to the name "Barnwell" being stamped on the envelopes of their letters, that a remonstrance was made to me by several of the residents with the view of having it discontinued. Accordingly, I communicated with the late Mr. Anthony Trollope, with the view of carrying out the desired object. His reply was no doubt official, but very characteristic of the man. In a serio-comic vein he good-humouredly referred to the improved tone which the church extension scheme—to which I shall presently refer—had already produced in the locality, and "in a purified Barnwell (he says) we may hope that the name will ere long be looked upon as an honourable distinction!"

I do not know that I could mention any fact more strikingly suggestive of the ill-omened repute which the parish bore at that date. The townspeople seldom mentioned the word. It was referred to in ordinary society with a certain air of apologetic hesitancy. People understood from local associations that it was the abode of a surplus population of the most

heterogeneous description. Disreputable characters abounded in certain streets from which no honest man, and certainly no undergraduate not engaged in parish-work, could have emerged without the taint of suspicion. "Gas Lane," where now St. Matthew's Church stands, was the rendezvous for all the cinder-sifters in Cambridge, who made a precarious living by screening the cinders collected in the town, and selling the pulverized carbon for plants and other uses. Tribes of gipsies occupied the houses there. Petts, or Petch, the chief of a famous tribe, was the champion in a celebrated prize-fight that took place on Newmarket racecourse. He was a great man in that part of the parish. Mrs. Humphry, the wife of the eminent Professor of that name, painted his portrait. I have his photograph. He was a splendid-looking fellow, stood about six feet two inches, wild as a Red Indian in appearance, hair unkempt, his face bronzed from long exposure to the weather, about seventy years of age, and as straight as an arrow. He was the last King of the Gipsies in the Eastern Counties. The battle which he fought decided his fortune, and ever after he was regarded with high honour by all the wandering tribes. He began to attend the services of the Mission Church opposite his house, and he became a regular attendant at the services both on week-days and on Sundays. Any stranger who visited that neighbourhood at that time, would see more donkeys collected together in the neglected field where now the church stands than he ever saw in one spot before in all his life. A very motley group of human creatures would add to the wildness of the scene—gipsies, cinder-sifters, small costermongers, tinkers, hawkers of all kinds, cadgers on the tramp, those hiding from the police, *et hoc omne genus*. The fields in front of the houses were called, in the current phraseology of the place, "No man's land;" and the place itself was designated as "The end of the world," because it led nowhere. There were no roads, lanes, bypaths beyond. It was the *ultima thule* of Cambridge, the last boundary of municipal jurisdiction. Of all the wretched, heaven-forsaken haunts of men, I never saw anything more suggestive of degradation, and misery, than that part of Barnwell extending from Gas Lane to Nelson Street and Wellington Row. The former, from its vicious associations, was called "Devil's Row;" and as for Wellington Street, there was not an honest house from end to end of it. It was there that, after much deliberation, I decided to build a church. Were it not for the unwearied activity of one whose name I can never mention without "deep affection and recollection," I doubt very much if the church would ever have been built, at least not in my time. His sudden and untimely end not only deprived me of a valued friend, but the

