



## **AN ADDRESS**

DELIVERED BY

Mrs. W. TERRETT, of Church House, Bedminster, Bristol,

ON THE OCCASION OF HER LAYING ONE OF THE

## **MEMORIAL STONES**

*Of the above Chapel, on the 22nd October, 1877.*

PRICE THREEPENCE.

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OF REDCLIFF CRESCENT CHAPEL, BEDMINSTER, OCTOBER 22ND, 1877.

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MUCH time, labour, and money have been spent to promote the improvement of the moral and social condition of mankind, and for the alleviation of their sufferings. And while the Gospel is the great moving power for good in every respect, is it not a fact much to be deplored that man *himself*, by an overwhelming majority—while his surroundings are all that can be desired—is dead to his best interests, both as regards this life and that which is to come? And when we speak of man himself, we mean THE SOUL—that immortal, invaluable something within! “Dust thou art, to dust returnest, was not spoken of the soul.” The reason for such a sad, sad state of things as exists to-day, is supplied in the Saviour’s own words,—“Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life” (John v. 40). And never can man be renewed, regenerated, and again restored to the high position from which he fell,—viz., to the favour of his Maker, and the unsullied joys of Paradise—until he comes to Christ in the way made known in the revealed Word of God—“For there is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved.” Therefore, we are “not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” And being fully persuaded that to diffuse this Gospel abroad on the earth, and thus to care for the souls of men, is philanthropy of the highest and truest type,—are we met this afternoon to lay the memorial stones, and otherwise to promote the building of another Evangelical Church. There are many of its kind in Bedminster already, but not enough to accommodate more than about one-third of the population—leaving a large margin for infants, old people, and invalids—and on last Sabbath evening, October 21st, 1877, there were in this parish, in the city and county of Bristol—a city of Christian England—nearly twenty thousand souls that could not enter a place of worship! This startling fact concerns us all; but especially would I commend it to the attention of my rich and cultured neighbours of Bristol and its large vicinity, and notes or cheques from any of them would be thankfully received. If I had the revenue of a Coutts, of a Rothschild, or of others that I could mention (some not far from this spot), I could do much to alter this state of things; but as I have not, shall I be at ease and do nothing? God forbid! But rather, knowing that soon, very soon, I shall have to meet the all-scrutinising eye of my Lord and Master, and render up unto Him an account as to how I have improved and appropriated what He has entrusted to me, be it little or much, let me be faithful.

But to return to the new building. Within its walls the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, in all its purity, will be preached: under the sweet but

powerful sound of which, hearts that are broken will be pointed to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Not to the priest nor to the crucifix, but unto Him who "is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." There, too, God's own people will be revived and cheered, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. In the school and class-rooms beneath—by no means the least important part of the work—the children will be taught the grand but simple plan of salvation. Total Abstinence, too, that angel companion to Christianity (and a companion that no Christian can afford to be without), will be inculcated. We look upon the youth of our country as its future rulers, and those that shall make its laws, both municipal and imperial; and we think that men with clear heads, clean hands, and pure hearts, are the best prepared to do this. Therefore, while we cannot but feel grateful for the facilities afforded for secular education, yet the teaching of the Sabbath-school is of a still higher order, and must not be neglected. Let the head be filled to overflowing with secular knowledge of the highest degree; but if the heart be unsanctified, we fail in the one great and all-important point. It is written, "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;" and he who is far-famed for his wise judgment has said: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Therefore it is our bounden duty to instil into the minds of our children the sin-subduing, soul-reviving, life-infusing principles of Christianity. The two can be beautifully blended together. I am glad to tell you that we believe our teachers are qualified for this work. Some months since, I was deputed by our teachers' meeting to write to a gentleman in this city, to solicit books (Bibles and Testaments) for the use of our scholars—either gratis, or at a low rate. His secretary answered me promptly. And are not our hearts cheered if we receive promptitude and kindness, when seeking at the hands of others assistance to extend the Redeemer's kingdom? Besides, it is scriptural to show mercy with cheerfulness: "a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward;" "forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The letter read like this:—"Dear Mrs. Terrett,—If all your teachers are members of society (which of course means decided Christians), Mr. — will give you the books." You may suppose how delighted I was to be able to answer that gentleman in the affirmative—"All our teachers are members of society;" and it is the same to-day. I mention this just to show you that we believe them to be in possession of that very necessary qualification that Christ was satisfied Peter possessed, when He said unto him, "Feed my lambs." Let me take this opportunity of asking the parents of the children of our Sabbath-schools *generally* to co-operate with us in this great work. It is to be feared that a great deal of the teaching imparted to the children in our Sabbath-schools is counteracted at home: for constantly on God's holy day are our minds pained to see these dear children going in and out of lozenge shops, spending their pence—and other shops also, with jugs and bottles, where they have been sent by their parents. Dear mothers! *especially* I appeal to you. Do you know, that with every one God has given you He has said—"Take this child and nurse it for me." Oh, if this Divine injunction had always been attended to, what a different state of things would have prevailed in the world; scarcely, if ever, would a gallows have been erected—a considerably less number of mothers would have had to mourn over lost and ruined daughters—fewer fathers would have had to say of a rebellious son—"You will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." It is also written—"Train up a child in

