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Lancaster Intelligencer. SATURDAY EVENING, SEPT. 3, 1881.

THE MECCA OF METHODISM. THE COMING ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE.

Local Highways and Byways of Lancaster—Where Wesley Lived, Preached, Prayed and Died—Where the First Ecumenical Conference Was Held.
A correspondent of the Baltimore Sun, writing from London, says: "For the past few days I have peered in and around the region of London least known to Americans and rarely visited by tourists of any nationality. This may be concretely called Finsbury. Once it was known by and still has a local name of Moorfields. Great moors formed this outer part of London on the north by west, and on these moors two windmills, which gave to the locality the name of Windmill Hill, and which is now known as Windmill street. From Moorfields the southern part of the great city radiated London wall by the then opening called Moor gate, and now known as Moorgate street. To-day the only remnants of the old Roman London wall can be seen in a little avenue intersecting Moorgate street in the very Finsbury zone, in this locality of Moorfields you can find Roman, Greek, Russian, Scotch, Welsh, Quaker and Wesleyan places of worship in close proximity, and, too, you can find here Israel's synagogues growing up with a historic wealth of passages and present notes never dreamed of one hundred years ago by the simplest of Christians or the most zealous of faithful Christians. But at this moment the greatest interest lovers among that I have been pleased to style "the Methodist Mecca."

This is the Wesleyan chapel, situated about three-quarters of a mile due north on this city road from the bank of England. It was founded on the very rainy Monday morning of April 21, 1777, and on the moist and dismal Sunday afternoon of November 1, 1778, it was consecrated and opened for dedicatory services. John Wesley was at this time in his 73rd year, hale, hearty and holy. He preached a sermon on that day from part of Solomon's prayer and I have just finished reading it in the very room wherein he composed it—the very table whereon he wrote it, and in the chair wherein he sat and studied it, in the "Wesley house," adjoining the chapel. That part of the city road where the Wesleyan chapel, or the Methodist Mecca is situated is called Royal Row. The ground leased for the graveyard and the site of the chapel was originally skirted on the front by little houses, designated as Royal Row. But after giving John Wesley his lease the city authorities, claiming territorial rights of law, pulled down this row of houses and upon the site erected the Wesleyan chapel. This lot was 113 feet deep north to south, or front, and 34 feet deep. On it was built the present chapel, which duly became larger by alterations, and is now big enough to hold comfortably the coming Ecumenical conference delegates to the number of over the stipulated 400, and twice as many more. It is a square built structure, solid and solid-looking. Within it is more imposing than without. A fine, lofty flat ceiling sheds a single gas "sunlight" of great power over the rectangular nave and the great galleries. The pulpit stands out prominently in front of the recessed sanctuary, which is a sort of added aisle above to the chancel, effectively lit up by three very large windows. I noticed some twenty-four or twenty-five monumental tablets in this chapel. Six or seven are within the chancel and are affixed to the walls. They are to the memory of the Rev. John Wesley, the Rev. John Fletcher, Rev. Joseph Benson, on the north side, and on the south to the Rev. Charles Wesley, Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke and the Rev. Adam Clarke. Outside the chancel are two monumental tablets to the memory of the Rev. Jabez Bunting, D. D., and the Rev. Watson are very effective to the visitors taking a coup d'oeil of this interesting chapel from the entrance door. Between the windows of the main west wall, which can be seen, one attracted my attention, and I may be allowed to describe it.

I believe the inscription is attributed to one of Wesley's own trustees, Dr. Whitehead. On the top of the tablet is a marble design typical of a globe and exhibiting Europe, Asia, Africa and America. This signifies the expense of Methodism, I suppose, all over the world. This globe is upheld by a Bible and liturgy, and the backs of two other books can be seen, marked "Sermons" and "Minutes." Then in suitable juxtaposition are a shepherd's crook and a winged trumpet typical of gathering in of the flock and the final summons of the angel of the Lord. Above all is a white floating cloud, through which the rays of the "light" to enlighten the world gleam. Then comes the inscription, which at this station is a beautiful meeting I may give from my note book. This stopped to copy it. It commences with one of John Wesley's own sentences: "The best of all, God with us." Sacred to the memory of the Rev. John Wesley, D. D.

