

Correspondence.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD AND HIS OPEN AIR MEETINGS.

BY EDWARD PATSON HAMMOND.

NO. II.

It would require a small volume to give anything like a connected account of the career of Rev. George Whitefield as an open air preacher. In our last we only had time to glance at his first efforts in two or three localities. It may prove interesting to those who have turned their attention to this important subject of open air preaching to the masses, still farther to follow this valiant champion of the Cross in his bold attacks upon the kingdom of Satan.

In August, 1739, soon after Whitefield's successful attempts at open air preaching in England, he sailed on his second voyage for America, and in nine weeks landed at Philadelphia. He was immediately invited to preach in the churches, to which all denominations flocked, as in England. But the crowds were so great that he was obliged to speak from the gallery of the court house in Market street, to an audience estimated at six thousand and upwards. The clergymen and church wardens invited him to their houses.

In the memoirs of Mrs. Hannah Hodge, published in 1809, the writer says: "The effects produced in Philadelphia at this time by Mr. Whitefield were truly astonishing. Members of almost all religious denominations, and many who had no connection with any denomination, were brought to inquire, with the utmost earnestness, what they should do to be saved. Such was the anxiety of the multitude for spiritual instruction that there was public worship regularly twice a day for a year." Surely this was no spasmodic movement.

In speaking of his preaching in Philadelphia, Dr. Franklin says:

"He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words so perfectly that he might be heard and understood to a great distance; especially as his auditors observed the most profound silence. He preached one evening from the top of the court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market street, and on the west side of Second street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand people.

"The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous; and it was a matter of speculation with me to observe the influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them that they were, naturally, half beasts and half devils. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless and indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world was growing religious; so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families in every street."

A constant attendant on his ministry at this time says, "His hearers were never weary; every eye was fixed on his expressive countenance; every ear was charmed with his melodious voice; every heart captivated with the beauty and propriety of his address. His sermons in open air lasted about one and a-half hours."

Watson, in his "Annals of Philadelphia," speaking of Whitefield's first visit to that city, tells us that he preached to a crowd of fifteen thousand persons on Society hill, and adds, "About the same time he so far succeeded to repress the usual public amusements, that the dancing-school was discontinued, and the ball and concert rooms were shut up, as inconsistent with the requisitions of the gospel. No less than fourteen sermons were preached on Society hill in the open air in one week, during the session of the Presbyterian Church; and the gazette of the day, in noticing the fact, says, 'The change to religion here is altogether surprising, through the influence of Whitefield; no books sell but religious, and such is the general conversation.'"

Dr. Belcher in his Life of Whitefield says, "At Chester, fifteen miles from Philadelphia, he preached to about seven thousand people. At White Clay Creek, he preached to eight thousand people, three thousand of whom, it is said, were on horseback."

An old gentleman assured Watson, the annalist, that on one occasion the words, "And he taught them, saying," as pronounced by Whitefield on Society hill, were heard at Gloucester point, a distance by water of two miles.

In reference to his first visit to Philadelphia, Whitefield thus writes: "I have scarcely preached among them, but I have seen a stirring among the dry bones. Go where I will, I find people with great gladness receive me into their houses. Sometimes I think I am speaking to stocks and stones; but before I have done, the power of the Lord comes over them, and I find I have been ploughing up some fallow ground, in a place where there has been a great famine of the word of God. But as God's word increases, so will the rage and opposition of the devil. Scoffers seem to be at a stand what to say. They mutter in coffee-houses, give a curse, drink a barrel of punch, and then cry out against me for not preaching more morality. God has enlarged my heart to pray. Tears trickle down my face, and I am in great agony; but the Lord is

pleased to set his seal to what he enables me to deliver. Amid cries and groans in the congregation, God gives me much freedom of speech. Many people and many ministers weep. My own soul is much carried out. I preached to a vast assembly of sinners; nearly twelve thousand were collected; and I had not spoken long, before I perceived numbers melting; as I proceeded, the power increased, and thousands cried out; never before did I see so glorious a sight. Oh, what strong crying and tears were poured forth after the dear Lord Jesus! Some fainted; and when they had gotten a little strength, they would hear and faint again. Never was my soul filled with greater power. Oh, what thoughts and words did God put into my heart. As great, if not greater commotion was in the hearts of the people. Look where I would, most were drowned in tears."

