

WILLIAM KELLY AS I KNEW HIM

By W. G. TURNER



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William Kelly as I knew Him.

MY first meeting with William Kelly was near the end of his long life and very early on in my own. The combined importunity and impecuniosity of a young Sunday School secretary faced by the difficulty of raising funds for the summer treat moved me to write him asking for a donation. Promptly arrived a postcard covered with microscopic hieroglyphics, the gist of which I made out as an invitation to call at his house. Upon doing so a most courteous reception was given me by Mr. Kelly, who, however, put his visitor through a fairly stiff cross-examination as to the whys and wherefores of Sunday School treats. He then intimated that the whole matter was rather outside his line of things; and further that my arguments had not at all convinced him of the necessity for Sunday School excursions.

Just as I was rather sadly taking my leave, he smilingly remarked: "Ah, well, if I do not feel at liberty to assist you in your undertaking, I see no reason why I should not recommend you to some persons who very probably will do so." This he proceeded to do by giving me the names of several likely donors, with gratifying results financially.

My next personal meeting with Mr. Kelly followed upon a rather ambitious literary excursion of mine into the realm of biography. Current stories of the late John Nelson Darby had so interested me, that I set to work collecting every scrap of reliable information concerning him, putting it down in a more or less orderly fashion for my own satisfaction.

Finding the material accumulating, it occurred to me that others might be interested, and so the idea of publication once entertained speedily grew. At last, having with some pains completed the MS., I submitted it to Mr. Kelly, in my youthful audacity, asking for his

criticism, knowing him to have been not only an intimate friend of J.N.D., but also Editor of all his voluminous writings.

At this time, as often as possible, I attended his Wednesday lectures at Blackheath, and never thinking he would recognise me among the congregation, duly went on the next occasion after despatching it. To my surprise, at the close of the lecture, he asked me to wait awhile, and then to accompany him to his house. Two or three leading men among the brethren escorted him home that evening, and even at this distance of time I can hear him mentioning that our young friend here has written a paper on J.N.D., contrasting him with E. B. Pusey, and the Oxford and Plymouth movements. He also mildly catechised me as to my motives, and apparently, more or less satisfactorily, as upon reaching our destination, he invited me to call on the next Sunday afternoon and discuss it more fully. The chief men gave an impression of being somewhat bored, but Mr. Kelly, on the other hand, seemed to have a real interest in the matter. I went my way light-heartedly because he was the only one who really counted, so far as I was concerned.

Sunday afternoon at three o'clock duly found me at Venner Lodge, his house in Lee, and having been shown into the library, I found Mr. Kelly awaiting me. Bidding me make myself at home, and drawing up to the fire, he for the next hour conversed in his own inimitable way, completely setting me at ease by the charm of his conversation. I found he had critically examined my poor effort, had corrected errors, made suggestive rearrangements of paragraphs, and supplemented it from first-hand knowledge of J.N.D. with invaluable matter of exceptional interest to likely readers.

A chiming clock caused him to look up sharply, and then he remarked: "You'll stay tea with me?"

One's nervous hesitation at the unexpected honour must have been pretty evident, for he quickly added: "I told them I had a friend coming, and that we'd take tea together here."

Now comes an incident which made a deep and lasting impression, for tea having been brought in, he gave thanks, asking a blessing on the meal with the greatest reverence of manner. Only a few short sentences, it is true, but the tone in which he uttered the words: "Our Father," betokened intense reality, and seemed to bring one into the very audience chamber of the King Eternal. A small thing but of great significance, and worthy to be pondered.

That afternoon spent with William Kelly in his library enabled one immature believer to believe more fully in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of believers. For, frankly, the interest shown by such a man in an unknown lad's first serious literary attempt surprised me, at the same time giving an insight into the true greatness of his character. Long afterwards, I was to learn that William Kelly's towering abilities had received frank recognition by some of England's greatest scholars, but his humble, unassuming attitude, and brotherly kindness that afternoon is gratefully remembered and recorded by the writer. Mr. Kelly was at that very time engaged in bringing out a great work which from its erudition might well have occupied every available hour; and this made his kindness the more marked. To help a poor unknown scribe struggling with a task too big for him, he placed his own work aside and opened the treasures of his well-stored mind, without the faintest trace of that awful patronage which is the bane of much well-meant helpful effort. He so encouraged me by advice and hints as to writing for publication, thereby making me a life-long debtor. Upon attempting to stammer out my grateful appreciation of this to him, Mr. Kelly replied (and memory treasures the very words): "Pray, don't name it; come again if I can be of any further service. It is a real joy to be of assistance to those who are His."

