to wonder upon what meat he has fed, until they know how the Lord has furnished him with choicest spiritual food. I have known cases where wholly new faculties seemed to develop under the pressure of the new responsibilities. The one who hardly knew a note of music becomes a musician; the man who was weakest in the languages grows a marvel of fluency; the bungler at tools shows himself a master workman. The vocation has the tendency to call out all there is in a man. If in some ways he may be narrowed, in others he is broadened. He enters into an international life. He is familiar with two worlds and master of at least two languages. He is cast upon his own resources and forced to be an inventor as well as a student. Precedents lose their force for him—he is the maker of precedents. Thus he grows into a creative life, touches things at their real center and is freed from the narrowness of provincialism. How many missionaries we know to whom this applies!

"I joyfully testify," writes a dear friend in response to my question on this point, "that missionary work has been an untold blessing to me—intellectually, socially, religiously and even politically; for it has compelled me to know things I never should have looked into, has broadened my entire range of thought, has brought me into contact with the oldest and newest intellectual and religious life, and has made me able, while doing individual work, to influence to a little degree some of the members of two great nations. The missionary's work is grandly broad, and at the same time intensely narrowing, unless the worker keeps sharp watch of himself. . . . In the providence of God the work one expected to be only local breaks all bounds and becomes immensely great at times. This makes us feel that we are really sent by God, and that cannot but broaden a man every way."

The time of deifying missionaries has past; the time of abusing them, also, let us trust. It is not always possible for us to judge a missionary justly, who, after an absence of ten or more years, returns to his native land. Fresh from leadership he finds it hard to be without definite vocation. Fresh from a nascent Christianity he is ill at ease in one that is triumphant and often seems corrupt. A longtime exile, the dialect of a new generation is not on his lips. And we are poorly prepared to enter into hearty sympathy with his trials, his hopes and his joys. But God has been shaping him into His own likeness, and when we read the life of a Hannington, a Goodell or a Paton we recognize that molding hand and learn to love our missionary brethren with fresh understanding and gratitude.

It is with peculiar satisfaction that I today recall an hour spent with Phillips Brooks shortly after my return from India, when I was expressing to him my thanks for valuable letters of introduction to his personal friends. Desirous of having my own judgment as to the comparative standing of our brethren at home and abroad confirmed, I asked him his opinion, derived from his own experiences on the field abroad. "As a body," was his reply, "the missionaries, both for ability and piety, stand at a high average." More than that certainly could not be expected, while many of the most conspicuous heroes are to be found among those whose lives have been shaped and whose characters molded by their work on the mission field.

WILD MAG.

I.

BY KATHERINE PEARSON WOODS.

In the late afternoon of a day in March, when sunshine flooded the world without and the air, even in Myrtle Street, was brisk, dry, pure and bracing, a man and a woman stood facing each other in a stuffy, slatternly room in the Wyvern Tenements—one cool and angry, the other dully wretched.

"No," he said, "I'll not live with you a minute longer; this here last game o' yourn's a little more 'n I propose to stand. 'Tain't enough, I s'pose, for you to lose all your good looks, not to mention keepin' these rooms so as 't a decent pig wouldn't live in 'em. 'Tain't enough for you to take to drink and pawn the very bed from under me; O, no! all that ain't enough, you had to *make* it enough! You had to get thick with them new gospel humbugs that are doin' the pious act over here, on a mission, as they call it—blank them and their mission, too, I say!—you had to get mixed up with them, turn pious, and ask me to marry you. Marry *you!*" with infinite scorn, "why, I don't take no stock in marryin', no way, but if I did marry I'd marry respectable."

"I always lived respectable till I knew you," said the woman, in the low voice of nervous exhaustion.

"And *I* live respectable now," he replied, surveying her with disgust in his eyes and his hands in his pockets.

