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MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. JOHN HYATT,
ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE TABERNACLE AND TOTTENHAM COURT CHAPEL.

In prosecuting our Memoir of Mr. Hyatt, it will be necessary to furnish some of our readers with a brief account of the chapels in which he preached.

The congregations at the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Chapel were originally collected at the opposite sides of London by the ministry of that eloquent and indefatigable evangelist, the Rev. George Whitfield. During the life of Mr. Whitfield, and for many years afterwards, several pious clergymen of the Church of England, preached occasionally, and at stated seasons, in these chapels. As the clergy gradually withdrew from services which were deemed not consistent with their canonical obedience, their places were filled up by Calvinistic ministers of various denominations, with equal acceptance and success.

At a time when few of the National Churches in London possessed evangelic and effective ministers, and when some of the dissenting congregations had sunk into Arianism, and others who held and loved the truth, were yet small in number, and assembled in obscure places, these chapels were

among the most efficient means of awakening serious attention to the Gospel, and of diffusing its vital principles.

Thousands of the poor had the Gospel preached to them with permanent advantage. Dissenting congregations were recruited from them; not a few in the middle classes became active and useful agents in the established church, and even some of her most laborious and successful ministers have received here their first religious advantages. These congregations, with others of a similar nature, have, from their origin, maintained a Catholic spirit towards other Christians, and have supplied not a small portion of the life-blood of vital Christianity to the metropolis of this kingdom.

Among the successors of Mr. Whitfield, perhaps no one was better adapted to his station than Mr. Hyatt. Of a character naturally ardent and bold, while a leader in the follies of sin, when he became a Christian, and embraced the Gospel, his decision of character was equally evident. In his first efforts to awaken the attention of others, he took measures

which manifested the man. We have seen him, already in his own neighbourhood as a village preacher. He would then often take his station under the ample shade of a spreading tree, on the skirts of the forest, and to listening multitudes address the words of eternal life. His tall and commanding figure—his well-known character—his powerful voice, and his ardent zeal, all tended to awaken and fix the attention of his multifarious audiences. When he became a settled pastor, he became a diligent student. To the writings of the most eminent divines he gave his days and nights, and his profiting appeared to all men.

He entered with all his heart into the grand peculiarities of the Gospel. They were essential to his own happiness, and they became the prominent topics of his ministry. The Cross of Christ was his glory. He viewed it as giving its own character to every other part of the inspired volume, as displaying the moral beauty and grandeur of God; and furnishing the only solid ground of hope, and the means of sanctity to guilty and polluted man.

When Mr. Hyatt entered upon his ministry in London, he was in the vigour of manhood, possessed of nerves of iron and sinews of brass—with a voice equal to the largest congregation. As an English scholar, only, he was never above his audience, and yet studious in his preparations for the pulpit, he was never below them. His sermons were carefully written at length, and yet so tenacious and so ready was his memory, that when he delivered them, they had all the freedom and point of unprepared addresses.

His method, generally, was analytical, furnishing the obvious meaning of the Scripture; he was, therefore, a textual preacher. Frequently the topic of his discourse would appear to have been suggested in a powerful manner to his own mind,

and it would seem as if, in preparing his sermons, he had the faculty of realizing, in the retirement of his study, all the diversity of characters of which his large audiences were composed. When he entered the pulpit his soul generally rose with his subject, and infused an ardour into his theme which reached every part of his audience. Congregations that would by their magnitude have overwhelmed a timid spirit, excited and elevated his. Faithful in the ministration of divine truth, he made it bear powerfully upon every class of character. All external distinctions vanished from his view. The truth was manifest to every conscience in the sight of God. The infidel often felt his armour drop from him; the most rugged minds were awakened, and trembled at the tribunal of conscience, doing homage to the majesty of God's word, and the fidelity of his servant.

Mr. Hyatt, it is proper for us to say, was neither profound nor original in his modes of thinking; nor was he gifted with those flashes of genius, which like lightning darted from the mind of Whitfield; nor did he possess *his* tenderness of pathos, which so frequently dissolved in an instant his largest congregations into tears; but in the power of individualizing the human character, and in the unexpected bursts of his heart, in appeals to the conscience, and the thunder of alarm, which he would sometimes roll over the heads of the ungodly, he had not many equals.