A characteristic remark he once made to me, possibly discerning my particular need of it, was: "Pains and labour; pains and labour; nothing worth doing is accomplished without pains and labour."

At one time when two seaside gatherings were contemplating breaking fellowship with their Brethren and starting independently, I happened to call on him at his house to be greeted with "I have just sent off a loving appeal to — and —," and the tone betrayed the feeling prompting this eleventh-hour effort to avert division. He had a hard head and a soft heart. I think it was that day also when Mr. Kelly showed me a page of the MS. of his last book on Revelation, corresponding line by line with, and of the exact size of the rough proofs lying alongside. I always pitied the printer who had to decipher the almost microscopic copy.

How much he could manage to include on a postcard will be seen from the following one written in answer to an enquiry as to the vocation of a preacher, and general habits of study. It also possesses a peculiarly tender and pathetic interest, being written on the evening following his dearly loved wife's death.

"22 Kid: Gr: B'heath.

Tuesday evening. Feb. 4/84.

Dear Bro.,

When I say that it pleased the Lord this morning to deprive me of a devoted sister wife, mother of several children, you will not expect more than a few words from me.

One who believes the Lord has called him and given him a gift to preach or teach, need not be hasty or anxious. Power makes itself felt; and it is well to begin in a small, proving one's gift and so be gradually led into a larger, way. But if sober brethren, who have heard, invite one to preach in their Room, one ought to have good reasons for declining. Love would lead to help; especially if gift were lacking among those older, or not of the kind to win souls. As to *studying* the word, it is well when reading papers of interest to search generally. But this should not hinder the regular *reading* of O. and N.T. daily. Both ways are

profitable, and should be combined. And it is not amiss to learn how to read Gr. and Hebr. words, even if one knows no more of the language; for this helps to better understanding of remarks, made by those who do know them. I do not think well of a slight knowledge of Gr. and Hebr., and most men, even if they spend many years, could only acquire a slight knowledge. If one just learns enough to appreciate good remarks it is far better than spending time for what is generally pretension. The A.V. compared with the Revision and other helps, give better results than most are capable of acquiring. And remember, 'prayer and the word,' Acts vi.

Yours aff:

W.K."

Some have asserted that William Kelly was a dry preacher; it is always possible that such complainers were very dry hearers. It was once the writer's privilege to hear this "distinguished alumnus of the University"—as a literary compatriot once termed Mr. Kelly—under somewhat unusual conditions.

Many of the assembled company, rarely, if ever, attended any so-called place of worship. The building, a disused Methodist Chapel, still retained the quaint old-fashioned box pulpit with a latched door—one of the sort designed apparently to prevent nervous preachers from hastily beating a retreat.

Here William Kelly delivered an interesting, instructive and very earnest discourse. His short, but very dignified figure, as he entered the tiny pulpit, and the assured manner in announcing the opening hymn, gave an impression of a master of assemblies. Two verses of the well-known hymn: "One there is above all others," followed by prayer offered with deep reverence and confidence in God, and a brief scripture reading from Luke xxiii., brought us to his address, based upon verse 33 of the chapter read. How would he, the cultured scholar, the man of books, impress this humble working-class audience, composed chiefly of tired women? They

had to be interested, held, impressed and converted to God if possible; and the preacher's manner clearly indicated his recognition of all this. With studied simplicity of language, in words at once simple and arresting, he told the old, old story of the love of God in CHRIST JESUS. Who the holy Sufferer at Calvary really was—why He so suffered—His ability and readiness to save any—the necessity of accepting so great a SAVIOUR—the peril of delay—the certain doom of the unbelieving despiser of God's mercy—all were dwelt upon and emphasised with a persuasiveness born of the constraining love of CHRIST. Then, in concluding his address, he earnestly besought his hearers to avail themselves of the present opportunity for deciding for CHRIST. A very impressive warning was given as closing the Bible he exclaimed, not loudly, but with great earnestness: "Remember, one robber was saved — so none need despair; but," after a pause, "only one, so none may presume."

His work as an evangelist has been belittled by some, mostly little men, but J. N. Darby had quite a high opinion of Mr. Kelly as a preacher. At the Portsmouth Conference of 1860, where he happened to preach, Mr. Darby remarked to several: "I wish I could appeal to people in the gospel as William Kelly does."

