

“THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS”

**MEMORIALS
OF
JAMES HORNE**

**FOR FIFTY YEARS A WESLEYAN LOCAL PREACHER
IN SURREY ;**

**WITH SOME PARTICULARS OF
THE RISE OF METHODISM IN AND
AROUND GUILDFORD**

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AND

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—
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Preface

This book was written in 1871 about my Great Great Great grandfather James HORNE. The text in this version has been partly (OCR) scanned, and partly “copy typed” from a photocopy of an original copy of the book.

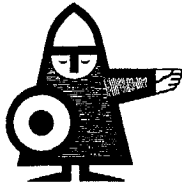
Originally it was difficult or impossible to retrieve some of the original text, however I am indebted to the “Normandy Historians”, who provided a second photocopy of the original book, from which it was possible to retrieve the remainder of the original text.

As far as possible I have tried to keep to the original format of the book, but in a few places this was not possible, and the pagination is not 100% similar to the original (mostly due to differences between Victorian and PC type fonts!).

I have tried to be as careful as possible to keep to the original text, but inevitably there may be some “typo’s” in this version, again I would be grateful if anyone sees or suspects any discrepancies, if they could let me know. My thanks go to Peter Blakiston of “Normandy Historians”, who kindly read and corrected my first attempt.

I would presume that the original book had a fairly limited print run, and so far I have been unable to locate an “original”, which I would dearly love to do, any assistance with this would be appreciated.

Trevor Neil Stanton 3/2002



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MEMORIALS, &c.

JAMES HORNE was born in the city of Salisbury, Oct. 9th, 1798. Beyond this fact and the vastly more important one, that his parents loved as well as feared God, but little is known of his earliest years. He lost his father when quite young, but cherished a lively recollection of his widowed mother as a *good Methodist*, who often led him by the hand to the six o'clock morning prayer meeting. For a short time he was indebted to the assistance of friends, but was early thrown upon his own resources, to which may be traced the character of self-reliance and well-regulated independence of mind that throughout life characterized his conduct. Before he was seventeen years of age he went to sea, a calling that he followed for four years ; during which, amidst all the dangers, moral and spiritual, to which it exposed him, he was graciously watched over and preserved by a loving god, -- a result that he in after life attributed to the early training and faithful prayers of a pious mother. upon relinquishing the sea he settled near Buckingham, and soon after -- on Sept. 21st, 1819 -- was united in matrimony to Mary Chitty, of Poyle, Surrey, who now mourns his removal.

At this time, though having the fear of God before their eyes, they had neither of them realized an interest in His love ; but it was not long before they were made partakers of this blessing that gave a new character to their existence, and was the fountain of all their joys throughout a long and wellspent life. It was in the year 1819, whilst listening to a sermon by the Rev. W. Breedon, in the Wesleyan Chapel at Padbury, near Buckingham, then in the Brackley Circuit, from the text "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another" (Mal. iii. 16), that James yielded to the strivings of the Spirit, and determined to cast in his lot with the people of God . He at once sought and obtained admission to the Methodist Society, an example that was followed by his happy partner the following quarter. A sermon by the same minister from the text,

“Break up your fallow ground ” (Jer. iv. 3), preached in the Buckingham Chapel, was the immediate cause of this decision on her part. They proved the blessedness of Christian communion not only between themselves, but also with the people of God, and for a short time they were supremely happy in their newly-formed connexions, when the failing health of Mrs. Horne reminded them that they still were denizens of the vale of tears. Other remedial measures failing, James was advised to take his wife to her native air in Surrey. She had been born at Poyle, in the parish of Seale, not far from Aldershot. Her parents were at that time living in the same vicinity, her mother being attached to the Independents, but her father to the Wesleyans, whom he had joined some twenty years before as one of the fruits of the Farnham Mission. The good old man and his wife died at the advanced ages of eighty and eighty-seven in perfect peace. The recently-married couple accordingly left Buckinghamshire and came to Flexford, a hamlet near Poyle, lying a little off the road from Guildford to Farnham, but otherwise about midway between those places.