His coat was off and his hat was on, otherwise he was neatly dressed, and his fair, ruddy skin had a clean, fresh look, which bore out his implied disgust at the dirt and disorder round him. His face was neither bad nor stupid, though the eyes were cold and, at the moment, cruel. His language had the rounded, forensic periods acquired in working men's meetings, where, indeed, Lemuel Dunn was a noted orator.

"Who taught me to drink?" asked the woman, in the same dull way.

He surveyed her with, if possible, added disdain before he replied, and Margaret Minton was not, at that stage of her degeneration, an attractive spectacle. She had once, it was evident, possessed considerable animal comeliness, of the tall, brilliant, brunette order, but it had bloated and bleared into that which probably inspired very different feelings in the angels and in Lemuel Dunn.

"Taught you to drink!" he said. "I've took my glass of beer when I wanted it ever since I was twelve year old, and it never done *me* no harm. Did I ever teach you to go and make a beast of yourself?"

"No, Lem," she answered, meekly, "but you see it's different. I took it first to drown trouble, and when you do that it gets a holt of you."

"Trouble," he said, "*what* trouble?"

"Knowin' you'd stopped thinkin' as much o' me as you done at first," said the woman, "and feelin' how wrong it was to go on livin' with you"—

"Then what on earth did you do it *for?* I wasn't so blame anxious."

"That's it! I knew you wasn't and it drove me wild. O Lem!" falling on her knees before him and catching at his arm, as he still kept his hands in his pockets, "O Lem, surely you won't forsake me now! I know you don't love me, but just try to put up with me a little longer. See if I don't improve. I swear before God I will make you a good wife."

"I don't doubt you'd try, Maggie," he said, in a softened voice, but his face did not relax nor his hand come out of his breeches pocket.

"For our baby's sake, Lem! You ain't forgot our baby that died?"

"With water on the brain? No," he said, dryly, "I ain't forgot nothin' about him."

He lifted her up from the floor and placed her in a chair, whence she would have fallen had he not propped her with a knee and one hand, while with the other he drew out a much worn and not overfull pocketbook.

"Now," he said, "I've been a pretty square man all my days, and propose to stay just about there; so I'll tell you what I'll do for you, and, if you want any change made, go talk to Washington's Monument, for you won't get it out o' me. Three dollars a week—there it is—and if you drink it up you won't get no more till pay day comes; but have it you shall, punctual, every Tuesday, so long as I have it myself. Yes, and I'll do more for you; if you live steady for a year I'll take you back again."

"Marry me, Lem?"

"We'll see," he replied, oracularly. "I don't make no promises, but we'll see."

A great light shone over her poor, bleared face; she caught his hand and kissed it. "O Lem!" she sobbed, "you was always so good to me! God bless you, Lem."

"That's all right," he said, patting her rough head not unkindly. "You ain't half such a bad sort, Maggie, if it wasn't for the drink, and even with it you ain't never give me a cross word."

"Because I love you so, Lem."

"Well," he said, "I believe you do, Maggie, I believe you do. Good-by."

He patted her head again and left her without other caress. She had had full possession of his hand all this while and had kissed it many times; was not that enough for her? The hand was wet with her tears; he wiped them off upon his trouser leg and felt some degrees more virtuous than usual. And not without reason, for according to his lights the man had done well. Marriage was to him such a mere farce, such meaningless twaddle! and yet, such a yoke of bondage; and he had half promised to submit to it in order to give this woman whom he had ceased to love an incentive to reform. Not that he believed reformation possible to her; he should save his manners and his meat, too, he told himself, yet he felt more kindly toward the once bright, gay creature whose life he had ruined than he had done for some weeks. "I wonder what she's doing now?" he thought, and by a sudden impulse crossed the street and looked up at the window of the room he had left. It had been prettily furnished once, and there were still blinds at the windows, blinds once white, which Maggie had not yet sold for drink. He felt a pang of regret at thought of the interior they had shaded, such a cozy, pretty room and neat, happy housewife until—where could she be, by the by? What could she be doing? There was no shadow on the blind!

