

1875

GREAT AWAKENING
IN THE
BLACK COUNTRY;
AND AN
EFFORT TO REACH THE MASSES:
WITH A
BRIEF SKETCH
OF THE
HALLELUJAH BAND.

BY THE REV. T. WHITEHOUSE.

WEST BROMWICH
PRINTED BY W. BOTTEN, HIGH STREET.

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APPEAL.

GOSPEL HALL, PITT STREET, WEST BROMWICH,
STAFFORDSHIRE.

AFTER much consideration and prayer, we, the Minister and Trustees of the Building, known as the Gospel Hall, West Bromwich, feel desirous of putting before the Christian public the short account of the great awakening in the district, known as the "Black Country," which began in the year 1863-4; hoping that such account may be rendered a blessing to others, by inspiring them to work for Christ, and secure the Salvation of precious souls.

We also desire to make an earnest appeal in behalf of the Building Fund, which is in a most necessitous position. This Gospel Hall was built by persons who were spiritually benefitted by the great Religious awakening above referred to, and is capable of holding about 1000 people. It is freehold property, invested in the hands of Trustees. All the seats are free, so that the working man with his family, however poor, may come and sit wherever they please, and hear the Gospel of Christ. There is also a Sunday School established, which is in active operation. The Hall is also used for Temperance Meetings. The sum of £700 is required to enable the Trustees to discharge the debt, which hangs, as an incubus upon the property, which amount would secure the Building as the Working Man's place of worship for ever.

Will the Lord's people help us to pay it off? Many friends in the neighbourhood will do what they can—one of whom has generously proffered £30. Still we are not sanguine that the great desideratum can be achieved by unaided local effort; therefore, we appeal to the Church of Christ and the public generally to help us in this matter. Sums of any amount may be forwarded, either in Stamps, Post Office Orders, Cheques, or otherwise, to the Pastor, Treasurer, or Secretary.

The Rev. W. G. OGBORNE, of 103, New North Road, Hoxton, London, who has been so successful in winning souls to Christ, is now engaged by the Trustees to preach Sermons, hold Special Revival Services, deliver Lectures, and solicit donations for the above object in any part of the United Kingdom. He will visit any place, and conduct Services free of all travelling and other expenses, simply on the condition that he be permitted to make Collections for the liquidation of our Gospel Hall liabilities. Applications for his labours may be forwarded to the Pastor of the Gospel Hall, or to his own address, which, in either case will secure immediate response.

It would also be esteemed a favour if the readers of this appeal would send the names and addresses of any persons who they may consider likely to render assistance in this necessitous case, to whom a copy of our printed Pamphlet and Appeal should be forwarded.

Rev. THOS. WHITEHOUSE, Pastor, Amblecote, near Brierley Hill.

T. WITHERS, Treasurer, Loveday Street, West Bromwich.

W. STAINS, Secretary, Sam's Lane, West Bromwich.

January 14th, 1875.

GREAT AWAKENING

IN THE

BLACK COUNTRY.

1863-4.

THIS powerful and interesting work of God, in what is called the "Black Country," was small in its commencement. A Christian church was formed in the town of Walsall, in May, 1862; there were only four members at its formation. The work gradually went on, the numbers increased, and the work spread around. The adjacent villages and towns were visited. A plan was drawn up, and the heralds of the Cross sent forth to publish the glad tidings of salvation. After much opposition and difficulty, we succeeded in erecting a large place of worship, being one of the largest chapels in the town. We have also erected large Sabbath Schools to accommodate hundreds of children; we have day schools, and also a free night school, to teach the rising generation. We visited West Bromwich, and took a large concert hall that will hold, when crowded, near a thousand persons. The cause was small at the beginning. At the opening services the first sermon was preached to about eight persons; but a gracious work soon broke out among the people, and hundreds were saved. The