parish of an unwearied worker. I never met his equal for unselfish, unostentatious, and self-denying labour in the cause of Christ. I refer to the Rev. W. J. Beamont, M.A., some time Senior Fellow of Trinity College. He was my intimate friend and constant companion in many a ramble together. No one knew him better, and I have never ceased to deplore his loss to myself as well as to the Church, both locally and generally. He was not what would be called *an* Evangelical, but he was in the truest and best sense of the term—Evangelical. If a total absence of self-seeking caution, an utter disregard for his own advancement in the Church, choosing rather to spend his time, his money, and his labours among the slums of Drury Lane in London, and in the poorest haunts of poverty and vice in Cambridge, than to enjoy the repose and comfort of College life; if a rigid self-denial of luxury and ease, and an unflagging devotion to the cause of church extension; if, in a word, unaffected piety and a humble, childlike trust in the merits of a crucified Redeemer—if these be some of the salient points of Evangelical religion, then my friend Beamont was an Evangelical of Evangelicals. But, then, he was not thought so. He did not adopt the nomenclature of a party. He talked very little, and he worked very much. He was the original founder of the Church Congress, and to some of the earlier ones I had the pleasure and the privilege of accompanying him, specially to Norwich, where the symptoms of that fatal malady which cut short his useful life suddenly attacked him, and I was obliged to hurry him as quickly as possible to Cambridge. Though enduring intense pain on his journey, he never uttered a single syllable indicative of suffering. He was the most unselfish and the most uncomplaining man I ever met. His manner was somewhat brusque and abrupt, but it was his manner only. The Church of Christ was divided into two classes in his estimation—the workers, and the non-workers. Everyone, of any school of thought, who belonged to the former class had a hearty welcome at Trinity Hostel. And what an extraordinary assemblage of persons from all parts of the world I met at his rooms! Tischendorf, the illustrious German scholar, and “Deerfoot,” the Red Indian—what extremes! Archimandrites of the Greek Church, and Jewish Rabbis from Syria. Christians and Jews, Sunday-school children, the literate and the illiterate, of all grades and classes, men and women and children of every variety of parochial administration, flocked round him. Such a mixture of persons I never saw in any man’s rooms before or since, and all these were attracted to him simply by the magnetic influence of his transparent good nature and disinterested labours of love.

St. Matthew’s Church was built mainly by his exertions.

Let any man this day go to visit that spot where in 1862 such a concourse of wretchedness and pauperism prevailed, and see the extraordinary, almost miraculous change which has come over the entire neighbourhood, and he will hardly be persuaded to believe that I am describing accurately its condition at that period. However, there are thousands of living witnesses who can certify that I have kept considerably within the truth. I fear that if I were to draw an accurate picture of the moral aspect of the place of that date, it might be a little too true to nature to be altogether edifying. Such a transformation scene has taken place since the church has been erected there, that no man even in the wildest incoherencies of a feverish dream could ever have imagined such an altered state of things. I myself had very little indeed to do with it. Beaumont was the prime mover who called the Committee together, consisting of Archdeacon Emery, Rev. John Martin, and other clergy in the town, and some of the laity, of whom Mr. Reynolds Rowe, the architect, was a leading man. Canon Leeke, now Chancellor of Lincoln, energetically continued the operations after my time, and the Rev. A. E. Humphreys, late Fellow of Trinity, has carried them on to their present effective completion. I received considerable aid, both personal and pecuniary, from my friend and Churchwarden, Mr. Bailey, whose efforts were unceasing in helping towards the building of the church.

I remember well the opposition I met with when I first mentioned the proposal to build a church in that out-of-the-way place. How I was discouraged by the concentrated wisdom of old residents both in the University and the town! "What!" (said one very influential member of the University)—"build a church there! You might just as well think of building a church on the Gog-Magog Hills. It is a useless expenditure of money. Your labours will be thrown away. You should build the church in the middle of Barnwell." I confess that I was perplexed. The opinion of more prudent men had weight with me, yet somehow I could not quite agree with them. One day, hearing that Bishop Perry was in Cambridge, I called on him to ask if he would kindly accompany me to Gas Lane. He did so, and after carefully examining the whole of the circumstances, and hearing from me the facts of the case, he said, in his own thoughtful way, "This is the spot for the church. The same excuses were made when I began to build Christ Church, and see what a population has sprung up around it! I have no doubt you will find a similar result here in due time." The Bishop was right. Already a large population of about 4,000 souls has sprung up in that neighbourhood, for whom additional church accommodation has been provided by

the energy of Mr. Humphreys, the present Incumbent. Land bought for £400 the acre was sold for exactly double the amount within a few months. A small town has started into existence as if by magic, and it is with difficulty that the old site can be recognised where the gipsies, and the cinder-sifters, and all that motley group with their herds of donkeys used formerly to hold high carnival.