“No one,” he writes, “can tell the loss of Christian society but those who have felt it. I had been in the habit of conducting the services before I left Buckinghamshire, and therefore I began to think what I should do. Two or three of used to meet together to read and to pray, and I used to give an exhortation. A friend opened his house at Flexford, and we held service there for some time, and the congregation increased ; but being a timid man, he feared his landlord would turn him out of his house,” and the services had to be relinquished. At this time Mr. Horne was keeping a school, but though good numbers encouraged his labours, the occupation was not favourable to his health, and he sought for other employment. In the year 1822 a small farm at Normandy* was to let, and obtaining a promise of a lease of it, he took possession and felt himself settled in the neighbourhood. “Then,” he continues, we began seriously to think how we could get Methodist preaching. I asked a few friends to meet at my house, and after consultation I wrote to Mr. Gaulter, then the President of the Conference,” or more probably as Chairman, as he then was, of the 2nd London District. The letter, it seems, miscarried, and as a result of a second meeting, Mr Horne undertook a pilgrimage to Chertsey in search of a Methodist preacher; and thus he describes his

***It was in this village that William Cobbett for many years lived, and plied his trenchant pen. He is described as a good neighbour, on very friendly terms with Mr. Horne. His farm is now the property of Wesleyans, and his house the home of the Methodist preachers**

journey :- "I accordingly went one Sabbath morning, distance thirteen miles to walk ; was very much pained as I walked along to see the desecration of the Sabbath. Men were everywhere at work in their gardens, some at harrow, others digging and planting. Such was the state of Surrey fifty years ago."

Arrived at Chertsey he finds the preaching place closed and The services abandoned; and enquiring of the only person who, he was told, could give him information about the Methodists, he had no sooner "mentioned the name of Wesleyan Methodists than it was like putting a match to gunpowder, and he closed the door in my face. . . . Thoroughly disgusted and disheartened I began my homeward journey, and as I sat by the wayside to eat some refreshments I had taken with me, I felt like Jonah, cast down and deserted."

But it must not be supposed that whilst he was thus longing, though in vain, for the refreshing ordinances of Methodism, he refused or neglected to drink of such streams as were ready at hand. The waste lands and barren heaths of Surrey were but too true a type of the moral and spiritual wilderness around; but amidst the almost complete neglect of religion that afflicted his soul, there were some spots cultivated. There was an Independent chapel at Perry Hill, some three miles from his residence, with whose minister, Mr. Haymes, Mr. Horne formed a close and lasting friendship. These two became hearty co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord, Horne's house being the home of the minister when he came to prosecute his labours at Normandy or Flexford, and himself foremost in securing the erection of a chapel at Normandy in connection with the Congregational Surrey Mission (three of his pupils being the first to subscribe half-a-crown each), and the instrument of raising an efficient and flourishing Sunday School on the same premises, and to this day there are those who remember him as the best conductor the school ever possessed.

About this time the hearts of Mr. Horne and his friends were cheered by an unexpected visit from the Rev. R. Haddy, whose name first appears on the Minutes as a missionary to S. Africa in 1825. He and his wife had come to Guildford to see her father before they sailed, and enquiring for any Methodists in the neighbourhood, he had been directed to Mr. Miller (still

living, 1871), and by him to Mr. Horne. "We gave him a cordial welcome, spent the afternoon conversing about the place and what could be done," and he promised on his return to London to use his influence with the President on their behalf.

Hope now ran high, but was destined to be again frustrated. Upon Mr. Haddy's return to Guildford he found Mr. Vidler, from the Mission House, urging his return to London, As the ship, instead of sailing in three or four days, was to leave the next morning, so that no opportunity offered for the exercise of his kind intentions. They were the more glad that they had "not let him go without a sermon, and he preached in the evening to about seventy persons. And gave great satisfaction," the remembrance of which has lasted for well nigh half a century.

Amidst hopes and disappointments James Horne continued to worship at Perry Hill, carefully giving the friends there to understand that he was a Wesleyan in heart, and would take himself off as soon as his efforts or the providence of God should bring the Wesleyans to his neighbourhood. One Sabbath morning he was not a little surprised to be informed that two gentlemen from Godalming awaited him outside the chapel. These were Mr. Isaac Austen, from the Sevenoaks Circuit, who had lately established a business at the former town, and Mr. Golding, a young man whom he had found in a draper's establishment there. They had some time yearned for Wesleyan associates, and learning there was a Wesleyan chapel in that direction, at a distance of nine or ten miles, they had started with a determination of finding it, for in no other direction could any-thing of the kind have been discovered within twenty or thirty miles. They had walked sharply for two or three hours when they fell in with a man of whom they enquired whether there was any Methodist chapel or any Methodists in the neighbourhood. Their respondent treated them to a rich dish of Antinomianism, liberally spiced with abuse of all Methodists and Methodism generally, but wound up by directing them to Perry Hill Chapel, at a distance of two or three miles, where just then they would probably find James Horne, who could no doubt tell them all about the Methodists if the neighbourhood were unfortunately cursed with any.