hall was so crowded that many had to go away unable to gain admittance. One hundred persons were joined in church-fellowship during the first three months. Dudley was next visited, and here many were brought to Jesus. We formed a Christian church, and forty persons were joined in church-fellowship during the first three months. The greatest work is now in progress at Wednesbury—the town where John and Charles Wesley met with such severe persecution, and were near losing their lives. In this town we had no church—not a single member; it was impressed upon our mind to visit the place. The theatre, which is very seldom used, was at liberty, and we engaged it for a month; the expenses in carrying on services in it were about 10*l.* per week. We announced the opening services by placard, for Sunday, October 4th. The theatre was filled in every part, and hundreds were not able to gain admittance. The Lord gave His servants great power to speak in His name. The Word ran like fire; many wept, others shouted for joy; and both saint and sinner felt the power of God, and many souls that day found peace in Christ. The band of men who took part in the special services were styled the Hallelujah Band: they have been very rough characters; their very appearance impresses you at once with the fact that they have been such; and to hear them give a description of their former life and exploits, when in the service of the Devil, their remarkable conversions, and their present experience, moves the hardest heart, and the most impenitent are led to weep on account of their sins. God in a remarkable manner has brought these men together to work as a band; their names are placed together on the plan, and they are fully engaged in this special work. When they have closed the services at one place, arrangements are made for them to commence at another. The services at Wednesbury have been going on for a month, Sunday and week-day. The service on Monday night was one of the most powerful of any. About one hundred and fifty souls a week are professing faith in Christ. The awakening is so powerful, that many persons can neither sleep by night nor work by day. The work is very interesting, and likely to be very extensive. In the year, and six

months since, commencing at Walsall, we have formed nine Christian churches in the adjoining towns and villages, and hundreds of souls have been brought to Jesus. In a future communication the men who formed the Hallelujah Band may probably be described, with some account of their former life, their conversion, present position, and usefulness; also an account of some remarkable conversions in this revival, and the various letters that have been sent up to the stage by these new converts to be read to the vast crowds that throng the theatre night after night.

THOS. WHITEHOUSE,

Minister.

Nov. 3, 1863.

The preceding was published in the *Wesleyan Times*; since then the author, in order to give a lengthened account of the Hallelujah Band, and the glorious revivals which have taken place through their instrumentality, resolved to publish it in the shape of a pamphlet. The following description of this Band—their former character, conversion to God, present state, and their successes in winning souls to Jesus—may be interesting, and may encourage others to seek mercy and labour in the vineyard of the Lord.

J. D., the first of the Band, and who generally acts as leader, is a man about thirty-five years of age; he is of low stature, with a robust frame, and a very powerful voice. His manner of address is full of earnestness. He is all fire and zeal; it is quite natural to him; and is seen to the best advantage when most in earnest; his addresses are then witty, humorous, exciting, and telling taking the audience with him to a climax of religious excitement, and often leaving powerful impressions on the mind. He has great natural abilities as leader of a storming party. He is designated by his companions, the "son of thunder." He was born at Nottingham, and was converted to God when fifteen years of

age, under the preaching of the Rev. James Caughey. He has been a useful local preacher for years; and is well adapted for, and quite at home in, this special service work.

The next of the Band is G. M. He is a little man, full of zeal and Christian earnestness, and never seems happier than when he is fully engaged in calling sinners to repentance. He is just the man for mission work. Singing, praying, and exhorting in the streets, and visiting from house to house, is his chief delight. He is a successful labourer in the vineyard of Christ. He is rather rapid in speaking, and often exhausts himself, and has a great flow of natural eloquence; his words, at times, are like a string of diamonds! He is designated, the "little worker." The Lord has made him a blessing to many souls; and also useful in instructing others to labour for Jesus. He is very witty and sarcastic at times; especially when addressing himself to infidels. He has a practical genius, and uses it in the revival prayer meetings with effect; and is fond of singing revival hymns. He has been a great blessing at Derby, since, where he is now labouring.

P. R. This man is a miracle of mercy; he is indeed a "brand plucked from the burning." He is about forty-three years of age, of low stature, very active and sharp. He is designated the "thimble-rigger and horse-racer." He served his apprenticeship at Hednesford, in the racing stables; and also travelled about the country, training and riding noble-men's horses. His life has been in great peril on several occasions. Six times he was thrown off horses; at one time his coat was torn from his back; on another occasion he was thrown out of a cart, and the wheel went over his head and face, where he has the mark to this day; at another time he was severely beaten for his bad deeds, by a number of men, who left him for dead. When intoxicated with drink, he has repeatedly made his horse leap over the mouth of a coal pit, whilst riding him. He was four months in prison, for a breach of the law of his country. He went into great depths of sin and iniquity. He became a great gambler; took part in a gambling marquee, with a gambling table, etc. He also

practised pocket-picking, and was a great backer of prize-fighters in the prize-ring; he backed Jim Massey in all his fights, but one. At length God brought him very low by affliction, he spent nine weeks in Hanley Hospital. When under the conviction of sin, many thought he was deranged, such was his distress of mind. He at length obtained a clear sense of sins forgiven, and soon commenced working for Christ. The Lord made him useful and instrumental in leading souls to Jesus. He is an active member of this Hallelujah Band, and speaks with freedom to the masses who come to hear him. In his addresses, when giving a description of his ungodly career, he states to the congregations that his reasons for doing so is that others may take warning, and see the misery into which sin leads; and also to magnify the grace of God that saved him, and to encourage other great sinners to seek mercy through faith in the blood of Christ.