The Barnwell of to-day is so unlike the Barnwell of a quarter of a century ago, that those who are ignorant of its antecedent history can form no adequate idea of the change that has taken place. If anyone were to visit the locality now, he could scarcely believe that where the well-cultivated and ornate Vicarage garden at present stands, with the effective church close by, a few years ago there resided an ignorant and almost barbarous population, whose Bohemian ways rendered it a work of no small difficulty to reduce them to anything like regularity either in social or religious life. The disreputable residences, where proctorial visits were of almost daily occurrence, have disappeared. A little church for special children's services has been built in Wellington Row, once the most infamous haunt of vice that could anywhere be found. The principle that if the people will not go to the church, the church must go to the people, was carried out to the letter. This was brought about by Canon Leeke.

It was no use to try to get these free-and-easy waifs and strays to go to the Parish Church. It was too orderly. The worshippers were too respectable for these uncivilized sinners. They had to be dealt with very tenderly—fed with milk, not with meat. There were men there who had never entered any place of worship, living in concubinage, unbaptized, as wild as the children of the forest and the prairie. It was not in human nature to expect such outcasts from society to take kindly, all at once, to the decent and orderly services of the Church, with which persons of educated and cultivated minds have been familiarized since childhood. A mission service had to be organized. The warm glow of sympathy had to be brought to bear upon them. The electrical influences of the human heart and face and voice had to precede any formal utterances of liturgical propriety. First of all, they had to learn that the parish clergy had no object in view but the welfare, both in body and soul, of these "publicans and sinners." They had to be "coaxed" to the mission-room. Little by little, line upon line, precept upon precept, they were to be led, one step at a time, to receive the love of the truth.

This process of missionary spoon-feeding was a necessary preliminary before getting them to enter into the spirit of the Church services. This work, requiring tact and temper, time

and patience, was efficiently conducted by the earnest-minded and painstaking men who kindly undertook this arduous mission, and who, from a devout love for the souls of these practical heathen, gave themselves up to this truly evangelistic work and labour of love. One who worked with painstaking conscientiousness, and who specially had charge of that district for a time—the Rev. F. C. Young—has long since entered into his rest. Others continued what he had begun, and the result was that on the opening day, when the church was consecrated by the present Bishop of Winchester, the people of that district cheerfully, if not intelligently, joined in the services and ceremony. Many of them looked on with wondering eyes. Some of them had never seen a Bishop in all their lives. The heads of houses in their robes, and the clergy in their canonicals, presented an imposing spectacle which deeply impressed the spectators.

From that day to this the sound of the church-going bell has been heard at their very doors. It was, and still continues to be, music to their ears. They were loud in grateful acknowledgment for what had been done for them, the best proof of which was their regular attendance every Sunday at the church. Let anyone go there to-day, and he will see that the church, which was then on the very outskirts of the parish—actually in the fields, not a single house beyond it anywhere—is now in the centre of a new town, which has sprung into existence all around, with a large population all astir—new schools, new mission-rooms, and all the newest forms of parochial machinery of every kind in active working order under the superintendence of the Incumbent, Mr. Humphreys.

When I visited the place in June last I was utterly bewildered. I found myself a complete stranger in Gas Lane—I could not find my way in a district where fifteen years ago there was not a single habitation of any kind, and where now there are upwards of 4,000 people newly added to the parish of St. Andrew-the-Less. The only mistake made in the matter of church extension has arisen from the inability of man to dip into the future. Were it possible to have anticipated the present development of Church work, undertaken in the first instance with so much hesitation, we should have erected a very much larger building, and of a more solid and enduring character than the existing one. Not that it is by any means defective; quite the contrary. So far as it goes it is a very well-constructed edifice, and I believe quite unique of its kind, modelled after a pattern which some of the Committee had seen in the south of France. It can comfortably accommodate 650 persons. The seats are all free and unap-