After a short stay in the city of Brotherly Love, Whitefield was invited by Mr. Mobile to New York. The Church Establishment in that city was under the control of a commissary appointed by the Bishop of London. At an interview Whitefield had a few days after his arrival, he says: "I was received by Mr. V. (the commissary) full of anger and resentment; and he denied me the use of the pulpits in New York." This step sent him into the fields, and he preached at once to two thousand who collected to hear him. His friends made application for the use of the Town Hall, but this was refused; so he preached from a window, whilst the people stood listening in the street below.

Of this visit to New York, and of his first sermon, a writer for "Prince's Christian History" says:

"I fear curiosity was the motive that led me and many others into that assembly. When I came there, I saw a great number of people, consisting of Christians of all denominations, some Jews, and a few, I believe, of no religion at all. When Mr. Whitefield came to the place designated, which was a little eminence on the side of a hill, he stood still and beckoned with his hand, and disposed the multitude upon the descent, before, and on each side of him. He then prayed most excellently, in the same manner, I suppose, that the first ministers of the Christian church prayed. The assembly soon appeared to be divided into two companies, the one of which were collected round the minister, and were very serious and attentive; the last had placed themselves in the skirts of the assembly, and spent most of their time in giggling, scoffing, talking, and laughing. Towards the last prayer the whole assembly appeared more united, and all became hushed and still; a solemn awe and reverence appeared in the faces of most, a mighty energy attending the word. I heard and felt something astonishing and surprising; but I confess I was not at that time fully rid of my scruples. I went to hear him in the evening at the Presbyterian church, where he expounded to above two thousand people within and without doors. I never in my life saw so attentive an audience. All he said was demonstration, life and power. The people's eyes and ears hung on his lips. They greedily devoured every word. I came home astonished. Every scruple vanished; I never saw nor heard the like; and I said within myself, 'Surely God is with this man, of a truth.'"

When Mr. Whitefield returned to Philadelphia, notwithstanding the great blessing which attended his previous visit, he was forbidden to preach in the city. One of the first persons he met in the street was the official commissary, who soon informed Whitefield that he could no longer permit the use of the Philadelphia pulpit.

"Thanks be to God," he exclaimed, "the fields are open." He went accordingly and preached on the Society hill to six thousand hearers, and in the evening also, when upwards of eight thousand were collected. On the following Sunday again, at the same place, he had a congregation, he says, of about ten thousand in the morning and about fifteen thousand in the evening.

This we see that while some in authority strove to drive him from the city, "the common people heard him gladly," and multitudes no doubt in heaven will rejoice that this servant of God was led to preach in the open air. I am well aware that those familiar with Whitefield's remarkable career will find nothing new in these sketches. But there was such a constant outpouring of the Holy Spirit in connection with his labors wherever he "lifted up" the Lord Jesus, that one would almost as soon tire of reading the "Acts of the Apostles" as of the labors of Whitefield. Some time since I chanced to meet with a volume of "Whitefield's Journal," published a hundred years ago. I often found the hours trickling down my cheeks as I read and re-read its precious contents. Dr. Griffin used to thank God for the "luxury of a broken heart." Accounts of such melting, pentecostal scenes as those in which Whitefield lived, if prayerfully read, can but have a tendency to soften our hearts and to make us long for such mighty outpourings of the Holy Spirit in these days of worldliness.

No man despises praise who has not lost all claim to it.

THE THREE EXILES—JOHN, CICERO, NAPOLEON.

BY REV. E. E. JAMES, D. D.

It might have been expected that, at such an age (95), in such solitude, among the bold cliffs and lonely peaks, with the solemn roar of the sea breaking against the barrier of rock, and the terrible storms mocking his desolation, John would have yielded to the shock of exile and sorrow, and broken his gentle heart in lamentation and despair! The great Cicero, who had ruled the Roman Forum for years, whose eloquence changed even the purpose of Cæsar, and to whom the Senate gave the name of "Father of his country" because he saved Rome from a terrible conspiracy,—in the prime of life, strengthened by memories of glory and the consciousness of duty, consoled by multitudes who honored him and loved his fame, and even when the Grecian cities emulated one another in bestowing on him civilities and honors, spent his brief exile in bitter lamentations. Like a befeared lover he cast a longing and lingering thought toward Italy, and behaved as Plutarch tells us, "with a littleness of spirit altogether inconsistent with his reputation, and with the opportunities he had enjoyed, of cultivation from letters and philosophy."