Ah! Huge and distorted as shadows are when cast by a kerosene lamp upon a cheap paper blind, he saw hers appear, holding—what!

"She smashed *her* whisky bottle," quoth Lem, "but there *was* one of mine on the shelf in the kitchen cupboard. But surely"—

The shadowy head was bent backwards; the something was raised to the shadowy lips; there was the action of drinking.

"Well, by ——!" said Lem, fiercely, "if that ain't enough to disgust any man. Pretends to think so much of me and can't keep straight for my sake five minutes. By gracious! it is enough to make a fellow hate whisky. If I was a fool, I'd go join the W. C. T. U.!"

Wherewith he turned into the first saloon he came to, where he drank and cursed the weakness of women till far into the night.

In the room his absence made desolate the woman he had left—not even a deserted wife—found herself abandoned by man before she had found God. She sat bowed forward upon herself in the chair where he had placed her, having no hope and without God in the world. Nay, was there not hope? Had he not spoken of coming back to her if—! She sprang to her feet; she *would* keep straight, she *would* win him back!

Her black hair hung in wild elf-locks over her eyes; she put it back with her tremulous hands and looked around. How empty the room was, how deathlike! If she could only have a glass of whisky now—just one! No, she must not. They had told her at the mission that God would help her. She would ask Him to do it for Christ's sake, though what did Christ know of a craving gnawing your insides like a wolf! She locked her hands together, threw herself on her knees. In less than a minute she rose, walked deliberately to the cupboard and returned with the bottle in her hand, looked this way and that, and said to herself, in low, whispering tones, "If I drink it now there'll be none to tempt me another time!"

But perhaps the angels judged her more charitably than Lemuel Dunn.

AS IN OLDEN TIME.

BY REV. FARRIS T. FARWELL.

Only a century old and yet how strange the old association records seem to us, how completely they belong to another kind of life from that which we live. Some such reflection will arise in the mind of any one who studies the records of our churches or ministerial associations near the close of the last century.

The "Berkshire Association of Congregational Ministers" finds the earliest record of its meetings dated February, 1792. The association was then, indeed, thirty years old, but during all those years no note had been made of its gatherings, though the famous Samuel Hopkins, then of Great Barrington, and Stephen West of Stockbridge were among its earliest members.

Here are a few items from that first record:

Voted, To spend a portion of the time of the next meeting in canvassing the twelve first chapters of Matthew. Questions containing difficulties to be proposed in order and spoken upon by the members once around, by the moderator and the proponent himself and then dismissed.

Voted, That the question for discussion be, What Is the Justification of the Ungodly?

We hardly need to say that such a program was not carried out at the next meeting. Indeed, it was three years before the twelfth chapter of Matthew was reached. The topic chosen for discussion reminds us of the difference between the subjects that interested the ministry then and those they consider today. How many of the following themes would occur to one now in making up a program?

Is It Our Duty to Pray for Immediate Holiness?

Is There a Specific Difference Between Common and Saving Grace?

Whether the Jews as a Body Will Return to the Holy Land and Personally Inhabit It?

Will Any of the Human Race Propagate Posterity After Their Probation Is Ended?

Does God Require of Any Person a Willingness to Be Damned?

Will There Be a Resurrection of the Saints at the Commencement of the Millennium?

Whether the Works of Creation Recorded by Moses Contain All That God Did or Ever Will Do?

Among the topics of those days there is a conspicuous absence of all that are now so common bearing on the conduct of life or on social conditions. Everything then centered about "faith" or doctrine. One exception we do find, however, and the reason of it we fain would know. The Sin of Gluttony is down for discussion at one meeting, but no explanation accompanies this suggestive exception. Can it be that any of the brethren needed to consider the matter?

A study of what may be called the executive capacity of the association is stimulating. In the first place think of the fact that such gatherings as these used to adjourn an evening session to meet "at sunrise" if in the warm season, or in cold weather, "*Voted*, To adjourn until tomorrow's sun one half-hour high." Then, moreover, their meetings occupied two or three and sometimes four days. About sixty years ago we find the following program:

Public sermon on the evening of the first day.