F. H., one of the most powerful speakers in the Band, is a man of about thirty-five years of age, of strong muscular make, with a powerful arm and heavy hand. Before his conversion to God he was a great prize-fighter, having fought in the prize ring on several occasions. One fighter, the "Bromwich Sweep," never recovered from the punishment inflicted by this man in one of his conflicts. He was also a publican, a great pigeon shooter, and dancer. He has been a vile sinner; and when relating his former life, tears gush from his eyes, and deep emotion fills his heart. God, in His infinite mercy, awakened him to a sense of danger; his convictions were deep and powerful. After drinking of the wormwood and the gall, the Lord gave him to enjoy the sweets of salvation and peace with God. He is designated, the "prize-fighter." His addresses are generally of a solemn character, and make a deep impression on the audience. Some of the death-bed scenes which he has witnessed are related by him with telling effect. Many have been awakened to a sense of their danger under these solemn and powerful addresses; they strike as with a hammer, the heart of sinners; men and women weep like children, and resolve to turn at once to the Lord.

W. M. This man's career is astonishing to relate. He

is about twenty-eight years of age; he is of low stature, strongly built, very active, and has a keen eye. Before his conversion he was a notorious character. This is the man who committed the great silk robberies on the Midland Railway, which was published in the daily newspapers, in the year 1862. Detectives were placed at different parts of the line, and watched night and day, for weeks; but without being able to capture the offender. His exploits were of the most dangerous character. He committed his depredations in the night. He used to await the trains going to London at a portion of the line where no detective was placed, and, whilst the train was going at twenty miles an hour, he would make a sudden spring, grasp some part of the train, and jump on! He would then cut open the cloths that covered the goods, get what he wanted, throw it off, and afterwards jump off himself, and secure the stolen property, often to a large amount! He was ultimately captured at one of the stations, whilst waiting for a ticket, with a suspicious looking parcel in his hand, and committed to gaol to take his trial. Whilst in gaol, the Lord awakened him to a sense of his danger as a sinner in the sight of God—no doubt in answer to his father's and brother's prayers, who had been praying especially for his conversion whilst in confinement. Whilst under deep conviction in the prison, a painful conflict was going on in his soul. He was undecided whether to confess his guilt or not; whilst in this state, his trouble of mind was indescribable, and a load pressed upon him intolerable to be borne. The moment he came to a decision to confess his guilt, light broke into his mind, and God spoke peace to his troubled heart. He shouted aloud for joy, and made his cell ring with songs of deliverance and praise. The gaolers heard him, and requested him to be quiet; he would be calm for a while, and then break out again in praising God for what he had done for his soul. He at once wrote a confession to the judge, describing how he had committed the robbery, and the circumstances under which he had done it, and the plans he had laid for committing more extensive robberies. He also gave a description of his conversion to God in the prison. With this open confession, and a hope that there would be a

change in his future life, the judge sentenced him to nine months' imprisonment, instead of fifteen years' penal servitude. Since his liberation, he has joined this Band, and speaks at the services, often referring to his former life, and magnifying the grace of God which has saved so vile a sinner. He is likely to be an effective speaker; his illustrations in his addresses have a pleasing effect. He bids fair to be useful. Most of his time in the day is occupied in selling bibles; and his evenings and Sabbaths in taking a part in the revival services.

G. M. This man may be justly styled the "weeping prophet." He spent the former part of his life in the hard service of the devil. His appearance at once tells you that he has been a member of the prize-ring. He generally wears his white hat, grey coat and waistcoat, and white trousers. He is about twenty-seven years of age; a muscular, powerful looking man, below the middle size; he has lost most of his front teeth in his pugilistic encounters. His name has often been before the public, advertised in *Bell's Life*, as a combatant. He was converted to God a few months ago, at some special services conducted by Dr. and Mrs. Palmer. He was very cruel to his pious mother before his conversion, and near broke his praying father's heart; he is now their great joy. His wife and child had to be placed in the Union through his dissipated habits. He has redeemed his character, and is in a prosperous condition. His addresses are very sympathetic and touching; the whole congregation are often melted into tenderness and bathed in tears, and a gush of deep emotion springs up in the soul. His words fall like the rain, and distill as the dew. He is a thorough abstainer, and can deliver humorous and pleasing addresses on that subject, and is very happy in singing temperance melodies. He bids fair to be useful.