There was another exile on another lone ocean-rock—the man of destiny, who, after the glory of Marengo and Austerlitz, of Jena and Eckmühl; after the conquest of Egypt and Italy, of Germany and Spain; after he had dictated terms to European courts, and filled the world with the terror of his name, was borne by the ship of a hostile nation, on whose generosity he had cast himself, to the rock of St. Helena, where, by a succession of petty annoyances, his life was embittered and shortened. He had protested in vain against this cruel destiny, and when it pressed on him as a reality he had not the philosophy nor the fortitude to bear it. He broke often into passionate complaints at the indignity; felt most keenly his degradation; his absence from Josephine and his son; from the light of France, and from all human sympathy. Although fifty years had not yet been numbered in his life, he sank beneath the weight of his misfortunes, and died, possibly a believer, but with "France"—"the army"—and "Josephine"—on his lips, as if his spirit grieved for the glory of the past, though it caught no light from the future.

But here is John the beloved disciple, severed in his old age from his wonted associations, from friends and scenes of labor; from the places he had rendered holy by his prayers; from the young men who bore him from place to place and watched over him as over an endeared father, sent to a solitary isle, bare and bleak, and washed and shaken by storms, with no companion who could recall the past to his heart, and review with him the events in which their common interests were blended and their energies employed, and yet with all the disadvantages of age, in which one becomes a child again, and needs a hand on which to lean, a heart to offer it tender and patient sympathies—that good old man, that banished man, without a home, without wife or child, without the fellowship of old friends, on the ocean rock, in the lonely cave, fed, we know not by what miracle, sheltered we know not by what human power, guarded at night in his lonely rest, we know not by what other hand than that of God, that banished old Christian stands there in his solitude, his white locks caressed by the wind, his eyes looking into heaven, and his ears open to the celestial voices, a sublimer man than Cicero or Napoleon! The love which so long filled his heart, the lessons he learned when walking by the side and leaning on the breast of Jesus, the nearness of his soul to God and heaven, the possession of a life which the great Roman orator and Corsican conqueror did not know, lifted him from dependence on man and earth! In the absence of places to which he had been accustomed, of the beings who once ministered to his comfort, and of the scenes which had hallowed his earlier days, his piety changed the bleak rock into a Paradise, its caves were God's temples, and the waves that beat around it sang anthems to him soft and sweet as the mother's songs that lulled his infant heart to repose.

The Lord's day dawned over that still isle with a divine light; and as he looked off on the sparkling sea dotted with historic islands, and bordered by the glorious Grecian land, he thought of the land of the blessed; his soul went up to the ascended Christ; he was in the spirit of devotion and praise, happy without any of the wealth, or pleasure, or splendor, or luxuries, or comforts for which we labor, and struggle, and sin. In that devout and holy posture, the solitary exile heard behind him a great voice of a trumpet saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," and

turning to ascertain the meaning of the voice, he had a vision of his Lord; not as when he leaned on him at the supper, but in glory and grandeur, clothed with majesty; his head and his hairs were white as wool, and his eyes as a flame of fire; his feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice like the sound of many waters, and he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Well might he, at such a sight fall down as dead! Little did he anticipate such a revelation of his Lord, nor would he have known him but for the words "Fear not, I am he that liveth and was dead."

RELIGIOUS CONDITION AND PROSPECTS OF MEXICO.

Ten years ago, the order of Jesuits was restored in Mexico, and the natives for a time seemed disposed to hug those more galling chains which other parts of Central and South America were disposed to throw off. But at a later period, her people arose in their might, broke the power of the church, which had been stronger than the state, confiscated the church property, expelled the bishops and proclaimed religious liberty. This work, which commenced before, was consummated by Juarez, after Congress had elevated him to the presidency in 1861.

Two acts of his afforded an ostensible reason for the invasion of Mexico. One was the suspension of payment of all claims against the State for two years. The other was a refusal to pay a claim of fifteen millions (15,000,000) which Jecker, a Swiss banker, brought against the Mexican government. While Miramón was in possession of the city of Mexico, claiming to be president, he borrowed seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars of this banker, then doing business in Mexico. Upon the basis of this loan Jecker founded the above claim, and when Juarez refused payment Jecker found means to interest the French minister in the matter. Soon after, Jecker was claimed as a French citizen, and that government took up his claims.

Such, as we have intimated, was the ostensible reason for the invasion of Mexico, but every one is well satisfied that so far as relates to the French it was something more. Their real purpose was, from the beginning, to found a monarchy there which would be subservient to the interests of France. The nominal effort to elevate the Latin race might have been to appease the Empress, who was highly offended at Napoleon's treatment of the Pope.