A man in learning and sincere piety scarcely inferior to any; in zeal, industry and extensive usefulness superior, perhaps, to all men since the days of St. Paul. Regardless of fatigue, personal danger and disease, he went out into the highways and hedges, calling sinners to repentance and publishing the Gospel of Peace. He was the founder of the Methodist societies and chief promoter and patron of the plan of itinerant preaching, which he extended through Great Britain and Ireland, the West Indies and America, with unexampled success. He was born the 17th of June, 1703, and died the 2d of March, 1791, in sure and certain hope of eternal life through the atonement and mediation of a crucified Saviour. He was sixty-five years in the ministry and fifty-two an itinerant preacher. He lived to see in three kingdoms only about three hundred itinerant and one thousand local preachers raised up from the midst of his own people and eighty thousand persons in the societies under his care. His name will be ever held in grateful remembrance by all who rejoice in the universal spread of the gospel of Christ. "Soli Deo Gloria." I am told the original lines have been altered from the patron and friend of the lay preachers, by whose aid he extended the plan of itinerant preaching," to "was the chief promoter and patron of the plan of itinerant preaching." Otherwise the foregoing is as Dr. Whitehead wrote it, and it has been my pleasure to see the original draft, now in the possession of a Dr. Whitehead living at Gravesend, and who is the descendant of Wesley's trustee.

Close to this monument is that of John Wesley's most potent defender, the renowned John Fletcher. I am told he is not buried there. Appropriate is the design of this tablet. It represents the ark of the covenant, typical of Fletcher's evangelical thoughtful zeal and his constant communing with his Maker. I can recollect one of the finest tributes to this divine given by a popular Methodist in Petersburg, Va., some twenty-five years ago, when Fletcher's combat on the "An-