J. C. This is a strange, rough-looking man. He is designated the "Birmingham rough; or the great bear wrestler." He once wrestled with a bear, and succeeded in throwing him to the ground, and gaining the mastery over him. He

is about thirty-five years of age; tall and ungainly in his gait. He looks a hardy fellow, and as though nothing would daunt him; but he is a diamond in the rough. A part of his life was spent with a party of travelling gipsies. He once was seventeen weeks without sleeping in a bed. On one occasion, when he was hard up for money, he got a brick and beat it to fine dust and sold it for flea powder. The description he gives of his exploits when in the devil's service, is very exciting. After a night's drinking, he was walking out early one Sunday morning, and met with a poor old man, who was hungry and in great want; he took him to his house and gave him lodgings. He afterwards succeeded in getting him work to do. It turned out that this old man was a Christian. At his work a number of navvies insulted and illused him. When J. C. heard of it, he went to the place where the men were at work, and gave them a very rough chastising with his brawny arm. On another occasion, when fighting with a man, the man found his opponent too strong for him, so he went and fetched an old sword, and asked him if he would "fight him now"; he replied, "Yes!" The man ran at him with the sword; he received a gash on the forehead, the mark of which he bears to this day! He ultimately succeeded in wrenching the sword out of the man's hand, and afterwards gave him a severe beating and almost killed him. When a lad he had displeased his father by his bad conduct; the father requested the mother to tie him up to a beam, and requested that he would take off his shirt and prepare for a correction. He said to his father, "You need not tie me up; I will engage neither to run away, shed a tear, or cry out." The father beat him till he was tired. He turned round and said to his father, "Have you done?" The father was so exasperated, that he took the buckle-end of the strap and cut his back till the blood ran down at his heels; but not a tear was shed, or a cry heard. The father never beat him after, as he found beating had no beneficial effect. When under conviction, such was his distress that his wife thought he was deranged! He sought the Lord earnestly till his bonds were burst asunder, and his soul set at perfect liberty. After his conversion, he was anxious to see his wife well clothed; for

she had scarce clothes to her back. He bought her a new shawl, gown, and bonnet. When he brought them home, such was the joy of the wife, and so seldom had anything of the kind being bought for her, that she scarce knew what to do with them; she spread them out upon the floor, and walked around them several times, praising God with a glad heart. His little children, who used to be filled with terror at the approach of their father, now ran with open arms to meet him with joy. There is novelty and originality in his addresses; and at times ideas and illustrations entirely new and original. His language at times is rough, but telling upon the audience; he gradually improves, and is a useful member of this Hallelujah Band.

F. A. This has been a desperate character. He is about thirty-seven years of age. He was converted to God under the preaching of Richard Weaver. At the time he heard Mr. Weaver preach, he was living in adultery. When the preacher began, he said, with great emphasis and assurance, there was a man in this congregation living in this sin. It had such an effect upon this man, that he was compelled to spring from his seat, jump into the air, and cry out, "I am the man." He was also a great and fearless house-breaker. Sometimes, when engaged in this dangerous business, he has carried two pistols, one in each hand, to shoot the first person he met who dared to oppose him. He was the terror of the police. On one occasion, when in an unconverted state, he made an effort to destroy his own life. He ran, with a lighted candle in his hand, to jump down a coal pit; the pit was partially covered over, so that he could only get his legs into the pit, before he could get his body through the covering, and whilst in this perilous condition, his friends ran and rescued him. He is now clothed, and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus. He is a man of few words in company, and as humble, as a child. His addresses are characterised with great earnestness and simplicity, and attended by the power of the Holy Ghost. He is successful in leading souls to Jesus, and is very punctual in his attendance, night after night at the services, although he has to come a distance of three miles.