At a gathering of brethren, labouring in the LORD'S work, held in a London meeting-room, many elderly and leading brothers were present, and the question of gospel preaching was under discussion. After several including himself had spoken freely upon the subject, Mr. Kelly, looking across the room at a young brother who had been very useful and acceptable as a preacher, remarked, "Let us hear what our young brother opposite has to say on the matter." Immediately several brothers who happened to be on the other side of the room, none of whom could be styled young, save by courtesy, looked up; and upon one of those beginning to express his substantial agreement with what had been said, Mr. Kelly interrupted with, "Yes, yes, but it was our brother, the young evangelist behind you to

whom I referred." The opinion of the young fellow in question was probably of little value, but the memory of the kindly recognition by the great man of the gift of CHRIST in him will be ever prized by him. The Christian courtesy exhibited by Mr. Kelly may well serve as an object lesson to some, who, in their anxiety to curb the display of "flesh" in their meetings, forget that an inspired apostle could write to a young man, "Let no man despise thy youth," and to the gifted Corinthian assembly, "If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the LORD as I also do. Let no man therefore despise him; but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren."

The strenuous life was drawing to its close; the good fight had been fought; the faith had been kept; and now the course was rapidly finishing.

He who had hoped to live to welcome the returning LORD, was instead to be put to sleep by JESUS, to await with CHRIST that moment of rapture when "the dead in CHRIST shall rise first."

Several years before the home-call came to him, in reply to one who asked whether "he would desire to depart and to be with CHRIST," or be amongst those who are "alive and remain at the coming of the LORD," he said, "I have no choice, neither would I choose if I might."

"But, surely," persisted the interrogator, "you would like to be alive and meet the LORD on His return?" Turning to his questioner, who was also a dearly loved relative, he replied, affectionately, "I have no wish at all in the matter, my dear—, it will be as He wills, best either way."

After a year or two of gradually failing health (during which, however, he, although an octogenarian, steadily did the work of a man in the prime of life), he began to realise that his life-work was ending, and that shortly he must lay aside the sword and the trowel with which for sixty years he had respectively warred against evil,

and built up the saints of God. One premonition of his recognition of this fact was seen in the disposal of his valuable library of fifteen thousand volumes which at the suggestion of the then Archbishop of York he presented to the town of Middlesbrough, where a special wing for their accommodation had to be added to the public library building.

This magnificent gift was entirely unhampered by any conditions, one characteristic request only being made, namely the entire anonymity of the giver.

The great Codices (some in facsimile); all the great Polyglots; the works of the Fathers, and the great Schoolmen; were comprised in this gift; as well as many rare and valuable volumes in every department of Science, Philosophy and History; it was specially rich in Classics, Ecclesiastical History, and Theology.

His wish for anonymity was respected, but upon his decease the Middlesbrough library authorities were compelled to make a statement with reference to this, which they did in the following terms:—

“The Free Library,
April, 1906.

Anonymity no longer.

We have been repeatedly asked why we have avoided all notice in our pages of the recent death of our ‘anonymous benefactor.’ More particularly as the bond of silence laid upon us has been removed by the publication of his name: we, therefore, take this opportunity of assuring our readers that it was not because of forgetfulness, or the lack of a sense of duty, but of the express wish of his family. Mr. Kelly was a man who preferred to do good by stealth, or rather he held himself a steward only, of possessions either physical or mental, and only last summer (1905) he reiterated to us his hope that his name might not become public property as the donor of the valuable library which has come to us. We guarded the secret well, and it was with surprise and regret that whilst paying the last

tribute of respect and gratitude to one whom we owe so much, that we learned that *The Times*, in an obituary notice, had stated his connection with the donation to Middlesbrough. Then it was that his daughter signified her wish that we should remain silent, but the paragraph in *The Times* was copied and expanded, and, eventually, our local press published the information to our townsmen. It is greatly to be regretted that the donor's wish has been disregarded by others, for it was the only obligation he laid upon us. His donation was a free one, without any of the onerous conditions which so frequently accompany such gifts, and perhaps the spirit in which the presentation was made can be best appreciated by the following fragment of conversation:—

Standing in his Library where the books were being packed for their transit to Middlesbrough, we asked, 'It must be painful to you, Sir, to thus part with your old friends, is it not?' 'Well, no,' was the reply, 'I cannot hope to require them long, and I do wish to see them settled where they may be of service to others.'