the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it;" and if you would have your children grow up to be blessings to the world, you cannot begin this training too early. And why should not your children be blessings? Some of the greatest men the world has ever produced have risen from low ranks in society. Moses was of very humble parentage; Gideon was taken from the threshing floor; the Apostles were fishermen; Bunyan was only a tinker; Luther's home was a very humble one; as also were those of John Angell James, Kitto, and Morrison. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to train in my son a Pounds, a Carey, a James Thorne, or a host of others that I could mention. Then there are our daughters, too—we must not forget them; and while we may not be successful in making them Hannah Mores, Elizabeth Frys, Geraldine Hoopers, Florence Nightingales, or Mary Carpenters, yet we may render them capable of making homes happy—domesticated, Christian, loving and devoted wives and mothers. It has been beautifully and rightly said—"The arm that rocks the cradle rules the world." Then how important is it that those who are entrusted with the souls as well as the bodies of these heavenly and invaluable treasures should be faithful to their stupendous charge. But alas! alas! the carelessness manifested towards those tender lambs that the Saviour (while on earth) was wont to take such delight in (and are they not precious in His sight still?) makes our hearts bleed. But while we have to mourn over the listlessness of, I fear, the majority of mothers and nurses, yet there are many bright exceptions, whose names are utterly unknown in the literary world, that are doing this, the all-important work of the age, faithfully. And when the time arrives that those children shall take their stand, and act their part in the great battle of life, not only themselves, but the world at large shall reap an abundant harvest—the fruit of an early sown, deeply rooted piety, richly watered and well matured by the dews of the heavenly grace, and the genial rays of the Sun of righteousness. And oh! what encouragements we have thus to labour; among others, the present noble Earl of Shaftesbury has told us how much he is indebted to the faithful labours of a pious nurse. We bid all such good speed in the name of the Lord, feeling confident that there is no surer way of bringing the world to the feet of our Redeemer than by training the children rightly.

And now a word or two about the Bible Christians. Who are they? Are not all Christians Bible Christians? Then how came *they* by a name which is above every name?—for when a community or an individual has attained unto the standard of the Bible, both in the shadow and the substance (for we look upon the name as the shadow, and the substance *only* as the real thing), they have gone as high as it is possible to go in this world. The name Bible Christians was given to our forefathers in derision, when they first went forth into the streets, by the hedges and highways, or from house to house, as the case might be, with their Bibles in their hands (in some instances almost the only book in their library). Their usual dress was a Quaker-like coat and low hat, their hair being combed over their foreheads. And as they proceeded, I can fancy I hear the clamorous mob (dark and benighted they must have been, but were unknowingly the subjects of the same prayer that the Saviour used for His persecutors when on the cross:—"Father, forgive them; they know not what they do;" which was proved in numerous instances after, by their being found sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind) exclaiming in scornful accents—"Here come these Bible men!" or, "There go the Bible Christians!"—at the same time