The production of their hymn books and exhibition of their society Tickets, obtained by post from Sevenoaks, *only* about forty miles off, soon explained their object and made James

Horne's heart jump for joy. His hopes seemed at last about to be realized. They spent that day in reading, prayer, and praise, mixed with Christian conversation at Mr. Horne's, who shortly returned the visit at Godalming. It was then some months before the intercourse was resumed, till upon the occasion of the Rev. Hugh M'Neil, then of Albury, preaching at Stoke Church, near Guildford, they by mutual consent made that a half-way house of meeting, and continued their intercourse and explanations of apparent coolness till near midnight, pacing up and down the Woodbridge Road, little dreaming they should ever there see the commodious Guildford Chapel that now adorns the spot. From that hour "our friendship," writes James, "continued until death," and the affectionate manner in which Mr. Horne always spoke of Mr. Austen was sufficient to satisfy any one that they had been friends united by the closest, dearest, and most enduring ties.

The operations of nature and of Providence are carried on more by the concurrence of several cooperating causes or events than by any single and remarkable exhibition of power. In like manner several trains of events were now working together to produce the result for which James Horne had for years prayed. A gentleman of the name of Thomas Keeling, of Runcorn, in Cheshire, and whose mother had lived and died a member of the Wesleyan Society, had some years before this come to Puttenham, a village midway between Normandy and Godalming, to study Hebrew and Greek, under the clergyman of that parish, with the view of entering the ministry of the Established Church, the living of St. James's, Manchester, being at his command. The tutor was an eccentric character, and probably more fond of the field than the study; at all events the pupil oft times found that, when ready with his lesson, his preceptor was wanting. Upon one occasion, however, he abruptly sent young Keeling to a certain village to read a sermon to the people in lieu of the service they were expecting from himself. This first effort was so far successful that it was repeated, and before long the sermon read gave place to a chapter in the Bible, accompanied by an exhortation and prayer, and in the end the pupil became quite popular. In the meanwhile he begun first to question, and then to decide, that he had no call to the ministry; but having become fully alive to the spiritual destitution of the locality, he regularly

visited the sick, distributed tracts, Bibles, and other religious books, and conducted regular service first at a house in Flexford, and then at a small chapel at Pink's Hill. These he maintained at intervals for several years : for, being of a delicate constitution, he passed his winters in the south of France, and took the opportunity to visit Flexford on each of his journeys going and returning.

With this gentleman Mr. Horne had early become acquainted, and indeed he had acted as his agent in supplying the people during his absence with tracts and books. On the occasion of his visit about Easter, 1825, Mr. Horne wrote to invite, Mr. Austen and Mr. Golding over to hear him. Some of the people, unknown to Mr. Horne, had urged Mr. Keeling to get him to preach, so that, the services might be continued during his absence, and before leaving the pulpit in the evening he announced that preaching would be continued on the following Sabbath, Many supposed he was about to prolong his visit, but upon descending he informed Mr. Horne that he must conduct the services in future. Mr. Horne hesitated to comply, but taking Mr. Austen and Mr. Golding with him to his father-in-law's, he at length consented to make an attempt on the next Sabbath, on condition that Mr. Austen would supply for the following one, and be ready in case of a break down. A large congregation greeted his first attempt, when he selected as his text, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," &c., and like many another young evangelist, when he had done he thought the Bible could not furnish him with another text ; though subsequent experience also taught him that appropriate texts are easier to find than suitable sermons.

Such was the simplicity of his *call to preach*, He felt anxious to attempt something for the good of his neighbours, but did not press himself into the work. No bishop's hands laid upon his head separated him to the work of an evangelist. He passed no examination at a local preachers' meeting. He conformed to the conventional rules of no church. The matter was discussed by a few of his neighbours, devoid of all ecclesiastical authority, and settled between his own conscience and the Master. "I used," he writes, "to have my hymn book in my pocket, and opening it upon this occasion my eye lighted upon this verse,-

"My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord,
Into Thy blessed hands receive,

And let me live to preach Thy word,
 And let me to Thy glory live ;
 My every sacred moment spend
 In publishing the sinners' Friend."