It was not our good fortune to know Mr. Kelly intimately, but as we did know him he was ever the cultured gentleman, a profound scholar without a shade of pedantry, whose knowledge was freely bestowed when sought, and whose friendship must have been a privilege."

Resuming his weekly lectures at Bennett Park Hall, Blackheath, on Wednesday evenings, he now commenced his final course. This was on the Epistles of John; and at the conclusion of the first lecture, he said, "I trust, if the Lord will, to continue these lectures on St. John's Epistles without intermission," and this, happily, he was enabled to do.

These lectures (since published) were characterised by all his accustomed vigour of intellect, and incisive speech, but to these were added a sweet graciousness of spirit which made a great impression on his hearers at the time, and is still remembered as giving a singular

charm to these last discourses. The glory of the sunset was resting upon the last phase of that faithful ministry, and as the year 1905 ran out, it became very evident that the time of his departure was near.

Acting upon medical advice Mr. Kelly went to stay awhile at Exeter, where he was the guest of his friends, Dr. and Mrs. Wreford. The closing days of his life, told in sympathetic detail in a volume entitled "Memories of the last days of William Kelly," from Dr. Wreford's pen, is familiar to many.

A few short weeks he lay waiting the summons to "go hence," and on the evening of Tuesday, March 27th, 1906, the silver cord was loosed, and the watchers by the bedside realised that William Kelly "was not, for GOD took him." "With CHRIST; far better."

No need to pray for the repose of his soul, for long years it had rested in undisturbed repose upon the finished work and faithful word of his LORD and SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST.

"Weep not for him;
He has no need of tears."

His soul, unfettered, unencumbered by limitations of the body, as he himself had expressed it, "neither mortal nor to sleep" had gone to join the great host of those who having "crossed the flood," now wait in the immediate Presence of Him, Who is the "Prince of Life"; Whose are the keys of death and of hades; and Who will ere long claim again the precious dust of all whom He has put to sleep; refashioning them like unto His own glorious Body, when "the dead in CHRIST shall rise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the LORD in the air." Amen—even so, come, LORD JESUS.

His body was brought back to Blackheath and on Saturday, March 31st, 1906, was laid to rest in the Cemetery at Charlton.

Few who were present on that bright spring afternoon will forget the impressive scene when devout men

carried William Kelly to his burial. The hundreds of mourners; the solemn strains of the hymn, "For ever with the LORD"; the hush as the plain casket was lowered into the earth, broken by the voice of Dr. Wreford reading two portions of Scripture in tones charged with deep emotion (Acts xx. 25-38; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18); the sterling tribute to the departed brother, friend and leader, whose face here we should see no more; the emphasis placed on the two thoughts suggested by the Scriptures read, namely, "Sorrowing because they should see his face no more," and the hope of the LORD's coming which prevents our sorrowing as those that have no hope; all this combined to deepen the impression upon the assembled company. Dr. Wreford then expressed the gratitude of all to God for the life and ministry of William Kelly, and after a short pause, a hymn, frequently used by the departed brother and expressive of the felt common sense of dependence upon the LORD followed.

"SAVIOUR before Thy face we fall,
Our LORD, our life, our hope, our all."

In the quiet of that solemn hour by the open grave, some deeper sense of the absolute indispensability of the LORD JESUS, the SAVIOUR of the soul, and of the body, Himself the Resurrection and the Life, came upon the heart; and as the subdued strain of the hymn died away, Mr. Moore, of Bournemouth, read from Psalm xci., and making reference also to Psalm xc., 16, 17, exhorted all to remember the words so often heard from William Kelly and epitomised in his latest utterances, namely, "*the hatred of the world is a real thing; the Cross is a real thing; and the love of God is a real thing.*"

Colonel Binney then led in commendatory prayer, commending the precious dust to the keeping of the LORD until the trumpet shall sound, and the dead be raised incorruptible, and death itself be swallowed up in victory.

So we left him on that bright, clear, spring afternoon and turned our faces toward the morning when:—

“Soul and body re-united,
Thenceforth nothing shall divide;
Wakened up in CHRIST’S own likeness,
Satisfied.”

Some more general matters may interest the reader in connection with William Kelly and those who knew him. Of these the following letter from an old Christian man will speak for itself.