propriated for ever. There is a good parsonage-house, and an endowment from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of £200 a year—an inadequate sum, considering local claims on the Vicar. Parochial machinery of every description is in full and vigorous action. Yet it is in the very midst of such missionary labours that "The Salvation Army" are at this moment erecting their headquarters, in order "to make an assault" upon the place. Surely there are parishes where, as yet, the masses are not reached by either church or chapel, and there such an organization might be valuable. But to enter into other men's lines of labour, after they have, amid many a toilsome step, succeeded in evangelizing the people, seems to me to be a departure from the original programme of "The Army," as it certainly is contrary to the principle of Apostolic precedent. To go where Christ has not been named, and to unfurl the standard of the Cross in districts where spiritual destitution abounds, would be more in accordance with the fitness of things, and, for my part, any such movement would have, as it has already had, my genuine sympathy. But to come in at the eleventh hour, after others have borne the heat and burden of the day, is not, as it seems to me, exactly coincident with the Pauline principle. It is calculated to promote confusion and unseemly conflict of opinion.

Some of the scenes which I have witnessed among the poor hawkers and cadgers in that district form amusing recollections of the curiosities of clerical experience. Let me select a single instance out of many. One night about twelve o'clock I was suddenly summoned to attend a poor hawker—a half-bred gipsy—in New Street. It was a lodging-house of a very humble description. On going upstairs I found myself in a small lobby with three or four bedrooms on one side of it. In the first of these lay the sick man. His wife, hearing my footsteps on the stairs, came out to meet me, and introduced me to her husband, who was evidently in great pain. I noticed some very well-executed artificial flower-screens in one part of the room. They were made by the man and his wife, and were hawked about for sale as a means of obtaining a livelihood. After spending about half an hour there I went away; but as I was descending the stairs a woman whom I knew well, and whom I was in the habit of relieving from time to time—for she and her husband were very poor, and occasionally were in want—accosted me and said, "If you please, Mr. Weldon, my husband and I have been out on the tramp for the last week, and we returned home about two or three hours ago; and we was going to have our supper when we heard you was a-coming to see the man in the next room, so we waited, thinking that you'd be a bit tired, and we hope you will not

think it a liberty if we were to ask you just to come in and have a cup o' tea."

I gladly accepted the hospitable offer. They lived in one room—a small one, very poorly furnished, but on this occasion there was a little "brushing up" in honour of my visit. There was a good fire, the table was covered with a rough but clean cloth, and to my surprise there was what I should call a very substantial supper, all laid out and ready. The man on my entrance into the room got off his seat and shook me warmly by the hand. "Glad to see you, sir, and you be that welcome—that you be. Sit down here near the fire, and the missus will make a start. Come, missus, up with the tea." The bill of fare was not by any means despicable. There was a small leg of mutton, which had been in pickle for about three or four days; a hot loaf of bread, round as Norval's shield and almost as large; plenty of good salt-butter; a large dish of watercresses; a very fine cauliflower; and last of all a dumpling, solid, fortifying, and studded plentifully with currants.

The entertainment began by the man putting on my plate two very substantial cuts of the mutton; then he handed me a large piece of the hot bread in the form of a triangle, having previously cut it in two and saturated it with butter. Everything indicated that I was to be honoured with Benjamin's mess! Knowing that true politeness in that rank of life consists in piling up one's plate with everything on the table, I began to feel somewhat uneasy at the quantity of the food so lavishly assigned to me. Just then the man cut the cauliflower in half, and bringing the dish over to me, he rolled off one of the halves with the knife on to my plate. Then, to crown all, came a lump of the dumpling, which completed the share of the feast intended for me. The woman then helped her husband to the same viands, but by no means so generously, and finished by doing the same kind office for herself. This done, the man said, "Now, sir, if you please, I hope you'll begin; and I only wish we had something better for you." I began certainly, but how to finish—that was the problem. There was no way of shirking, and I did not want to hurt the feelings of my kind host and hostess by not doing justice to their ample fare. But how to do it was the difficulty, as I was not very hungry. So I thought I could manage to engage them in conversation, and meanwhile to find some way out of the "mess."