Such was Mr. Hyatt as a preacher of the gospel. Among the people of his charge he lived in habits of the greatest friendship. He had formed a strong attachment to them, and they were equally attached to him. It is gratifying to review an union of twenty years, without one moment's suspension of mutual confidence and love. In his temper Mr. Hyatt was amiable, and his friendships were both warm and firm. It was his

happiness too to be united in his labours with a colleague, many years his senior, by whom, indeed, he had been cordially introduced and recommended to the congregations, who ever used his utmost influence to promote the personal and domestic comfort of his younger brother, and the extent and usefulness of his ministry. It was by the special recommendation of this his faithful friend, that several gentlemen in the congregations united to insure Mr. Hyatt's life, in order to make some provision for his family after his decease.

"It is truly grateful to my feelings," says his brother, in the funeral sermon for Mr. H. "and honourable to both parties, to record, that from the first day of their union as co-pastors, to the latest period of its existence, the most perfect harmony subsisted between them; such an union between two ministers may have been equalled, it never was, it never will be surpassed."

The annual collections of Tottenham Court Chapel, for the Missionary Society, have long testified how deeply Mr. Hyatt was interested in this great and good work. His labours were not confined to his own congregations, others were desirous of participating in them. Nor did he spare himself; frequently did he preach six or seven times in a week. His brethren often suggested to him that, strong as he was, he would undermine his constitution, and bring on premature old age: nothing moved, he still went on in services which were always his highest earthly felicity.

He was, indeed, too careless of his health, and on one occasion laid the foundation of the malady which afterwards terminated his course, by accompanying a friend immediately after finishing divine service at the Tabernacle, in an open carriage to the distance of several miles in order to preach in the afternoon.

Mr. Hyatt was undoubtedly one of the most popular preachers of his day. Popularity is always a trial of character. We have, no doubt, it

was so to Mr. Hyatt. The applause of some persons is more dangerous than their censure. There were some hearers of the hyper-Calvinistic cast, who evidently wished him to adopt their abibboleth. The means which they employed were not feeble. Some of his best friends felt the peril of his situation; but he soon saw that those high notionalists were at war with all practical preaching. He saw their delusion, and he exposed it with fidelity, and it is a pleasing, as it is a rare, triumph of a faithful ministry, that many persons were led to abandon their empty speculation, and to receive the truth in the love of it, to the salvation of the soul.

Mr. Hyatt's preaching was particularly experimental. It is not an easy thing for a Christian minister to speak of himself without, at least, appearing to seek his own glory. Yet some of the most touching representations of divine truth furnished by the Apostles are those which are blended with their own personal circumstances. If on one occasion the profound humility of St. Paul induced him to speak in the third person, on another occasion, he has presented in his own experimental confessions one of the most instructive lessons of his pen—(Phillip. iii.) Perhaps some excellent ministers have too much shunned a reference to themselves, and if Mr. Hyatt introduced his own spiritual trials, or his own religious enjoyments for the purpose of illustrating divine truth, and impressing it on the minds of others, in a mode which a more refined taste would have altered or withheld, it is certain that this feature of his ministry was attended with great benefit to others. And if Milton, and Young, and Cowper, never come so near to our hearts as when they touch, with exquisite pathos, the affecting peculiarities of their own personal or domestic sorrows, may it not be permitted to a Christian minister, especially in ad-

vancing years to blend his personal testimony with the truth of God. If this practice was frequent with Mr. Hyatt, it was always impressive, and that can scarcely be too frequent, except to mawkish minds, which saves a soul from death, or heals a broken heart. The labours of Mr. Hyatt had been breaking down his constitution; for several years he had been obliged to limit his services to his own chapels. In the winter seasons, for two or three years he had confined himself to one service on the Lord's day.

"The complaint with which he had for years been afflicted, (the asthma) had excited in the breasts of his friends, for several winters past, the most fearful apprehensions, and the severity of the weather this season, greatly increased those fears. Still he could not be persuaded to desist from his pulpit duties, or rather his pulpit delights, but continued in the active exercises of his office, even to the second Sabbath of the month in which he expired. His last sermon was delivered on January the 8th, founded on Eph. iv. 13. 'Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' After the discourse, he administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and with this engagement for ever terminated his public labours. From this time his friends began to think that his work was finished upon earth: and the fear of separation was hourly increasing.