“I read in ‘Words of Help’ your writings on W. Kelly with much joy, calling back to me my first meeting with that loved and departed brother, whose writings to me brought such joy and do now.

I had not been many years a child of God, born again, and redeemed by the precious Blood of CHRIST, when I met him. I had been a poor gipsy, and not many of the tribe I belonged to could read or write; and his treatment of me was love; he met me as though I was one like himself, in such a humble, loving way.

I had asked who he was at a meeting, and when told it was W. Kelly wondered why he had not even opened his mouth, for I loved his writings that I had read.”

The above from a one-time gipsy may be supplemented by one from an Anglican dignitary sent me soon after Mr. Kelly’s death. It will add to the interest for such as knew Mr. Kelly to also include the two post-cards from himself which explain it.

(From the Rev. F. W. Foster, M.A., to W.G.T.)

“Sheffield.

St. Gregory’s Day, ’07.

“Dear Mr. Turner,

Will you care to look at the accompanying brief (i.e., brief for that learned writer) postcard of the late Mr. W. Kelly.

You see, I had been urging Mr. Kelly as ‘editor’ of the *Bible Treasury* (monthly) to aim at all possible

lucidity of exposition and beauty of style in his very able articles in that excellent periodical so far as his time allowed him to do so; what he says in this postcard is in substance a reply to my bold entreaty.

Nothing is ever written well in a hurry; no, not even if written by a pen like the late learned, earnest and eloquent Wm. Kelly's.

I told him all I could remember, find out, or imagine about *πιστεύωμεν* with (1) accusative, of things, and with (2) dative, of persons . . .

You cannot lay too great stress on one striking characteristic trait of our lamented friend, viz., his marked humility, conspicuous even in his smartest arguments and controversial writings . . .

The enclosed postcard is by no means a choice exemplar or very favourable specimen of Mr. W.K.'s skill as a letter-card artist.

Yours sincerely and faithfully,
F. W. Foster.

P.S.—W.K. very rarely (I dare say) diverged into politics, or contemporary topics, as he does at the beginning of this feuilleton.—F.W.F."

The postcards to which reference is made are the following:—

"Belmont Pk., Lee, S.E.
3 Jan., '05.

(To Rev. F.W.F.)

My Dear Mr. Foster,

Though I fancy I wrote last, I do not scruple to write again, trusting that the New Year finds you fairly well, and awaiting the blessed hope.

Port Arthur is fallen, and the Baltic fleet delays, the third is clamoured for by the young bloods of Russia; but we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, need grace to serve acceptably. I think, as you rather complained of apostolic rudeness of speech and, if I mistake not, in the Exposition of 2 Peter though finding

substance in it, that I asked your kind help in pointing out such defects.

For though I rather despise rhetoric in divine things, and have not time even to cultivate it, I am happy to profit by a friend whose metier it is more than mine.

The addresses on the Epistles (half) are in the printer's hands; and I may have a fourth more by the time he has done that half, and the remaining fourth as soon as he can set it up and get it through the press.

There is a mistranslation in 1 John iii. 23, where "on" is contrary to the usage of " π " with the dative. Yet to say "believe the name" seems strange, as if it were a person. What say you?

Believe me with best wishes,
Ever faithfully yours,
W.K."

"V.L. Bt. Pk. Lee, S.E.
1 Sept., 1905.

(To the same)
My dear Foster,

Though I cannot deny plenty to do, I must write a few words to explain that the new Serial in which Dr. Driver take a leading part is 'The Interpreter,' of which I have seen but No. 1.

It was enough for me.

Not that he does not exercise great restraint, and steers clear of German scoffing and irreverence; but he seems to me only occupied with the husk and knows nothing really of the inner fruit.

The external caution makes him, with his Hebrew learning in the letter, the more dangerous in my eyes. Yet I mean to get and weigh his recent book on Genesis, puffed by the 'Times' which endorses that sceptical school.

Only I want to bring out Leviticus as a whole; which as it will make some 700 pages, raises the question of two moderate volumes.

If allowed, I hope to bring out Genesis in three fair-

sized volumes, D.V., so I fear my sword must wear out the old scabbard.

Did I tell you that Col. (or rather Mr.) S., as he prefers to be styled, having abjured the army, is the literary executor of the late Mr. G., and asked me to review his own defence of the strange doctrines candidly. This, as you know, is my wont; and I only pray that it may blow up what hardly deserves the powder and shot.