tionian" heresy created a revived sensation in those Virginia days. He was born at Nyon, in Switzerland, but became vicar of Mealy, in Shropshire, where he died and is buried. He was the meekness and the wisdom indeed, in the coadjutor of John Wesley. Bedson's tablet is a pediment of scroll work, the centre encircling a butterfly. A zealous, practical commentator, laborious and consistent, was the orthodox Bedson. I was struck with the tablet to Jabez Bunting. It carries a profile likeness of this divine. Great force of individual character is indicated, and with a powerful, broad, catholic spirit pervades the expression. The eminent, farseeing and earnest in religious thought and feeling was this man. A glance across at Mrs. Mortimer's memorial tablet. It is very attractive. I am told she was one of the "first ladies of Methodism." Certainly her career made her a Christian example well worthy of emulation by less lovely women. She was the most exemplary and earnest of Christian women in her day. To her John Wesley gave the only portrait of himself by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as a gift to accompany his gold seal bearing his initials. I may here mention that Mrs. Mortimer was a Miss Ritchie, and where the Sun circulated across the Potomac there can be found scenes of her ancestral stock. I look at another interesting tablet. It is to the memory of the Rev. Robert Newton. Two weeks ago I read his life, written by Mrs. Thomas Jackson, and never was more charmed with a career and a character of untiring energy, boundless fidelity and earnest faith. Perhaps there is no book in the English tongue more touching, beautiful in style and purity of diction than this of Jackson's. I look at the monumental offering to the memory of Charles Wesley. And this is the poet, preacher and churchman whom Oxford dons first signaled by giving him the sobriquet of "Methodist." He was the first man ever so designated. I have read his poems and sermons often, and with delight. He is symbolized in this chapel with emblems on the pediment of his monument signifying the sacramental cup and bread, with the lyre close by; thus preacher and poet are combined. What a fine line this is, above the inscription: "Glorious in his work," but carries on his work." I omit the long tribute to Charles Wesley, however beautifully composed. I never felt so much desire to die and have a decent epitaph before now. Posthumous praise is very unprofitable to the living. I pass over the tablet to the Rev. Thomas Cooke, as "He that winneth souls is wise," is alone a volume of tribute. And this is Adam Clarke! What an infinite roll of recollections does not this name arouse in the mind of school-boys even! A white marble tablet, with a freely ornamented pediment in the centre whereof is an eagle, reminds me of the greediness "our bird" is typical of. Two scrolls are partly open and on them are written Hebrew and Greek. The inscription is in English, mental vigor, varied learning and Christian zeal. But, indeed, "his praise is in all Christian churches," and I need say no more of his character. Looking at his portrait yesterday, I was struck with his mouth. It is large and loosely formed, yet it indicates expression. His eyes are of a laughing, somewhat slyly critical cast, and his long, curly hair serves to make a pleasing picture, be it a portrait or not. He was an extempore preacher, and made points, telling and telling, of his prominent feature in this eloquent address. He looks like a dramatic courtier with a three-cornered cocked hat on. In fact, it is one of our colonial Revolutionary hats, and John Wesley was favorable to this head-gear, which gave a Napoleonic style to some of his friends' heads to others. A face like Adam Clarke's became this style of hat and he seems to have been very fond of it, for he had his portraits always painted with his hat on. The plain white marble slab with its inscription to Lady Mary Fitzgibbon also interests me. It is in the fashion of an able world "and joined the faith" by the exertions of a noble relative. She was brought to death's door by being set on fire through a slight accident. I leave the interior of this chapel and go on to the man of it, when he lies the best of all Wesley. Of him the Christian world knows all. I come to the front of the chapel and there see the monument to his mother. It is fourteen feet high and of Sicilian white marble. Such a son and such a mother make examples worthy of those who would imitate him and who now into the little adjoining house where John Wesley lived and died. You can enter by the back. It is a little low-sized room, with a dingy coat of green paint and a small iron knocker to announce your presence. I present my card, and am at once shown to the reception room of the present incumbent, the Rev. Mr. Ponder, who soon appears. He is a handsome man in his face and a good man in his expression. And this is the room where John Wesley received his guests. It is about twenty feet square and of equal proportions. An old glazed bookcase finely made and worthy of copying in this age of retrogressive art furniture is on the north side of the room. The chair in which John Wesley sat, studied, wrote and conversed is on the west side between the two windows. It is a simple and plain Italian walnut with few joints. Not a Chippendale chair and not a Queen Anne absurdity, it is "early" enough in simplicity and charming enough in comfort, and would make a fortune for an aesthetic upholsterer and furniture manufacturer if amply copied and called "the Wesley chair." I find the rest of the articles in the room simple and few, but modern. I go into the adjoining and communicating room. The first was Wesley's bedroom. Here he lived in this room, 14 by 18 feet, was his small and narrow bed. It is now gone. His coarset or upright writing desk is still there and where the bed stood. It is a peculiar and pretty desk. The inside of the doors are pasted over with engraved portraits of Wesleyan divines and zealous laymen. The china "crackery" kettle of Wesley is the occupant of the book shelves and on it is the usual grace before meals that in those days marked pitcher and platter kettle and cup. It is one of those rotund, pale yellowish white earthenware kettle, with a straight spout at the angle of 40 degrees elevation from the body. It has done service in Savannah, Georgia, as well as in Finsbury, London. Near the desk is a tiny four-legged table, with all the marks of "the slave of the lamp." On this John Wesley wrote man of letters. This room is lit by a gas lamp, and from it you can see the rare graveyard where the great preacher lies mute, but whose spirit is abroad and aloud to-day. This window casts a ray of eastern light upon an oil painting by some unknown hand and representing indifferently John Wesley. It is a poor painting of a pious preacher who toiled for £30 per annum. I learn that John Wesley was short in stature, below five feet five inches, spare in figure but generous in activity. His face was of the long and lean type, yet full of a beaming warmth that was inspiring. His nose was of that type Napoleon always picked