But the woman began the talk, and on she went while the three of us were getting through the repast. "Maybe, sir, you think we lives always like this, but it isn't often we gets the chance. We have been for two days and more without having

a bit of victuals, and we came in luck's way by getting a good job yesterday, and earned a bit o' money. So we tries this way to make up for the bad days, by having a blow-out like this once in a way like. If the poor people didn't now and then have a little treat like this, they'd die right out—that they would, sir." Seeing that I had hardly touched the mutton, the man said, "You're not eatin' your share, sir; and you needn't fear the mutton, for it is real good. We got it from a gentleman near Newmarket, and thinking it wouldn't keep, we put it into salt. We often does that on the tramp." Here he laid hold of the dish of watercresses, and helped me plentifully to them; the woman adding, "They be right good, sir, those creases—that they are. We picked them ourselves, and they have been well washed, and passed through three waters."

I was getting on too slowly for the hospitable sympathies of my entertainers, for the man said that he had "a nice slice of the mutton waiting for me" when I had finished what I had on my plate. So I thought that, as no man is bound to the impossible, I would make a clean breast of it, and confess my inability to eat any more; that I had dined at eight o'clock, and that in spite of all my good intentions and grateful acknowledgments of their kindness, I was unable to do justice to their substantial supper. They were evidently disappointed, but we compromised matters by my taking the tea—as black as ink—some bread and butter, and the watercresses. And so, after about an hour and a half from the time we began, I left them, and got to the Vicarage at about two o'clock in the morning.

The stories which these two people told me of "hawker-life," and their "tramp" experience, were very amusing. What surprised me most was the tone of voice in which the woman spoke—so natural and pleasant, and all the more agreeable because both she and her husband possessed a keen sense of the ludicrous, after their fashion. Whenever she came to my door to beg, she always addressed me in that lugubrious whine so peculiar to persons of her class. At the supper there was no trace of melancholy, no doleful ditties. They were both quite "at home," easy, almost jocular, and natural. Seeing that I was interested in their "camping-out" experiences, they gratified my curiosity, whether by drawing on their imagination or not I could not tell. But whether it were fact or fancy, the stories were, if not true, remarkably "well found." The interest attaching to the whole affair arose from the entire absence of preparation for my coming. It was their supper, got ready for their own special benefit; and they merely delayed it to enable me to have an opportunity of joining them.

Barnwell had been peculiarly favoured by the labours of my predecessors, as well as of those who have succeeded me—Canon Leeke and Mr. Trotter. The influence exerted by Mrs. Trotter, by her Bible classes, is very great, and tells most effectively upon the people. Bishop Titcomb for fourteen years presided over the parish, and during that period he laboriously and successfully organized the parochial machinery, under more than ordinary difficulties, and moulded it into that condition of completion in which my immediate predecessor found it. The Master of St. Catharine's College—the Rev. Canon Robinson—succeeded Dr. Titcomb. He carried forward the improvements already set on foot, and after two years of incessant labour, during which he became most popular, he resigned his charge over the parish, on his election to the Mastership of his College.