It is a scheme worthy of a maniac at issue with Scripture on every side. I have striven to speak kindly and repress indignation, and hope eyes may be opened. You may not know that an early volume of mine (on the Ephesians) caught the eye of Father Thomas (an Oxford early Tractarian) who went over long before J. H. Newman, and (later) joined the Brompton Oratory. Astonished to find the "Church" there, as far from Rome as from Canterbury, he was given the volume which made the round of the cells.

But I told the donor that these gentry needed "Romans" rather, and sent him one by post. I know no more, but do not forget that Roman Catholics have consciences to feel and souls to be saved.

With Dr. Wace I have never corresponded, but sent him occasionally a brochure.

You asked me (not in your last, I think, as to Councils of Orange). There were two as far as record goes; one presided by Hilary of Arles in A.D. 441, with thirty decrees on discipline; the other in A.D. 539 under Cassarius of Arles with twenty-five decrees on dogma, chiefly extracts from Aug: and Gen: and against Pelagianism.

There was nothing of moment in either.

We had an excellent season at Southampton from Great Britain and Channel Islands from Saturday evening, 5th August, till Tuesday night; early prayer, forenoon, afternoon and evening.

As I took a large part (save in the early morning being miles away) you may judge I am able to play the working man still.

I am sure that they would have furnished you with much thought and lasting enjoyment.

Believe me ever yours in the faith and hope,

W.K.

P.S.—You may like my notice of Whitefield in Sept. B.T.

W.K."

The reference to the Conference at Southampton is the more touching as it was the last he ever attended, and only six months before his homegoing.

* * *

The following from a long-since defunct journal may not only interest the reader, but also stir very mixed feelings in the minds of those who knew the subject of this sketch.

If anyone wished to study at first-hand either church truth, or prophecy from what is termed the "Futurist" standpoint, he commonly went to Blackheath in search of information, Mr. Kelly being usually considered one of the ablest exponents of these things. Such an one who veiled his identity beneath the nom-de-plume of "Spectator" contributed his impressions of the Blackheath meeting to a weekly religious journal; and as his article contains a pen-portrait of Mr. Kelly, it is of more than passing interest. The writer says, "The Brethren" are like Zoophytes who at certain times cut themselves off from the parent, and start life on their own account. The "Brethren" do this with themselves, only they never own their relatives after.

This process of development has been again recently gone through, I am not sure whether "the meeting" I attended at Blackheath is or is not part of the original parent stem.

Mr. Kelly is the "leading brother" as the chief minister or ministering brother at a gathering (that is meeting) is called.

The room is lofty and very comfortable; the table covered with the usual white cloth; a large decanter of wine, and some four or six large tumblers for the distribution of it; this gives the table a singular appearance: (I slip in); before me a board with a polite request

written on it, not to trespass into the sacred enclosure of those "breaking bread," I wait; more arrivals until about 150 people of the well-to-do class are present.

Hymn books are provided for visitors. They are entitled spiritual songs for the "little flock."

Does the "little flock" mean the Brethren? Mr. Kelly now arises and states our brother so-and-so, from such a place, is breaking bread with us. This is, I judge, a signal that the meeting has commenced, for immediately after, a hymn is given out, and is sung standing. I notice there appears an unwritten rule that when hymns are addressed to the Divine Being they stand. If only truth *about* GOD or CHRIST they *sit*. The singing, though not unmusical, was of the slowest description until it became positively painful. Do they wish outsiders to consider they are going through a painful process? Mr. Kelly prayed. It was on the whole a very remarkable prayer and had some notable striking sentences.

He said, "O GOD, we thank Thee it is Thy will to bring us together. We should never have thought of it—should never have known the joy of communion, and the deeper joy of CHRIST in the midst; separate us from the evil, from the evil which looks fair. O GOD, may our hearts be led by the HOLY GHOST. Heaven is occupied in praising. Thou hast called us now to praise Him. He became a Man, to take up that great question, entirely insolvable to any but Himself—the question of our sins. O GOD, never didst Thou have an object which entirely filled Thy heart but CHRIST. We thank Thee for that One Who drew out Thine affections, Who wrought out Thy counsels of glory. May there be holy liberty for Thy SPIRIT to exalt the Head, CHRIST JESUS."