Thus commenced a laborious life in the service of God and in connection with Methodist ordinances : for no superintendent at this time directed or controlled their proceedings, nor indeed any recognised agent of the Conference had any cognisance of them, further than the preacher at Sevenoaks, who quarter by quarter remitted their tickets by post to Mr. Austen and Mr. Golding. These two self constituted local preachers in turns furnished essentially Wesleyan services to those poor people for a whole year or longer, without remuneration of any sort or any wish for any, but free of all cost to those who heard; having freely received they freely gave.

About this time a supervisor of Excise of the name of Hall had been sent to Guildford. Finding that there was no Methodist preaching at Guildford, but that there was such at Pink's Hill, he speedily went over and formed the acquaintance with, and strengthened the hands of, our two zealous friends. His professional duties taking him to the Paper Mills at Chilworth, some three miles on the opposite side of Guildford, he there obtained from Mr. Rowland, the proprietor, permission to have preaching in one of the large mill rooms, in which one of their friends had a Sunday School of one hundred children. Mr. Austen was the first to open the commission at this place, which he did in May or June, 1825, to what they considered a large congregation. In this way their labours were increased without any increase of labourers, for Mr. Hall soon procured a removal to a place where he could enjoy intercourse with a Wesleyan Society. Still Horne and Austen laboured on, and God blessed their labours. The foreman of the paper mills, a backslider, was restored, the piety of his wife quickened, three, and ultimately the whole of their children brought into the right way.

But it was not long before opposition met them. The services at Pink's Hill were conducted in a chapel belonging to the Unitarians, who occupied it only once in a fortnight, and through Mr. Keeling's influence lent it when not required for their own services. The regular minister from Mead Row, Godalming, obtained but a small congregation when he visited the place,

sometimes not more than could be counted on the fingers of one hand; but when Horne or Austen preached the place was crowded with two hundred hearers. This then, was a manifest misappropriation of the edifice, and at the end of twelve months our friends were requested to discontinue their occupation! What was to be done ? A worshipping people had been gathered, consciences awakened, souls converted, a Class of eight or ten members constituted, if with some irregularity. Must the field whitening to the harvest be abandoned to the wild beasts of the forest ? No such thought could be entertained for a moment ; and Mr. Horne opened his own house for the services, the Class, the Sunday school, and prayer meetings ; and for thirty-six years was this the preacher's home, and for a large portion of that period the preaching place too, until the little chapel was built upon a piece of freehold land given for the purpose by Mr. Horne, who had then become the owner of a small farm.

This miniature Circuit, embracing two preaching places and two local preachers, without either travelling preacher or steward, had been in operation about a year, when one Monday morning, upon mounting the coach for London, Mr Austin recognized the Rev. W. Toase, then Chairman of the Portsmouth District, journeying from his circuit town of Portsmouth to the great metropolis. Mr. Austen soon laid the case of Godalming and Normandy before the zealous chairman, who at once informed him of his own efforts to introduce Methodism to Petersfield, a market town about midway between Portsmouth and Godalming, and where he had hired a barn or shed, and was fitting it up at an outlay of £70 or £80, which, he said, he was determined to pay out of his own pocket, if no one would help him. At his invitation Mr. Austen was present at the opening of this chapel, on May 15th, 1826, and by his permission, and relying upon his promise of assistance in every form practicable, Mr. Austen and Mr. Golding, after hunting all over the town, secured a room near the market house at Godalming, and fitted it up for preaching at an outlay of £70. This was opened on Good Friday, the Revs. W. Toase preaching in the morning, G. B. Macdonald in the afternoon, and F. B. Potts, all from Portsmouth, in the evening. In the Minutes of 1826 Petersfield first appears alone under Portsmouth without the dignity of a number, the Rev. R. Goyer being the preacher, and reporting forty-seven members in 1827. This minister

visited and preached at Godalming one Sabbath, shortly after the opening, and at once set to work to organize a Society. He found eight or ten at Chilworth ready to his hand, thence eight miles to Pink's hill and found a similar class, returning five miles to Godalming, where a good congregation awaited him, and where he formed a third class of ten members: so that in 1827 Godalming is associated with Petersfield, under the pastoral charge of Mr. Wilson (better known as Captain Wilson, from having been the Captain as well as owner of a trading vessel), who reported one hundred and eight members to Congress in 1828.