THIS powerful awakening goes on with unabated interest, and a variety of wicked characters are being saved. One night, a pigeon flyer was amongst the number. He had been a great sinner, given to gambling, dog-fighting, and prize-fighting. He has fought several prize-battles. He generally spent his earnings at the public-house, whilst his wife was without food at home. On the day after his conversion to God, he sold all his pigeons, and brought the money to the theatre at night, and presented it as a thank-offering, towards the erection of a place of worship.—Another man, who had been an infidel, brought his infidel book on the stage, tore it to pieces, and renounced his infidelity before a crowded audience!—Another man was a clog-dancer. He used to go round to the public-houses, dressed in blue breeches and fancy clogs, and a fiddler with him. They used nightly to amuse the publicans' customers. Both he and the fiddler have found mercy. When he returned home, after having found peace with God, he took his breeches and clogs and put them behind the fire. The fiddler has found better work for his fiddle, and both rejoice in their Saviour.—Another of the converts is one that took delight in cock-fighting. After his conversion he at once determined to part with his idol. The game cock was at once sold, and the money given towards the erection of a place of worship.—Another case is that of a young man who was a prize-runner. He found his way to the cross, and started for heaven. The running slippers have been sold, and the money given towards a house of prayer. The presentation of these various sums of money for these things, by these various characters, in the presence of the crowded audiences that nightly assemble at the theatre, produce a powerful impression on the heart of sinners. One young man, in relating his experience one night at the fellowship meeting, said that before his conversion, he used to keep two pockets—one for the Devil, and the other for his mother; but, he said, the Devil had the largest share; since his conversion he has kept but one, and that was for his mother. One night, when a number of praying women were returning home from meeting, they were called into a house by the road side to pray with persons



under conviction; four souls professed to find salvation, and they continued in prayer to God till after midnight, singing the praises of God; and such is the influence of the revival on the morals of the people, that the publicans are complaining of having so few customers; the police cases for the town are much decreased; and the work of the magistrates is greatly lightened! Hundreds are still finding peace with God through faith in the blood of the Lamb. Mid-day prayer meetings are being held at the iron works and the coal pits, and showers of blessings are coming down upon the workmen. Hallelujah! glory to God and the Lamb!

THIS glorious revival is moving onward, and extending to the adjacent towns and villages. On Sunday, November 30th, we opened the theatre at Bilston, for revival services. The crowded state of the place was alarming; fears were entertained lest the galleries should give way. Although it is large, and will hold a great mass of people, hundreds crowded outside, unable to gain admittance. The doors had to be chained to keep them back, such was the press to get in to hear the Word! The services of the day were attended with power. Many listened as for eternity. The Word of the Lord was quick and powerful! Fear and trembling took hold of sinners! Cries for mercy went up to heaven, from many hearts, at the prayer meeting! After the addresses, a large company stayed. The enquirers came forward and crowded the stage; many of them soon found mercy. About thirty-five names were registered as having professed faith in Christ! In addition to this, a great number of children professed to find the Saviour—perhaps forty or fifty. We could scarce find kneeling room for them, there were so many crying for mercy, with streaming eyes, uplifted hands, and earnest countenances. This commencement of the work is very encouraging, and says, in the language of the poet,—

“Lo! the promise of a shower drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour all the spirit of His love.”

It was in this town of Bilston that the infidel, with fear-

ful imprecations, roasted his bible, and afterwards by the judgment of God, suffered such horrid tortures with his mouth, that his tongue became withered and useless for ever! It was also here that the cholera made such fearful ravages when it first visited this country, multitudes being cut off in their sins, especially a gang of bull-baiters. God is now visiting it in mercy.

At Bloxwich, about three miles from Walsall, we commenced services on Sunday, November 15th. The interest here is very intense. The people tread one upon another. The place is nightly filled to suffocation. A great number have found their way to the cross. Last night (November 29th,) nearly fifty names were received. On Sunday night, the slain of the Lord were many. Near a hundred souls are supposed to have been enquiring after salvation. At Wolverhampton, services were held in the theatre, and also in St. George's Hall, which were attended with great power and many turned to the Lord; amongst whom were some that had been vile sinners.

The instrumentality we have assisting in this great work in the black country, in giving addresses, etc., is very humble. One is a commission agent, another an engineer, one a baker, another an engine-fitter, another a bible-seller, one a furnaceman, another a blacksmith, also a schoolmaster. Several earnest men from the neighbourhood of Nottingham, hearing of the wonderful works of God, came and assisted in the work. A converted poacher, a waggoner, a navvy, and a sweep have rendered us good service. J. D., the converted poacher, was in early life associated with the lowest characters in Nottingham, and thoroughly initiated into the degrading amusements and vices of a class of men generally found in most towns; in fact, he was one of the brightest ornaments of the tribe of cock-fighters, dog-fighters, and poachers, the neighbourhood could produce; and for a number of years obtained his livelihood from such like sources. The prison doors have been open for his reception, and the Union workhouse has been a place into which he has begged admittance. On one occasion he actually had to supplicate an old woman for a character to obtain shelter in Birmingham poorhouse,