Should that invasion eventually cease, leaving Juarez in power, Mexico would present an inviting missionary field. Many of the people are liberal in their views, and among those who are the most so is Juarez himself. One who has long resided in Mexico and is personally acquainted with him, says that he would gladly welcome and protect Protestant missionaries; and that he is disposed to provide, at his own expense, in the city of Mexico, a place for Protestants to worship. But whatever may be the results of this invasion, we see for that distracted country a dawn of hope. We trust it is one of those glimmerings that portend the coming day. Indeed there are a number of favorable indications as to the moral improvement of that country.

As early as 1850 or 1851, the attention of the American and Foreign Christian Union was called to the importance of a mission for the Mexicans in the valley of the Rio Grande, and a converted Spanish Monk, who had labored for that society elsewhere, was sent to Brownsville, Texas, where a large number of them lived. Remaining on this side of the line that divides us from Mexico he enjoyed American protection, though laboring almost as much for her people as if he had been within her territory. He had a school during the week and on the Sabbath, when he also read the Scriptures among the people and exhorted them in the Spanish language.

Exchanging that field for another, his labors there were assumed by a noble self-denying female, through whose instrumentality the missionary work of the Christian Union for Mexico is mainly carried on. Brownsville has quite a Mexican population, and there this lady opened a school for girls about the year 1855 or 1856. Her object was to counteract the influence of a convent located there, and to promote evangelical religion while furnishing the means for a thorough education. And her labors, like those of her predecessor, were mainly for the Mexican part of the population. Her school was so much better than that connected with the convent, even in the estimation of the Papists, that several early withdrew their daughters from the latter for the purpose of sending them to the former, with the full understanding that the

teacher would give them as much Biblical instruction as she pleased. They risked all harm from that quarter in order to avail themselves of the superior advantages of the school.

While engaged in teaching, the principal and her associates embraced every opportunity to distribute Bibles, and tracts among the people, by whom they and their books and tracts were kindly received. Though this seminary soon met with opposition, it has steadily gained in the confidence of the people. The American and Foreign Christian Union early employed this teacher to instruct indigent Mexican girls, of good promise, at the expense of the society. Their object was to qualify them for usefulness in their various spheres of life, and in due time to send them into various parts of the country to do good, as they were able. A Sabbath school was early started also, which was attended by adults as well as by children, and thus an opening was made for the truth, very quietly but effectually, to reach the hearts of many Mexicans in a way that they were not disposed to resist. Many of those of whom the proverb says "the priests have them soul and body," would attend these schools though they could not be induced to attend a Protestant church. At one time the teacher says the Mexican girls which I have in my school have nearly all come from the convent. Again she says, "I fully believe that the truth is penetrating the hearts of many in Mexico, and will eventually develop itself in their salvation."

She specifies some interesting cases. When Cortinas and his outlaws attempted to destroy Brownsville, in 1860, our teacher passed over to Mexico for better protection than the Stripes and Stars could for the time give, but returned to her favorite post as the danger passed away, and continued her labors till near the outbreak of the present war. She had then educated two hundred young ladies in a thorough Christian manner. As they have returned to their homes or gone to other parts of their native land, they have taken their Bibles along with them and much good is not only done already but the way is preparing for greater good to be done in time to come.

"Other instrumentalities" are co-operating for the moral improvement of that country, through which thousands of Bibles and other religious publications have been scattered within the last ten years. An "Evangelization Society" has been formed at Monterey, by English, Scotch and American residents for the diffusion of the truth. And even the Emperor "Napoleon has expressed the wish that religious freedom be allowed there as well as in France." The fruit of these various efforts for the benefit of Mexico already appears in such a way as to give promise ere long, of an abundant harvest.

A Jesuit, who was receiving an annual salary of \$25,000, came into possession of a Bible. He read it, saw the truth and gives every evidence of having embraced it that can be asked. He submitted to the loss of salary, property, friends, influence and even to the infliction of torture for the truth's sake. This man says that he knows of one hundred and fifty priests who desire to renounce popery and would do it but for the fear of starvation. Some have done it and are wandering in disguise.

Thirty miles east of Monterey a good work has been accomplished by the Mexican Evangelization Society. Fifteen persons hope they have come to a saving knowledge of the truth. They would gladly be formed into a church. A Bible class is held two evenings each week. "In another direction a school of thirty scholars is taught by members of a Scotch family, where considerable interest is manifested in religious truth."

Thus, whether the French invasion is permanent or transient, God has been pleased to give us a door of entrance to the heart of the Mexican people. The influence which is exerted upon them is silent but effective, like showers of rain that water the earth. The light imparted is spreading, and the Mexicans are opening their eyes to behold it and to see the source whence their calamities flow. The number of enlightened men in Mexico is increasing and, as means are furnished, very much more can be done both along her borders and within her bounds. As those who are educated go to their homes at the end of their course, or go as teachers into any other part of the country, well-trained in the principles of our holy religion as well as in the rudiments of science, they take their Bibles with them and will become, we have reason to think, healthful centres of moral influence whence truth will flow out more or less upon the wide wastes around them and they will shine "as lights in the world."