exercising their muscular power by causing to whirl around and about their sacred heads and forms, stones and other missiles, some, if not so hard, much more offensive (eggs, for instance, in a state of decomposition). Sisters, too, have been treated in this way, one of whom, with others, was the means of my conversion. Privation and imprisonment have they also had to endure for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. Oh, yes! the servant is not above his Lord. Faithful souls, greetings such as these, with many of them, have been exchanged for the welcome "Well done!" from the lips of their Saviour. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." But there are still some few remaining who remind us of the past—the brethren Tabb, Kemeys, P. and M. Robins, Eynon, Brown, Hinks, Wooldridge, Martin [since entered into rest], and last, but not least, J. Way, now in South Australia, whose son is Chief-Justice of that colony. And while listening to thrilling tales from the lips of some of them—from their early labours—the springs in my head have started, and sent tears coursing down my cheeks, and I have felt as if I should have liked to have lived then, to have contributed something (if only a smile or a word of cheer in the name of the Lord) in trying to smooth their paths. But it is God's will that I should exist to-day, and as none are blest with more than one lifetime, let us see to it that we *live*, and try to reach the real acme of our short but stupendous life; and then we shall find plenty of room for the exercise of our sympathies (however large) in connection with the cause of our Redeemer; and while our beloved ministers may now travel in somewhat beaten paths, I have yet to learn that human nature is any better than it was fifty years ago. Consequently they have to deal with all the evils of the carnal mind, pride, prejudice, avarice, &c.; and to have to deal with these in a cultivated is even more difficult than in an uncultivated mind. The spirit of persecution, too, still survives; and have not all Christians, at times, found it good to rest beneath the shadow of that beautiful passage—"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. v. 11-12)? Oh, yes! my friends. Do not let us suppose for one moment that because our ministers appear cheerful in our midst that they have nothing to endure. Every heart knoweth its own bitterness; but there is no bitterness to the faithful Christian minister like the bitterness of non-success; and, in consequence, he is often bowed down before God in tears. To all such I would say—"Be not weary in well-doing; for in due time thou shalt reap, if thou faint not." Fix on His work thy steadfast eye; so shall thy work be done. Let us, then, as members of their flock, be always ready to help them by our sympathy and prayers; and if we would strengthen their hands and cheer their hearts, we must always be found "scattering seeds of kindness, with a patient hand removing all the briers from the way, keeping the wheat and roses for our reaping by-and-by;" so that the work of the Lord may prosper in our hands, and the name of the Lord Jesus be magnified.

To return for a moment to our name. Prior to this name—Bible Christians—being given to our people, they were known as Bryanites, William O'Bryan being one of our founders; but not wishing to be called after any man, the name "Bible Christians" was thought preferable, and was therefore adopted. Some of our younger brethren, not feeling very

comfortable when on platforms with other Christian ministers, because they fancy their name seems to ignore the fact that other ministers and people are Bible Christians,—have brought the matter before the Conference, to try and get it altered; but they have always been in the minority, and until these dear young brethren reach their majority, we retain the name. The founders of the denomination, although not distinguished for wealth or social influence, were nevertheless men of deep piety and sound judgment. They commenced their operations in the lower part of Devonshire, on the borders of Cornwall. The charter of their enterprise was the command of Christ to His disciples, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” They have not yet gone into *all* the world; but they are doing so as fast as men and means will admit. We have already churches in America, in South Australia, in Victoria, and in Queensland; and a missionary, the Rev. W. H. Keast, is now on his way to New Zealand. We have also had loud calls from Ceylon and other places; and though no practical answer has as yet been given, they are not forgotten. Let us, therefore, “pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.” While we have reached the antipodes, I am glad that the work at home has not been neglected, and the four persons that have laid the memorial stones to-day are fruits of that work.

I think I am right in saying we were among the first to recognize the importance of Home Missionary exertions, and to actively engage therein; for while we believe it is right to attend to Colonial and Foreign work, we also believe that charity should begin at home. The success, both at home and abroad, has been great; but bright as our past history has been, we are expecting a brighter future. To-day we number over thirty thousand actual members; but if we include our Sabbath-school teachers and scholars, and regular hearers, we must number over one hundred and fifty thousand. These are on earth; how many we number in heaven we cannot tell. Not only have many gone up from our own churches, but from other churches also; our friends having migrated and emigrated to places where we have had no cause; they have joined other churches—and in Bristol to-day, as in many other places, you will find persons connected with the Bible Christians in fellowship with other denominations: to God be all the glory!