at which time his health and constitution were so impaired by his past conduct, that the doctor rejected so worthless a character. Thus have we the works of the Devil strikingly displayed in one, who, according to the abundant mercy and grace of God, hath obtained pardon and peace through the blood of Jesus Christ, that cleanseth from all sin. Fourteen or fifteen years since, J. D., and one of his companions (who was well known amongst them by the name of "Sponty,") were out poaching one night, about twelve miles below Nottingham, on the banks of the river Trent, when a very terrific thunder storm came on, which compelled them to take shelter in an old barn. Sponty being terribly frightened, said, "For God's sake, Jim, let's go on; we shall be burnt up!" "Do you want to nesh it," says Jim; "we might as well be burnt up here as anywhere else;" so he invited his friend Sponty to get into the manger, and covered him over with straw, and lay on the top of him, to prevent him seeing the flashes of lightning. The storm, however, continued for some time, and they set out for the nearest house, to dry their clothes and obtain shelter. The night was terrible, and they could only see the path they had to pursue when the lightning flashed, which was so continuous that they were nearly blinded by it. J. D., knocked at the door, and received the welcome answer from within, "Come in, and the Lord bless you;" so he hollowed out to his old terrified friend,— "Sponty, Come on, my lad, there are some of the Lord's people here; we have got to a right shop;" but, however, the words, "The Lord bless you," seemed to be deeply impressed upon his mind, and led him to serious reflections. The "Lord's people," soon found their strange visitors were from Nottingham, and began to enquire about J. Caughey preaching there, and told them he was such a wonderful preacher that they were going the next day to hear him—a distance of thirteen miles. J. D., was struck with the idea that they should go thirteen miles to hear the man preach, and he, living at Nottingham, could hear him by going little more than as many yards; so he resolved within himself, he would go and hear the preacher. The storm being over, they both set out for the village

public-house, to have refreshment, as there was not any prospect of sport that night, the terrified Sponty exulting in the hope of a good time the following night after the storm. J. D., had decided for home, to hear the man preach; his companion, Sponty, do all he could, was not able to prevail upon him to stay and share in the coming sport. When the morning arrived, off he went and left his old friend, reached home a little before preaching time, and, wishing to attend the house of God as respectable as possible, he put on a clean shirt—which was the only change of clothing he could make, as he always reckoned to carry his best clothes with him; and he has often told the people to whom he now preaches, all the clothes he had would not have fetched one shilling at any old rag stall in the town. As the shades of evening drew on, he went to the chapel—not having courage to go in open daylight—and, when he arrived, the gates were closed; so, turning upon his heel, walked gently away. The Devil suggested, “You have a first-rate chance of not keeping your resolution, now the gates are closed.” He said to himself, well, Devil, you shall not cheat me;” so he turned back, and over the gates he went, quicker than ever he had leaped a five-barred gate after an old buck hare in all his life. Into the chapel he went. He had not been in many minutes before great big tears began trickling down his cheeks faster than he could wipe them off with his fingers and coat-sleeves, as he had not in those days set up in pocket-handkerchiefs. He said to himself, “What’s up with you; are you going to turn one of these old crying methodists?” They were then holding the prayer meeting before preaching, and he thought whatever will be the matter when the man comes, at last the man came, and the Spirit of God so wrought upon him, that every word the man said seemed to knock tears out of him, although he could understand very little of what he said, and remember less, as it took him all his time to wipe off his tears that flowed from eyes that knew not what it was to weep. Service being over, he, with the crowd left the chapel, and, as he went home, called and got a can of beer, saying to himself, “I am not going to be gammoned by these