Not a little excitement and opposition were created in the town of Godalming by the intrusive audacity of these Methodists, who could not help remarking that many of their persecutors were ere long silenced by remarkable means. One a member of another church, openly reviled the preachers, calling them play-actors, and ridiculing them in every way ; but he was soon glad to decamp in the night, to avoid being provided for at his country's expense. Another, who was working close by the preaching-room, scoffed at the people as they went in, saying they were going to hear a "cast-iron preacher," and that the whole thing was "going by steam." But shortly afterwards as, he was going to London with his waggon, he slipped off the shaft and was killed on the spot. He was a well-known character in the town, and Mr. Austin did not fail to draw the attention of the congregation to the awful suddenness of his end.

The financial arrangements of the Circuit during these first years were on a very limited scale, the preacher's expenses for the year, exclusive of travelling, varying from under £50 to about £65; but even these could not have been met, but for the liberality of such men as Mr. Irving, of Bristol, Mr. Crop, of London, and especially Mr. Butterworth, who more than once contributed as much as £20 at a time.

In going Sabbath after Sabbath from Normandy to his labours at Chilworth, Mr. Horne had to pass through Guildford, and it was, to his mind, a source of deep regret that there was no Methodist preaching in that town, numbering its inhabitants as it did by thousands. There was then residing there, engaged in tuition, a pious lady by name Miss Jostling. On her one Saturday, James Horne called, and unfolded to her his anxieties ; and after an earnest conversation, during which her mind was

deeply impressed with the persuasion that she ought to make some effort for the introduction of Wesleyan teaching, they united in prayer that God would open their way. There was also another pious lady residing there at this time, whose predilections for Methodism were of old standing. She was a native of Guildford, and more than twenty years before had been awaked to a sense of her danger as a sinner by a sermon in the Independent Chapel of that town, in which she had sought shelter from a storm that overtook her whilst listening to the military band on the castle green. She had subsequently accepted a situation in the family of the Rev. Peard Dickenson, one of the "Methodist clergymen," and well approved of by Mr. Wesley, doing as she had previously, to the knowledge of the writer, done - and in which she might with advantage be imitated by others, - choosing a family in which she might have religious advantages in preference to those in which greater worldly ones were offered. Here she attended the little Wesleyan Chapel at Lambeth, and in 1807 received her first Society Ticket from Dr. Adam Clarke as a member of Mrs. Corderoy's class. She had now returned to her native town and become the wife of Mr. Attfield, one of the deacons of the chapel in which she received her first light. - (*Meth. Mag.*, 1864, p. 1062).

On Good Friday, 1829, and probably shortly after Mr. Horne's interview with the former, these two ladies went to hear Rev. W. Wilson preach the anniversary sermons of Godalming Chapel, if such it could be called, and in so doing got not a little wet. Miss Jostling's muslin dress especially elicited Mr. Wilson's sympathy, whose gallantry, as noted as his abounding cheerfulness, invited the retort that it was all his fault, for not coming to Guildford to preach, instead of making them come to Godalming to hear. Thus appealed to he promised to come if a suitable place were found. Thus encouraged, Miss Jostling applied to her friend Mr. Whitburn, the auctioneer and cabinet maker, to let them have his auction room for preaching on the Sabbath, and one week night, which he finally agreed to do, at a rental of £10 10s per annum. This room, capable of accommodating two hundred persons, was accordingly fitted up, and the Revs. W. Wilson and Timothy Ingle opened it; and here the Wesleyans worshipped till, in 1843, under the auspices of the Rev. Isaac Harding, the present handsome chapel was created, due in great part to the munificence of the late William Haydon,

Esq., of the Guildford Bank, who for many years regularly attended the Wesleyan ministry, and helped materially towards building chapels at Farncombe, Normandy, and Shalford, as well as maintaining the various funds of the Circuit.