Second day. Sermon to be read and criticised.
Sermon plan.
Dissertation on some theme.
A critical exercise.

Third day. Devoted to anniversaries of county benevolent societies.

Fourth day. Licensure of candidates for the ministry.
Social prayer.
Discussion of questions in pastoral work.
Concio ad clerum by the ministerial host.

In this particular association Hebrew does not seem to have had a special place until about the middle of this century.

The etiquette of the body is suggestive. There are many records of members asking and receiving "leave of absence" when unavoidably called away. One record explains of a certain brother that he was late in arriving "being in poor health." Failure to attend sessions must be explained, and the moderator often called men to account for their delinquencies. In its function as a guardian of the ministry this old association was most faithful. By no means would it license every man that appeared before it for examination. Sometimes it required of young men who applied that they study for a year or more under some member of the association. On one occasion it recalled a license that it had given, on account of the candidate's "gloomy state of mind, which makes it inexpedient for him to undertake to preach the gospel."

But the interest of the association was not confined to its own ministerial body. It felt itself to be the brain and eye and mouth and hand of the churches. It planned for their welfare and for the spiritual interest of the communities in which they were placed. There were many and great revivals in those days, and probably a study of other records would show that elsewhere, as here, those revivals were largely forwarded by the prayerful plans laid in these gatherings of ministers. The churches helped one another more then than now, it would seem, and ministers went by twos from place to place preparing the hearts of the people.

It surprises us to find much space given to the subject of temperance. In 1828 the whole association took the total abstinence pledge and recommended it to the churches. Ten years later this same body, sharing the expense, engaged a lecturer to go from town to town in the interest of temperance, thus providing for the weaker as well as the stronger churches—an example which may well be imitated. Earlier still, in 1805, the vexed Sunday question was before the association, and a memorial was addressed to the State Legislature in behalf of Sunday laws and their enforcement. And this in the days before Sunday trains or Sunday newspapers!

Then there was another custom of those days to which we find interesting reference. The old habit of catechising has been abandoned. Have we done wisely? Here is a resolution passed in 1814:

Resolved, That it is the duty of ministers composing this body to revive the attention of the brethren and people of their respective charges to the subject of catechising their children in their families and in their schools. And, further, that it is highly expedient that the ministers, attended by some of the members of the churches, visit the schools twice a year for the express purpose of catechising; also that the laudable custom of catechising the children once a year, publicly, in the intermission of public worship, be revived and prosecuted.

What can illustrate better than do these words the change which has taken place in the relation of the churches to the public schools?

Here are a few other items that also reveal the change in opinion during the century. In 1810 the question was asked, "To what age is the baptism of children on account of the faith of their parents to be limited?" The answer of the association was, "They are suitable subjects for baptism during their minority, or while under the authority of their parents." In 1829 it was deemed necessary to pass a vote that "deacons are to be ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands, agreeable to apostolic example in Acts 6." In 1847 this association voted "that the membership of ministers with their churches is inexpedient." So late as 1849 the opinion of the ministry on woman's position in the church was illustrated by the following queer minute: "The question was asked, Have minors and women a right to vote in the church? and it was unanimously decided that women may not vote in the church. As to the right of minors, the association was of divided mind."

How do our ministerial associations compare with those that have preceded us? It is evident that there have been great changes. There has been some loss in power. These bodies are not the force in any community that they used to be. Much of their work is now done by conferences and various charitable and missionary organizations. It is a question, however, if the association might not be more of a power for promoting spiritual life than it now is. The difference between meeting at sunrise, as our predecessors did, and at ten o'clock or later, as we do, probably has its parallel in the religious energy then and now. Perhaps we discuss more important themes. We are more "practical," and curious questions find scant room on our programs. But a careful study of these old records serves to impress the fact that in earnestness, in vigor, in diligence, in loyalty to its mission, the association of today may learn much of its century-old ancestor.