They found me in a dark and benighted village in the North of Devon, still a lovely spot to me; and although my dwelling-place to-day may be more desirable, yet “My heart, amid all changes, where'er I roam, never loses its love for the old house at home.” The material sun shone as brightly there as any other where, but the Sun of righteousness was an utter stranger in the hearts of the people. One incident that will serve as a fair representation of the spiritual darkness that prevailed in that locality I may give. The wife of one of the principal farmers in the parish, passing the cottage door at the time a meeting was being held, attracted by the singing, stopped to listen. Eight or ten young converts were singing the good old hymn about “The Union,” and some of you know how they will sing when their hearts have just been set at liberty. The hymn has reference to the blessed union that takes place between the new-born soul as the branch, and Christ the living vine. “I am the vine, ye are the branches” (John xv, 5). She listened to her heart's content, and on reaching home she called her household together, and said—“Zoos! Zoos! all they vokes up ta Betsy Cook's be gwine to Yewnyun! they be! they be! ver I yerd em zinging Yewnyun! Yewnyun! Yewnyun!” and her regret reached its

climax when she said how sorry she was to think I (the speaker) was there. That dear woman's highest idea of becoming a Christian was that we had become poor, and were going to the workhouse. I am glad I was at that meeting; and although the next four years of my life were worse than wasted, yet the day I entered that cottage, my fortune, both for this world and the next, was made. But I am sorry to tell you that through the death of the much-to-be-revered Sir Humphrey Davy (the manor falling into other hands), in course of time a new steward was appointed, and the decree went forth that if any cottager or farmer allowed the Methodists (all Nonconformist bodies have the credit of being called Methodists there) to preach in his house, he would be served with notice to quit; and so the Bible Christians had to leave the neighbourhood. Is not this bigotry of the deepest dye and the blackest type? Oh, that hideous monster! How I wish it was buried in the depths of the sea, and, once and for ever, every impression of its cloven foot erased from the earth. I learn from the good Old Book that God made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth. If that is true, a man's a man, whatever be his colour or social standing in life; and wherever I meet a man or a woman I meet a brother or a sister; and in the same sense a Christian is a Christian, be he Arminian or Calvinist, Methodist or Baptist, Presbyterian or Congregationalist, Church of England or Bible Christian, Greek or Barbarian, bond or free. You smiled just now at the darkness of that dear woman's mind. Is not this darkness in the extreme? But darkness of a similar nature to hers is to be found in our midst to-day; and so—alas!—is bigotry to be found also. As I was passing through one of the streets of Bedminster, not many months ago, at his door stood an old man, bent and tottering, and by the appearance of his snowy white locks, he must have seen at least seventy-five or eighty winters. As I passed him my heart was drawn toward him, and the thought occurred whether the dear old man's soul was as ready for heaven as his body for the grave. I passed on, but the monitor within told me I must speak to him. And, oh, if we always listened to the monitor within. I retraced my steps, and introduced myself, by saying—"Are you well this evening?" "Yes, thank you, I am pretty well." "Are you trusting in the Lord?" I said. "Em, em," he said; and thinking he did not hear me, in louder accents I said—"Do you love the Saviour?" "The Saviour, who's he?" was the answer. The state of his mind you can guess. In course of conversation, he told me he had been to church in his younger days, and had been christened. I tried to show him the inefficacy of water to cleanse the soul, and also tried to show him the all-cleansing power there is in the blood of Christ, and how that blood might be applied to *his* heart. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." I had a tract in my pocket, which I gave him, and as I bade him good-bye, he said, "Where's the minister?" thinking it strange, I suppose, that anyone besides the minister should preach the Gospel. So I said—"Would you like to see a minister?" And he said, "Yes, I should." So I sent him the Rev. A. H. Goodenough; and I have the consolation of knowing that that aged man was pointed to the Saviour at the eleventh hour.

The question may be asked, as there are city missionaries as well as other agencies in connection with *all* our places of worship, how is it people are still to be found who are not even acquainted with the name of the Saviour, to say nothing of His power and willingness to save? I think I can give you the reason, my friends. (It is a good thing to know our