"His mind was not in that calm and happy state which his friends were anxious to witness; not that he was afraid of death or its consequences, far from it; he knew that for himself, 'to die would be gain,' yet he felt anxious, very anxious about his family, being in the state described by the apostle, 'For I am in a strait, betwixt two: having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ which is far better. Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is needful for you.' Like many other pious parents, he had met with some heavy family trials. He had one son, just entering upon the medical profession, and for him he wished to live. 'To abide in the flesh' he thought 'was needful for him.' On his account there was a momentary conflict between the parent and the Christian, between nature and grace; but the latter triumphed, and grace reigned in the last scene; for as death approached, he resigned this, his youngest son, into the hands of his God; and no doubt he said, 'God Almighty will bless the lad: the blessing of the God of Abraham be with thee;' and

we earnestly hope that his prayers will be answered. In reference to the separation which all now expected, his excellent and pious son said, 'Father, I find it hard work to say, thy will be done;' the dying saint replied, 'I do not,' and then with peculiar emphasis said, 'thy will be done.' 'If it be the will of God,' said he, at another time, to spare me a little longer to serve him, I would willingly stay; but if I have finished his work, I have no desire to continue here.' At another time, when asked how he did, he answered, 'very, very bad, but I desire not to murmur; I have not one moment's ease, but God is an unchangeable God, he will support me. Ah, dear Lord, I shall soon be with thee, my work is done, I shall soon be at rest for ever.' He frequently alluded with his accustomed fervour to the prominent theme of his ministry, Christ crucified; and oftentimes when the excessive weakness of his frame rendered articulation difficult, would he whisper, in accents which refreshed and cheered the soul, 'precious blood! precious blood!'"

His venerable colleague who called upon him a few hours before his death, in a characteristic conversation said, "is all right for another world?" "I am very happy," said Mr. H. "have you made your will?" mistaking the question—"the will of the Lord be done," said the dying Christian. "Shall I pray with you?" "Yes, if you can;" alluding to Mr. Wilks's feelings, at that moment considerably excited. After prayer—"Well, my brother, if you had a hundred souls could you commit them all to Christ, now?" (alluding to an expression Mr. H. frequently used in the pulpit.) With a mighty and convulsive effort, he replied, "a million!"

"I had an interview with him the last hour of his life; his weakness was so great that he could not speak, yet he was perfectly sensible, and knew me. I sat on his bed, his hand grasping mine. By his bed side stood a pious female, whose unwearied attention to him during his last days, will never be forgotten by the family. Near her stood a younger lady, who with all the kindness and affection of the female character, strove to assist her dying pastor in his last moments; thus exhibiting the influence of Christianity as a religion of tenderness and compassion. In another part of the room, sat the affectionate wife, now about to part after a union of thirty-nine years of uninterrupted love and

affection. His youngest daughter, a most affectionate and devoted child to her father in all his illness, for whose welfare he was much concerned during his last days, was standing by. His son Charles, who for many years had been a comfort to him through all his afflictions, stood in the attitude of prayer to his God, and his father's God. As I glanced my eye to a corner of the room, there sat another son, who had——, but I forbear, I will not further draw aside the curtain which properly hides the family scene from public gaze. Oh, no! it was the last, I can never forget it. I saw his dying legs drawing up in the bed, and thought on the good old patriarch Jacob, 'I die, but God will be with you.' And when Jacob made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost."

We have already said, and we say it considerably, that difficult as it is to estimate the direct or indirect usefulness of the Christian ministry, we do not think that its direct influence has been witnessed in a more extensive degree in any individual case, for the full space of twenty years, than in that of Mr. Hyatt, and we could adduce extensive proof for the support of our opinion, if our space would allow, but we forbear.

Scarcely ever was there such a scene as Bunhill-fields presented on the morning of his funeral. Hundreds, who could not reach the place, presented themselves as mournful spectators as the funeral procession passed their houses; and thousands of his hearers pressed to take possession of the ground. Yet numerous as they were, every tongue was silent—every countenance was marked with sorrow, as if at the grave of a father. It seemed, by the countless crowd, as if some mighty man had fallen; yet they were not drawn together by the attractions of family rank—nor of affluence won by successful commerce, nor of high scholarship—nor of some mighty captain's name, who had turned the scale of empire. It was the silent, and solemn, and devout lamentation of thousands for the loss of a good minister of Jesus Christ; of a man of whom we will now speak in the lan-

guage of his colleague and his friend, whose feelings, with the uncertainty of health, in his eightieth year, would not allow him to speak over his grave.

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"He was a highly favoured servant of Christ in our connexion. From our mode of admitting members to church fellowship I was furnished with the means of assuring myself that his ministry was more instrumental in the conversion of sinners, than that of all the other preachers who have stately, or occasionally, occupied our pulpits.

"To me he was indeed a brother beloved, and I can add that during a period of more than twenty years, in which he was my co-adjutor, an angry word or look was never exchanged. His death, though to himself an unspeakable gain, has proved a heavy affliction to our churches, and to none heavier than to yours in our common Lord.