Hymn again, followed by some gentleman praying. He used very much the same style of language as Mr. Kelly. Hymn again, sung standing. Mr. Kelly then broke the bread, and prayed again. Addressing himself to the SAVIOUR, he said, "O blessed SAVIOUR, this is

Thy particular command that we should break bread in remembrance of Thee. Lay it on our hearts, that we may as a continual offering give Thee the fruit of our lips. No tongue of men or angels could adequately set forth what Thy death means. What a sweet savour to God, what glory everlasting that death shall bring. Every other death is the wages of sin. Thou art the life everlasting, yet didst Thou die, Thou Who art the resurrection and the life."

The bread and wine having passed round, a hymn was given out by one whose appearance and manner indicated that he was of the lower class. The good brother pitched it to the tune of "Hold the Fort." It did not fit, so he had to pull it out to the right size. This the brother did, singing a solo at the same time. It is peculiar to hear this tune sung at the rate of a mile an hour.

At last it was finished and Mr. Kelly got on his feet, a rustle of expectation going through the room. The brief address being over, the box went round for the collection. Another hymn and short prayer and the meeting broke up *without* the benediction. Mr. Kelly is an able man as a teacher and theologian; moreover, he is a scholar and evidently a thinker. He was formerly a clergyman.* His manner is not pleasant as a speaker, and he has a weak voice, dropping it at the end of every sentence. How is it all the Brethren who minister at the meetings in Blackheath have weak voices, and drop their sentences?

Objectionable as the practice is, in a general way, of reporting prayers, since they are presumably intended for the Divine ear, and not as the American press once flatteringly remarked of a preacher, that "his prayer was the most eloquent ever offered to a Boston congregation"; yet, now that Mr. Kelly's voice is silent, few will regret that the reporter at the Blackheath meeting included the above two devotional utterances, and on reading them many who loved him will instinctively

* The reporter is slightly astray here.

recall the well-remembered tones in which they would be uttered.

A young Government official once remarked to the writer, that often when standing alone under the starlit sky in the lonely Soudan he had meditated upon a sermon of Mr. Kelly's at Blackheath, heard by him on the Sunday evening previous to going out to his appointment. Though not living at Blackheath, he had on the Sunday previous to his departure for Egypt gone over "to hear the old gentleman once more, perhaps for the last time," and, singularly enough, in his address, Mr. Kelly, quite unaware of the visitor's presence, dwelt very much upon the restless ambition of men for wealth or fame driving men to the ends of the earth, in seeking their own advancement in this world, while often neglectful of the all-important concerns of the soul.

This made so profound an impression on this hearer, that on the first Sunday after landing in England some three years later, he repaired to Blackheath to hear again the one whose words had so deeply impressed him on the former occasion, and narrated the incident.

One other incident of the Sunday evenings at the Blackheath room will be of interest to many, and of encouragement to others.

A young man who although brought up in the strictest manner, had never been able, as he termed it, "to see the light," and getting tired of the preaching in his own place thought he would like to hear Mr. Kelly. He went, and, as he later remarked to the writer, he could not describe how it happened, but while Mr. Kelly was preaching he saw his need, God's remedy, and accepted the SAVIOUR straight away. Saying nothing to any at the meeting he on reaching home clearly and plainly confessed CHRIST.

If the Blackheath days yielded nothing but the two incidents related above (neither of which Mr. Kelly ever knew down here), who shall say that they were not days of blessing to souls and of glory to the Master? Mr. Kelly only discontinued his Blackheath lectures about

two months before being called home, so he may be said to have literally died in harness.

To these Wednesday evening discourses came a very catholic auditory; people of almost all shades of ecclesiastical opinion being frequently found in the congregation. Visitors from the Colonies and from America were also often to be seen in the Bennett Park Hall, where these addresses were given.

Those who attended the last course of these lectures remarked the graciousness which pervaded them; it seemed as though a touch of completeness was being given to the long ministry of one who had figured prominently in the conflicts and controversies of the ecclesiastical arena. They breathed a spirit of quietness and peace, contrasting somewhat with the polemical style of much of his previous work. The light of evening time was upon him, and many of his hearers were convinced that the end of that faithful ministry was near. His own words, which indicated his thought on this holy employment and were illustrated by his practice, were:—"O my brother, be it ours to fill 'the little while' separate from the world, and above fleshly ease in the devoted service of CHRIST. Nothing so good and happy now, and nothing so appreciated on high and through all eternity; unless it be the communion with Himself and the worship which accompanies it."