faults, but a better thing to mend them.) There are too many missing links in the chain of our Christianity, and the greatest and most important, and the only one I shall stay to mention, is this—*unity*. If this were in its proper place, I think all the others would follow. We all know that “Unity is strength,” and “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” I am glad to say that much of the strangeness that did exist among the ministers of our city has been rubbed off through an opportune move by the Rev. Urijah Thomas, of Redland Park Church. Many fraternal gatherings have been held, the result of which, under the Divine favour, has been successful united meetings for prayer and exhortation. May it be a prelude to a universal stimulative in the cause of our common Lord. The idea of the Christian church is one family in Christ, our living Head, in whom all in heaven and earth are named; and if by being united we can work more successfully, then let not names nor petty differences in church government hinder us, but let this be swallowed up in Christ. And I verily believe that if all the religious sects in Bedminster were to join hands, and every Christian man and woman did their duty, in a very short time the Gospel would be carried to every house in the parish, and not only in Bedminster, but in Bristol, and indeed throughout the whole of Christendom. And if the Redeemer is to have the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, how is it to be brought about? In no other way than by united Christian effort; and in that way soon, very soon, might the knowledge of the glory of God cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. I know there are many mighty and fierce opponents to Christ and His holy religion; but what are they all when compared with the *almighty* and omnipotent power of Jehovah and His conquering Son? If the Christian church, to whom the conversion of the world is entrusted, buckle on the whole armour of God, which is the helmet of salvation, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, having their feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and let holiness unto the Lord be written on every heart, and thus proceed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—who dares defy the armies of the living God? A Goliath attempted to, but was felled to the ground by a little David; a Pharaoh and all his host were drowned; a Felix trembled; and in like manner would the hearts of men everywhere fail them; they would bend like standing corn before the wind; and the pillars of the kingdoms of darkness would give way, for their foundations are rotten; and soon would the kingdoms of this earth become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and He should reign whose *right* it is from the river to the ends of the earth; and the sooner we organize and begin our campaign, the better. “Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest; behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest;” and thousands of the stalks, some with the weight of the full ears, and others for want of attention, are bending, drooping, and dying. Are we (the Christian Church) ready to thrust in the Gospel sickle, and mow the masses down at the feet of our Redeemer, and thus save them from perishing altogether? If we are, the angels are ready to gather up the sheaves, and the Lord of the harvest is waiting to gather the fruit unto life eternal; “that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.”

And now, my dear friends (those of you who, with myself, will have

to bear this burden), most of you know I have promised to get ONE THOUSAND GUINEAS; and if I do, there will be a large sum for you to obtain. I should like you to understand that it is my own proposal to get this sum; neither Mr. Dymond nor Mr. Goodenough (ministers for the Bristol circuit) ever intimated to me the sum they would like me to get, or that I must get, toward this building; they only asked me to *get as much as possible*. Well, now, I believe I shall get a thousand guineas, although some of my dear friends think me a little too sanguine in the matter. I do not think I go beyond what is scriptural, while the words, "According to your faith, be it unto you," remain on record. In the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews we read of what was accomplished through faith in the days of the prophets; and is not God the same to-day as He was then? And have we not monuments of living faith now in our midst? Just turn your eyes to Ashley Down for a moment, and look at the Orphan Houses. And results of the same like precious faith you may find throughout the whole of Christendom, though not perhaps on so gigantic a scale in any other particular case. I will ask you, is not our position as a community to-day the result of the humble but living faith that was given to William O'Bryan and James Thorne, when they went forth to preach the Gospel? "All things are possible to him that believeth." Ah, yes, we must believe as well as work and pray. And shall I tell you what I believe? It is, that we shall open this building (if not free from debt) in a manageable condition, and that the debt shall soon disappear; and I should like to be able to retain the old chapel, and soon to erect another also in some other part of Bedminster. In conclusion, my dear friends, I would say that, with a good foundation, good materials, a good architect, and a good builder (all of which I am happy to tell you, with but little difficulty, we have succeeded in getting), we shall without doubt have a good building. But massive and strong as it may be, it will pass away; then while this material structure is going up, and one stone is being skilfully laid upon another, let us see to it that we truly lay the stones of faith, hope, and charity, upon Christ, the sure foundation, the chief corner-stone, and so shall we rear a structure that will not only stand the storms and trials of this life, but one that will stand the test in the last great day, in the general conflagration, when every man's work shall be *tried by fire*; and while the grand consummation of all things is taking place, with joy shall we lift up our heads, and receive from the lips of our dear Redeemer the welcome "Well done! good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of your Lord." In the meantime, thus living and thus acting, let death come at any moment, it will only be the welcome messenger to conduct us from the church militant to the church triumphant above, into that building "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," there to take our stand amidst the ranks of the shining ones, and the spirits of the just made perfect, many of whom are our own kindred and friends, and none of them will be strangers, for we are all one in Christ: "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Amen, so let it be.