There were two curates when I was appointed—one for the Abbey services, and another for Christ Church. The Church Pastoral Aid Society liberally allowed £250 a year to provide curates and a Scripture-reader. My friend Beamont, by his ceaseless perseverance and importunity, eventually succeeded in obtaining for the parish a grant of £300 a year from the University. More valuable still than money, he procured the assistance of able men. After a sermon preached by Dr. Vaughan, the present Master of the Temple, at Great St. Mary's, four Fellows of their Colleges nobly volunteered their services as curates. Among them was my friend the Rev. E. T. Leeke, my successor in Barnwell, but now Chancellor of Lincoln. There were seven of us, each as diverse in his religious views as the colours of the rainbow, but, like that crescent of hope, possessing a unity in variety which produced amongst us a symmetrical harmony. Our complementary colours blended beautifully into each other. Work was the grand aim of all—work, based on the story of Redemption. By this means there were six, and at times seven, curates working with all their might amongst the Barnwell poor—the Rev. C. Gray, Fellow of Trinity; the Rev. A. F. Torry, Fellow of St. John's; the Rev. J. Lang, Fellow of Caius, now of Corpus Christi, and others. Hard work—work of the hardest kind—was done by them, with palpable results. The plan of church extension became rapidly developed. A new church was built in Gas Lane, another in Wellington Row; a parish vestry was erected; the old church had a new porch; a workman's hall was built by the untiring assiduity of Miss Ellice Hopkins and her distinguished father, who was said to have made more Senior Wranglers than any man of his day. Altogether, for about seven or eight years, the work was such as to put a glow of gladness into the hearts of all true Churchmen. Archdeacon

Emery threw his wonted energy into the scale, by co-operating with Mr. Beamont, and between them all Barnwell passed through the several degrees of comparison, as a quaint fellow observed to me in June last: "It used to be Barn-well, it then became Barn-better, but now it is Barn-best."

I should like to make a few remarks upon the singularly successful work of Miss Hopkins. It was in many respects very remarkable. Here was a young, delicate-looking girl, apparently of a fragile frame, who resolved to go amongst the "navvies" and coprolite-diggers and all the lowest stratum of society in and around Cambridge. They were certainly a very demoralized set of men. In Timbuctoo or in the wilds of Arabia no wilder aborigines could be found—none more godless, reckless, or thoughtless. They never entered any place of worship, and hitherto the Church had not reached them. These were the men to whom she went preaching the simple Gospel. Some of the more orthodox divines shook their wise heads, and blandly asked for a precedent to justify a woman preaching after that fashion. She did not wait for an answer, but on she went in her own way, by the tacit if not actual consent of Dr. Robinson, my predecessor. When my turn came I was asked by several what course I intended to take in the matter. My answer to all was that "I did not feel disposed to take the lynch-pin out of a rolling waggon. I did not set it going, and I was not inclined to stop it." We made a sort of compromise. She was to have the use of the school-rooms, but the clergy, myself included, were not, as a rule, to appear on the platform with her. This accommodating arrangement arose from the fact that she scoured the country all round wherever wild men were to be found, regardless of parochial rights or dignity, and she assembled them in my parish. In deference to the sensibilities of my brother clergymen, I did not appear on the platform with her, but, out of regard to the social advantages of bringing souls to Christ, I placed every facility for her work at her disposal.

It had not originated with me. I merely continued what Dr. Robinson handed down to me. I had the pleasure of hearing Miss Hopkins now and then. She spoke with great power, and she exercised an influence over those incarnate devils which seemed almost like that of an enchantress. One fellow, called "the Devil of Barnwell," whom everyone dreaded on account of his ruffianism and desperate temper, she was the means of converting—and a wonderful conversion it was to see that rough man where he never had been before in all his life, at all events since childhood—*on his knees*. The converts were sent to me for examination after Miss Hopkins had them under her teaching, and if approved, they were admitted to

the Sacrament. The rule with me was that they should go to the Lord's Table in their respective parishes. Miss Hopkins in the first instance quarried the stones, and then she sent them back to the parochial clergy to be polished. The present Bishop of Winchester, then Bishop of Ely, when asked about this work, replied with his usual good sense: "An irregular disease may require an irregular remedy."