parsons, after all,” although much impressed with strong convictions, and as miserable as sin could make him on this side eternity. He had a testament, which had been given him at a Sunday School, when a lad, which he had often thought of selling for a can of beer, but always found it too heavy; so he thought he would try and read it, and, if the parson was right, he said, “Lord, thou must let the same feeling come over me again as when I heard the man preach.” So he began—although he had to spell all the hard words, as he called them; page after page was wet with the streaming tears—he had to keep wiping them off with his coat-sleeve, time after time, and felt quite convinced that he was a great sinner, and was living under the thunders of Sinai for six months, fearing every hour if grim death were to strike the blow he should drop into hell; at the expiration of which six months, J. Caughey was preaching again in Nottingham. He went a second time to hear the man preach. He was powerfully wrought upon, but left the chapel again without getting into liberty. The next morning, at his work, he could not refrain from speaking to his “mates” of what he had heard and felt of the love of Jesus. They at once began to upbraid him, and told him he was turning an old canting methodist, and he at once cried out aloud, “Glory be to God! I am a methodist; I have gone with you chaps to ‘dog hell,’ (the name of a very low public-house,) and spent my money long enough in buying swill; I’ll save my money and buy a pig;” and since then he has bought some thousands, and is now one of the largest pork butchers in the town. He then went home to his breakfast. The first thing he said when he entered the house was—“Glory be to God! I am determined to give up that ‘dog-hell!’” and his wife, a converted woman, says to him, “I believe the Lord has pardoned all your sins.” “Glory, glory be to God! I believe he has!” And thus it was, as soon as ever the confession was made before men, he lost all his load, and then could sing with the poet—

My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

And so it is with the heart. “Man believeth unto

righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." He is very earnest in his addresses; the description he gives of his exploits when in the service of the Devil is very exciting and amusing, carrying the whole congregation with him. Persons having heard him once are anxious to hear him again. He understands the revival work well, and is very successful in leading souls to Jesus. Since the writing of this account, this man has been holding large meetings each year, in the Market-place, at Nottingham, with great success, he has lately got a helper, in the person of Bendigo, the great Champion Prize Fighter, who was converted to God about two years ago. Bendigo's career has been a remarkable one, he is the youngest of twenty-one children, of whom he is the sole survivor, he is one of three at a birth; his father dying when he was thirteen he was placed in the work-house; he commenced his fighting career when he was sixteen years of age, and continued it till he was forty. He is a broad shouldered, well made man; very limber in his joints; strong in his muscles, and remarkably quick with his hands and eyes; he has fought twenty-three prize fights, winning them all but one; this was only lost by an accidental slip of the foot, for which act the referee decided against him, although in reality he had the best of his opponent; he contended with the greatest pugilists of his day, and defeated them all. He also gained the belt and championship of England; in all these encounters he says, he never had his eye blackened or his nose to bleed; his opponents are all dead. Ben Caunt, his greatest opponent, he assisted in carrying to the grave. Belts, cups, and large sums of money were won by this champion of the prize-ring. These things are now counted as loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. He has been brought from the depths of sin by the power of the Gospel. Before his conversion, the public house was his chief resort and the drink his great foe; the magistrates and the prison could not cure him; he has been locked up twenty-eight times for being drunk and disorderly, he is now a Christian and a total abstainer; the writer, who has been a total abstainer for thirty-four years, and has entertained

Bendigo as his guest, has had the opportunity of freely conversing with him; he was first awakened whilst serving two months in Nottingham Gaol for drunkenness, he narrates:—

"Twice a day on Sunday we had to go to chapel—to hear the parson. I didn't care much for listening to such things in general; but somehow, this Sunday I did. When I say somehow, I mean to say I couldn't help but do it. It was just in my line. It was about the set-to between David and Goliath. And when the parson began to talk about the big 'un—how tall he was, and how broad and strong—I was all the time picturing him as being a man after the style of the big 'un I had fought three times—Ben Caunt that was—and wondering how I should have got on in a stand-up with Goliath. Well, the parson went on and told us about the little 'un—about David, and about his pluck in facing the giant, though he had only a sling and a stone to tackle him with. When he came to describe the fight I listened with all my might; quite lost myself listening; and when it came to the wind-up, and David floored the giant and killed him, without thinking that I was in chapel, and that it was against the rules to say a word, I bawls out, "Brayvo! I'm glad the little 'un won." It was very wrong, and what made it worse for me, all the prisoners and the warders burst out laughing, the parson turned away, but I could tell by the move of his shoulders that he was laughing too; which, perhaps, made it a little better. The very next Sunday the parson preached another sermon, which seemed hitting at me harder than the one the week before. It was all about the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Bendigo, who was cast into the fiery furnace, and who was saved by the Lord from being burnt. Oh, yes! I've heard about that since; it wasn't exactly Bendigo who was third man; but the name sounded like it to me, and I took it as such, though I didn't say anything to anybody. 'If one Bendigo can be saved, why not another?' I said to myself; and I thought about it a great deal more than anybody thought, I'll wager. If I'd have told 'em, I might have thought that the sermons was got up for me. It really seemed so. Sunday after Sunday I looked out for

something about me in the sermon, and there it always was. After the one about the fiery furnace, came one about the twelve fishermen. Now, I'm a fisherman myself. Bless you! I should rather think I was, one of the best in England. I've won lots of prizes, and got a fishing-rod, that Mr. Walter, of the *Times*, gave me. Well, after that came another sermon about the seven left-handed men in the Book of Judges; and I am a left-handed man. Of course I am. It was that what beat the knowing ones I have had to stand up against. Well, it was this always going on that made me make up my mind to turn as soon as I got out."