his best men from—a large nose. His eyes were light, lustrous and large. His mouth energetic and prominent. He possessed the face of a Paul-like preacher, because it was ever saying something directly and indirectly. A great moving face. Beyond this bedroom of Wesley is the merest apology for a room. It is a sort of glorified sentry-box. Here he had his papers piled away. I am told he looked at his watch by rule of thumb in arranging his paper, and yet he was most orderly in finding all he wanted. His whole life was systematic. On the walls of the kitchen, so small and so dark, and yet so cleanly, he had a placard to the effect that every body should go to bed at nine at night and get up at five in the morning. And they did, and were happy, wealthy and wise! I could sketch a pretty picture from my notes of John Wesley's death bedroom. There the good Miss Ritchie and the saintly Mrs. Braden, whose family links are also local readers of the Sun—there the simple window received the morning rays of light on the 3d of March, 1791, as John Wesley feebly whispered, "Farewell! Farewell!" and his earthly light was put out; there the group of relatives and friends, who under a shroud with saddened hearts and sweet voices:

"Waiting to receive thy spirit, Lo! the saviour stands above, Sheds his precious blood, Reaches out the crown of love."

Now, look out, and you will see where the nursery of Methodism originated. It was called the "Foundry," and stood alone to compete with the aerial architect on Windmill hill. In 1716 the British government ever anxious to war trophies becoming materially or morally useless, resolved to establish a smelting furnace on Windmill hill southeast but a little distance from the present City Road burial grounds. Here it was that Duke of Marlborough's great capture of the French armies were patriotically melted by the populace and prepared for re-smelting by one Col. Armstrong, inspector of ordnance. A strolling Swiss looked at the recasting molds and pronounced them defective by reason of dampness. But no British subject, and particularly an ordnance officer, could be instructed by a Swiss then or now. The melted brass was duly poured into the molds, and then followed a frightful explosion and the death of some intelligent British artificers. The public proclamation was made for this Swiss to return and talk to Col. Armstrong. He came, he saw and he conquered the British ordnance officer, and proved the Moorfields was not the place for a foundry and that Woolwich was. And the Swiss, Schabell by name, goes to England, and he has had the honor of being knighted by the French emperor. This event is noted down as taking place in the foundry on June 25, 1744, and it continued for five days. Six clerical and four laymen were present. Their programme was: "First, 'What to teach?' Second, 'How to teach?' 'What to do to regulate doctrine, discipline and practice?' Here, then, the cradle and the nursery of Methodism. Where its boundaries and its growth?"

Brian Horn. Contemporary Review. The favorite hero of Celtic bard and historian fell fighting, as everybody knows, or ought to know, on the field of Clontarf; or rather he was slain toward the end of the battle by Hugh Roe, the young hero who found him praying in his tent—like Moses—for the success of his people. He was at this time eighty-eight years of age. Many of his kith and kin perished in the same battle. His eldest son, Murrough, we are told, used his battle-axe with great effect upon the Danes and his right hand and arm became so swollen that his blows were unable to deal death through the armor of his enemies. In this condition he was set upon by the Danish chief Arnulf. Seizing his enemy with his left hand, Murrough first showed his teeth and then he killed him with his axe; but it is said that the Dane, in his last moment, snatched his opponent's knife from his belt and plunged it into his side. Turleback, or Turrough, son of Murrough, and grandson of Brian, also died hard that day. He was only a boy of sixteen, but despite his youth, he "Annals of Clontarf" tell us that his body was found after the battle floating in the tide-way of the Tolka river, with both his hands twisted in the hair of a Dane whom he had followed into the sea. Fortunately for the future of the MacMahonns, some of Brian's children survived this famous day at Clontarf. Turleback, the second-son of another son—left a child, Murrough, who afterwards became king of Ireland in 1100. He left a son, Mahon O'Brian, the first MacMahon of Co. Wick. That the family came of good fighting stock we think the above details will sufficiently attest. By what process his Mahon O'Brian became chief of Co. Wick—namely, all of the shore line, hill-side, river, vale and meadow we have looked at from the height of land on the summit avenue lately described—there is no record; but title to possession could not have proved a matter of grave difficulty to the kin of Murrough, the armor-shaker, or Turleback, the hair-twister.

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