If the ordinary parochial machinery failed to deal efficiently with this class of heathen, I could see no harm in trying a remedy of an abnormal character. At all events, it succeeded so far as it was tried. To assemble those reckless characters regularly to hear the Gospel preached was a wonderful thing. Six hundred men would listen to that devoted "woman"—I use the word in its highest and most honourable sense—with intense interest. Tears rolled down many a cheek, which no blush of shame had tinged for many a long day. Consciences that had become almost seared were enlightened—hearts that had become as hard as the nether millstone were purified and softened. Wives, whose history had been one tale of woe by reason of their husbands' love of drink, bore witness to the happy and unlooked-for change in their domestic surroundings, and many a village church around Cambridge presented the spectacle of hitherto untamed and untameable men, like the demoniac in the Gospel, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed with humility and self-abasement, and restored to their right minds. If those once desperate characters were not brought back to the Church, and united to its great Head after the orthodox fashion, I can only say so much the worse for orthodoxy. Of one thing I am morally certain, that had it not been for "the irregular remedy" applied by Miss Hopkins to the irregular lives of those half-savage tribes, they would probably have continued to this hour in that wilderness which, if such animals did not find, they would be sure to create.

It was amusing to me at times to hear the sapient criticism passed upon these men by some of the dignity folk. The new convert was hardly, if at all, able to speak his mother tongue correctly. Therefore, to be unable to give anything like an intelligent and coherent account of his "views" under his new experience would not be a very unpardonable sin. I have heard their motives questioned and their conversion doubted because they could not do so. Yet, no man of common-sense or practical acquaintance with such ignorant men could for a moment deny that a wonderful change had come over them. In their own way they proved the reality of the work wrought upon their souls, and, after all, there is no testimony more brilliant or more convincing than the fact contained in those few and simple words, "Whereas I was blind, I now see."

Many of these navvies ceased to do evil, and at the same time were learning to do well—a better argument for the reality of their conversion than if they “could speak with the tongue of men or of angels.”

In these personal recollections of a place where I spent some of the most eventful years of my parochial life, and where I resided long enough to become acquainted with very many both in the University and the town, I have carefully avoided anything that might seem to invade the sanctity of private life, or to violate the secrecy of privileged communications. My object has been to deal rather with the results of church extension and parochial organization in a locality which required missionary enterprise as much as the wilds of Africa or of Hindostan. I have not sought to amuse or entertain the reader with the homespun concerns of the everyday life of the inhabitants, nor the local gossip of “Town” or “Gown.” There is no spot on earth which has more attractions for me than Cambridge, and I am willing to confess that I should esteem it the greatest honour of my life to be permitted, by Divine Providence, to end my ministry among the poorest of the poor in my old parish. I never experienced anywhere such warmth of heart, such sympathy, such rough honesty of purpose, and such a genial, cordial welcome whenever I have visited—only too rarely—the scenes of my old associations. Although since 1868 I spent some thirteen or fourteen years in the West End of London, where I saw wealth and its surroundings, and social refinement and its proprieties, I candidly admit that after a just and thoughtful comparison between Barnwell and Belgravia, I should, speaking as a clergyman, without any hesitation, on the whole, prefer my old parishioners, who, if poor, are not living for appearances, and if in humble circumstances, have hearts unspoiled by the garish grandeur of the world, with all its hollow and unsatisfying delusions. I have many friends in both parishes, but, taking the people in their aggregate capacity, I should prefer the plain and homely views of religious life among my Cambridge parishioners.

During the fifteen years since I left Barnwell what experiences the world has opened up to me! I have been twice almost round the globe, my horizon of life has been considerably extended from higher and higher points of observation. Every day's experience has made me more tolerant of the opinions of others. The little cobwebs of prejudice and party feeling, and bigotry and littleness, have been swept away, and I have lived to look with regret on mistakes formerly committed from want of a more enlarged acquaintance with mankind. The recollection of infirmities and failures must occur to anyone

who takes a just and sober retrospect of the past. A chastened feeling naturally arises in the mind as the thought occurs to us that we might have done so much better than we did.