Then he heard a forcible sermon from Richard Weaver. This was the turning-point in his career:—

"It was bad weather, and snowing hard, and I had to make my way home late at night across a park, and when I was half-way across I couldn't hold out any longer, so in the dark, and with the snow coming down, I went on my knees and prayed as well as I knowed how, and when I got up I felt a new man. I didn't quite go without ale; I had one half-pint between then and Sunday, and then I went to the chapel again, and on to the platform, and, in the face of everybody who was there, I knelt down and told 'em how I was changed, and how that nothing should tempt me to go wrong again, and I've kept my word, and I mean to go on keeping it. Ever since that time not a drop of beer or spirits has passed my lips, and I never felt healthier, or stronger, or livelier than I do now. I've tried the right road now for two year, but I ain't much of a hand at preaching as yet, because I can't read; but I'm learning as fast as I can, and then I shall get on better."

He has great simplicity, and is ready to listen to anything good, even from the lips of children; he often gives them pence to read the word of God to him; he would sit a whole day to listen to it as he cannot read himself. In his public addresses there is much simplicity. He speaks in a genuine, honest fashion, which impresses you greatly in his favour; in his very artlessness there is a power, which more fluent and better educated men often fail to win, as

it is the very sight of Bendigo a Christian, that is a sermon in itself; he is likely to be useful, and acceptable as a speaker for a Hallelujah Band.

In this awakening, persons of all grades and ages came and listened to these humble but earnest heralds of the cross. They required no dragging to the work. They were always ready and willing to storm the citadel of sin and Satan; and if I required a storming party to lead the van, and storm some strong hold of the Devil, all seemed anxious to have the honour of taking a part. They stood to the work like good soldiers of the Cross, and many a trophy have they taken from the enemy's ranks, and shouted victory over the vanquished foe! At Bloxwich, a most notorious thief was amongst the number of those that have found peace with God. Liars, swearers, drunkards, adulterers, and gamblers, were saved, and rejoiced in God their Saviour. The new converts are mighty in singing the praises of God. They retired from the hall in large companies, and made the whole neighbourhood resound with the praises of God! At one of the furnace works most of the men were converted. They held a mid-day prayer meeting in the black-smith's shop, which was well attended! Here souls have found the Lord. I attended the meeting one day, and found it good to be there.

I also sent these men to hold special services at the Circus in Birmingham, the Corn Exchange at Derby, and the Temperance Hall, Sheffield; they also assisted in holding services at Huddersfield, Leicester, and other places, with great success; at these various places several thousand souls professed to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, many of whom are now consistent, earnest members of various Christian churches; some have become preachers of the gospel; some have gone to foreign lands, and others have fallen asleep in Jesus; had I only had funds to meet the expenses of Halls, Rooms, etc., to have held meetings in, they may have been extended to all the large towns in the Kingdom, and no doubt with similar success, as the worst of sinners who never attend a place of worship came to hear the gospel from the lips of these

men who had been plucked as brands out of the burning. In connection with this awakening, and since, some very successful Temperance meetings have been held at the various Chapels, Halls, and Rooms, occupied as preaching stations in the district, and hundreds signed the pledge. After the commencement of the awakenings, a number of good and great men rendered us assistance on special occasions—Rev. A. Gordon, D.D., Rev. C. Vince, Rev. A. Mursell, Rev. J. Canghey, of America; Dr. and Mrs. Palmer, of America; Rev. — Wand, Mrs. Booth, Richard Weaver, Lord Teynham, Joshua and Mrs. Pool, and others; several of these have since gone to their reward.

T. WHITEHOUSE.

REQUEST FOR PRAYER.

WILL the Lord's people remember us at the Gospel Hall, West Bromwich, in their Prayers—that the Lord would pour out His Holy Spirit upon us, and save many precious souls; and that He would put it into the hearts of His people, to send the amount required to pay the balance owing by the Trustees, for the erection of the Hall, and the purchase of the Land.

Oblige by reading this request at your Meetings for Prayer.

T. W.