And to whom should Mexico look for that moral aid and instruction that she

very much needs, if not to us? For reasons that will be readily understood, we can aid her more easily and more effectually than any other nation. And we owe it to ourselves, we owe it to them to do for them what we can.

LETTER FROM INDIA.

Sympathy in our Struggle—The Great Cyclone—100,000 Lives Destroyed.

"He shall blow upon them and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble." Isa. xl: 24.

DEAR BRO. MEARS:—We have been looking from India upon the terrible slaughter caused by your civil war with mingled and varied feelings. Some of us note the deep depravity and demonic rage of the South in provoking and beginning such a bloody strife, and thank God for the pure patriotism which prompts the true-hearted men and women of the North to lay such costly offerings on the altar of liberty and humanity. Others, and the great majority I fear lift up their hands in a kind of holy horror at the fearful sacrifice of life, taking no proper account of the immense interests at stake, and blaming the very men who thus freely pour out their treasures and life-blood in the holiest of human struggles.

In the meantime God is teaching us that there are calamities more destructive than war, and that wealth and human lives are by no means the most costly treasures in His estimation, for He sweeps them away with the "besom of destruction," while the great principles of righteousness and truth remain eternal.

You have heard of our India cyclones. We have had them before—but none, within the memory of the present generation, so fearfully destructive as the one which smote Calcutta, the capital of British India, on the 5th inst. For three weeks our papers have been burdened with the details of this fearful calamity, and yet each mail brings new tales of suffering. The port of Calcutta was crowded with more than 200 ships and steamers. More than one hundred of these are reported to have been destroyed, and generally with all on board. The force with which the cyclone struck the city may be inferred from the fact that 410 houses strongly built of masonry work were destroyed, and 1604 damaged; while of the smaller and weaker houses 40,410 were destroyed and 4,578 damaged. More than 1000 persons perished by the falling of houses alone.

But the most sweeping destruction occurred between Calcutta and the sea. Over much of this region the ocean seems to have resumed temporary dominion—huge waves 30 feet high, rolling over plantations, islands and villages, and sweeping every thing in their course.

An eye-witness describing some localities writes: "The Sunderbunds are swept bare of every living thing and every habitation. The river and the land were strewed with dead bodies of men, cattle, and even snakes. Diamond Harbor, we found entirely destroyed, and the river so full of dead bodies of all kinds as to impede the progress of the steamer." A police officer having made his way, with immense difficulty, from Diamond Harbor to Calcutta, by land, reports that he counted over 5000 corpses visible on his route. A large number of laborers on the island of Sangor—5000 on one single estate—are supposed to have perished. All attempts to estimate the loss of life can as yet only approximate the truth. The first attempt made the estimate 10,000; but this quickly rose to 30,000; and now the details at hand increase this estimate to 100,000 human beings swept into eternity almost instantly by this terrific cyclone. Surely "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm;" and what reason have we in our human weakness, to bow submissively to His divine sovereignty, still heeding the lesson to do with our might what we would do for Christ and the salvation of souls.

The terrible calamity is eliciting warm sympathy for the surviving sufferers. A public meeting has been called in the Town Hall of Bombay to devise means of relief, and already our wealthy capitalists have subscribed over two lacs of rupees. Immense fortunes have been made in Bombay during the progress of your civil war, and it is well that some of this wealth be disbursed to the needy suffering.

Our latest telegrams tell us of the capture of Atlanta and the Mobile Ports, for which we devoutly thank God and take courage. Thanks to Sherman, Grant and Farragut, our European friends no longer taunt us with "The North has produced no Generals." God grant to our brave Generals and soldiers a rich reward for all their toil and sufferings, in the best of all lands saved to liberty and humanity. Our British India forces are gathering to chastise the Bootanese on our northeastern frontier. The necessities of life are at famine prices, and we are seriously threatened with the failure of the crops and still greater suffering.

Our mission work goes on as usual, our chapel is in a forward state, though some eight thousand rupees and three months active labor are needful to complete it. In the service of the gospel, Yours sincerely, R. G. WILDER. KOLAPOOR, INDIA, Oct. 25, 1864. P. S. Your paper of Sept. 1st came Oct. 16th, one week in advance of all direct American news.