M. WILKS.

We conclude with an extract from the Address to his Hearers, delivered by Mr. Collison at the grave:—

"Among you, my friends, he has for twenty years made full proof of his ministry. For you he has consumed the midnight lamp in his study, for you he has laboured in the house of God. In your sorrows he has sympathised. His pen, his tongue, his heart, his whole soul were yours. For you he has written, for you he has prayed, for you he has laboured, and in these labours, abundant and exhausting, he finished his course. When he entered upon his office among you, it was natural for you to expect the benefit of his services for years yet to come. But He that walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks removes one burning and shining light, and preserves and feeds another, as it seemeth good to him."

"You know how He exhorted, comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you to his kingdom and glory. You have witnessed how God has given testimony to the word of his grace among you—many of yourselves, and from your own families, and from the world, have been added to your churches by the labours of his servant.

"You have witnessed what a trial it was to his patience when weakness would not allow him to be with you in the House of God—when his sympathies for you increased his own maladies; perhaps too, my brethren, he was comforted in all his tribulations, that he might comfort you when in any trouble, by the comforts wherewith he himself was comforted of God,

"The *Disciples* who watched for your souls has given in his account, and resigned his crook to the great Master; the *friend* who entered into your sorrows and joys sleeps in this silent tomb,—but he sleeps in Jesus. The voice which you have been accustomed to hear in the solemn assembly, waking up and warning your best affections, to elevate them to things above, you will hear no more. The eye that beamed upon you with the tenderness of paternal love is sunk in its socket, and closed in death. The countenance which you have been accustomed to behold, illumined with sacred pleasure in the house of God, sometimes as the face of an angel while he spake to you of Jesus and of salvation in him with eternal glory, that face you will see no more.

"Remember then—remember him that has had the rule over you, who has spoken to you the word of God, whose faith follows considering the end, the last closing scene of his conversation,—*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*

"Remember how he has, on the most rational grounds, proved your need of that Saviour,—your spiritual destitution and wretchedness without him,—with what invincible evidence he has laid before you the truth of gospel revelation as the ground of your faith, and how he has invited you and reasoned with you to accept eternal life as the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Remember that that same Jesus, who is all in the divine Scriptures, was all in all in his ministrations to you. A sacred hymn shall record for your remembrance the testimony of his dying hour.

The race appointed, I have run,
The combat's o'er, the prize is won,
And now my witness is on high,
And now my records in the sky.

Not in my righteousness I trust,
I bow before thee in the dust,
And thro' my Saviour's blood alone,
I look for mercy at thy throne.

I come, I come, at thy command,
I give my spirit to thy hand,
Stretch forth thine everlasting arms
And shield me in the last alarms.

The hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice that calls me home,
Now, O my God, let trouble cease,
Now let thy servant die in peace.

THE HAPPY EFFECTS OF THE GOSPEL.

Remarks on Isaiah, xxxv.

CONSIDERING this chapter as describing the blessed effects of the gospel entering a dark or heathen country, the description will appear inimitably beautiful.

The country is compared to a dreary, desolate, and dangerous wilderness, where there is nothing to amuse, gratify, or refresh the miserable inhabitants and travellers.

Every barren wilderness wears the aspect of gloom, grief, and mourning. To view it raises corresponding feelings in the mind. It is hardly possible for a person to be cheerful in such circumstances, unless his happiness be derived entirely from mental resources.

This same wilderness, solitary country, is represented as rejoicing and blossoming like the beautiful, fragrant, youthful, opening rose, which the most gloomy mind can hardly behold for a moment without experiencing pleasant sensations, and feeling disposed exultingly to say, "Lo, the winter is past, and the singing of birds is come."

For the desert only to send forth a single rose would be no relief to a traveller's mind, but would rather tend to increase his gloom. This I often experienced in Africa. To see a solitary bird, or a solitary pair, or a single hill in a plain, or a single tree standing by itself, always added to the gloom: but a flight of birds, a group of hills, or a clump of trees, always gave liveliness to the scene. Hence in this chapter, the wilderness is represented as blossoming abundantly, consequently as rejoicing with joy, and with singing as the expression of that joy.

"These scenes are represented as strengthening the *weak hands*. When the body is greatly fatigued by traversing deserts of sand, of course the animal spirits ready to faint, this state of body and mind is strikingly shewn by the position of the arms, which spontaneously hang directly down. The traveller is divested of power and inclination to exert them in any way, even to elevate them to his breast, mouth, or eyes, so that they seem dangling as if dead at his side. No man need in these circumstances to be taught to do this; whatever be his colour or country, he does it naturally. In such circumstances I have sometimes taken up a pebble, that the holding it might produce some variety of feeling; but the fingers which held it, insensibly, like the arms, chose to hang down, and the pebble dropped to the ground, body and mind feeling the weight too great to sustain.

From these circumstances I admire