Few persons are at all aware of the pressure upon the mind of a clergyman in a populous parish. He has two lives, as it were, to lead: the life of a private citizen, with all its cares and crosses, and the life of a public minister of the Gospel, with all its entanglements and distractions. These things are sufficient to try the temper of the coolest head, and to test the powers of endurance of the strongest bodily frame. No one not in charge of an overgrown parish can form any adequate idea of what such a man has to encounter from "the craft and subtlety of the devil or man"—how his motives are often misinterpreted, and his good intentions repulsed—how much he has to face that is unpleasant, and how little he has to expect from those who are set against the truth. It is a warfare from which, while it lasts, there is no respite. Every day renews the conflict, and almost every night closes on some incident which calls for deep humiliation before Him to whom all hearts are open.

In Barnwell both politics and religion had keen partizans. From the first I never scrupled to declare my own principles when occasion demanded. In politics Conservative, in religion Evangelical; but in both liberal to the widest reasonable limits, and more liberal to-day than ever. No man could get along with the Barnwell people in those days if he had not individualism of opinion and independence of character. They might differ from him, but they gave him respect. There is nothing which strong natures imperfectly or inaccurately instructed resent more than *namby-pambyism*. Your anythingarian philosopher has no chance of success with such men. They like a fair stand-up fight for principles. They think strongly themselves, and they express themselves strongly, and they are all the better pleased to hear a man speak out boldly and manfully what he thinks. Humanly speaking, I attribute any measure of success among my Barnwell friends to the fact that they knew exactly where to find me, and that no paltry compromise of principle would lead me to seek for popularity at the expense of principle. It was very gratifying to me when leaving to find all parties—Radicals and Conservatives, Dissenters and Churchmen—ready to testify their goodwill and kindly feelings by presenting me with the only testimonial which I could accept, viz., a piece of parchment bearing the names of all who cared to sign it; and a curious document it is. The handwriting of the signatures is itself a study. To me it is a very pleasing reminiscence of old times and old friends.

What contests we used to have about rates and taxes, town councillors and churchwardens—everything almost! An election of a Member of Parliament could hardly have been more hotly fought out than an election of a churchwarden. Three days' polling on one occasion was necessary to decide who was to be the successful candidate. The usual excitement prevailed. My good friend JOHN WEBB, an honest and consistent Radical, was returned after a most arduous struggle, fairly fought. He was a capital churchwarden, and deservedly popular with all parties. I am happy to find that he has lately been honoured by being selected, quite unsolicited on his part, to fulfil the honourable position of Justice of the Peace in Cambridge.

The intuitive intelligence of the Cambridge people, more than any other people I ever knew, enables them to see through the transparency of a man's motives with marvellous penetration. They are wonderfully acute in the estimation of character, and they rather like to see a man—lay or cleric—stick to his colours and defend them. The people of Barnwell were to me a constant source of interest and humour. They were very natural, and easily dealt with if only they saw that you were in earnest. Of course, some of them gave me great annoyance, and offered all sorts of opposition to everything I might propose; but then others took my part, and by a fair balance of power things always came right at the last. We never kept up any unpleasant feeling. Many a hearty laugh I had last June during a week I spent in Cambridge when going over old associations with old friends, and I enjoyed my visit then, after that the smoke and noise of parochial battle had passed away.

Such is human experience—such the changes and chances of this mortal life. For my own part, all I can say is that in looking back upon my past recollections, I have done not what I wished to do exactly, but the best I could under the circumstances, and I heartily wish that it had been better.

G. W. WELDON.



## ART. II.—THE WORD "OBLATIONS."

### A REJOINDER TO THE DEAN OF CHESTER.

IN THE CHURCHMAN for May the Dean of Chester makes his "Reply" to my criticism in the June number of last year. I cannot surpass the kindness of his opening sentence, and I would not willingly fall short of it. Between the Dean, therefore, and myself, the courtesy of controversy may now, I think,