Mr. Horne had now been in the neighbourhood about seven or eight years ; he was as yet hardly thirty years of age, was possessed of no wealth, and but a limited education ; nor did he lay claim to any great natural talents, either of eloquence or of any other kind. He had a young family rising around him, and had to earn daily bread for them as well as himself by the manual labours of a farm of a few acres, conjoined to the equally arduous duties of a village schoolmaster; and yet, by persevering and faithful prayer, and by sedulously following up the openings of Providence, he was the pioneer as well as one of the main instruments of establishing five or six preaching places, with all their beneficent influences, and thus contributing to the establishment of a Wesleyan Circuit which, with its offsets, forms the centre of the otherwise unbroken "Methodist Wilderness," embracing the whole of West Surrey, West Sussex, nearly the whole of Hampshire, and large parts of Wiltshire and Berks. This had not been done without much opposition and much self-sacrifice. The labours of the farm so fully occupied the time not devoted to teaching, that he had few hours for study and even less for reading. His favourite time for preparing for the pulpit appears to have been whilst thrashing in the barn. With the heads of his discourse chalked up on the door, he developed and rehearsed his discourses as he plied the flail. Twice and more frequently three times a day he preached, say at home in the morning; at Chilworth, eight miles, in the afternoon; Godalming, five miles, in the evening, with seven miles to reach home, weary and perhaps wet, and half knee deep in the heavy clays and muddy lanes of the Hog's back range of hills. Blackwater and Frimley on the one side, Bramley and Hambledon on the other, were still more distant stations, and yet he seldom even in his later days would go otherwise than on foot, not caring to give trouble to others, nor counting his own strength dear; always after the morning and afternoon service hurried home if not otherwise engaged lest the preacher should have disappointed the Normandy congregation, and every now and then finding his solicitude not in vain - without rest or preparation occupying the pulpit himself;

and after all was done he would not hesitate to go two or three miles out to visit the sick or dying. Five, six, seven miles around would he at any time go to pray with such as needed mercy, and many and many a time has he seen them rise from their knees rejoicing in God their Saviour. Many such still survive, but more have gone before. A few days before his death he stated there was scarcely a house in the neighbourhood from the squire's mansion to the labourer's cottage, in which he had not offered up prayer with the inmates. For he made it a rule whatever house he entered, not to leave it without speaking about Jesus and praying with the people before he left.

Still there was nothing obtrusive, bold, or boastful about him. He had his own opinions and views, his own line of action, and his own modes of proceeding; and he valued them, not because they were his own, - but rather they were his own because he valued them. He ever felt-

“ I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.”

From the day of his conversion, to the day of his death, he was a man of strong faith and persevering prayer, and scarce a spot in the fields but had been the scene of his wrestlings : barn, stable, cowstall, hayloft, had been his closet. “Many an hour,” writes his daughter, “did he spend in prayer for those who were yet slumbering in their beds; and when the shades of evening gathered around him, and no eye but that of God observed him, he might be found in a quiet corner of the field, like another Jacob, pleading for those that lay near his heart, for the church and for the prosperity of Zion.” The whole course of his life was marked by consistency, integrity, and faithfulness. He never hesitated to rebuke the ungodly with whom he came in contact, and many were led to acknowledge that this rebuke was just. The glory of God and the salvation of souls lay near his heart, and in labouring to secure these ends he was willing to spend and he spent. Amidst much practical infidelity, great indifference and abounding wickedness, all intensified by strong antinomian hyper Calvinism he ceased not to declare the whole council of God, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, determined that if the word was choked or unfruitful the blood of souls should not be upon his skirts.

He was not without the cares and troubles that flesh is heir to. Losses he had in business, and losses in his family. Five of his thirteen children he buried, four in infancy – the other a strong healthy young man of twenty-four, was cut down in twenty one days by inflammation of the lungs. This was a severe trial, and was for a time felt more keenly, inasmuch as, notwithstanding parental influence, example, and entreaty, the young man had neglected the salvation of his soul. Prayer, however, public and private, was made for him, and not in vain. He sought and obtained the pardon of his sins; and with his dying breath he sang –

“My soul, through my redeemer’s care,
 Saved from the second death I feel ;
 My eyes from tears of dark despair
 My feet from falling into hell”

This took off the edge of the affliction, and the father was able to say, “The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord;” and yet he felt it keenly. He earnestly sought and prayed for the conversion of all his children, and it was evident to them all that their salvation next to his own, was his first and chief concern. Several of them have profited by his efforts and reaped this reward: some in very early life gave their hearts to god and gratefully acknowledge the strength and tenderness of fatherly love manifested towards them. One – the first fruits of these his labours in his family – found peace under the father’s sermon on the text “Chose ye this day whom ye shall serve,” and recalls with affectionate remembrance the tone of voice and beaming eye with which he spoke, especially dwelling on the glories of heaven.

The lease of his farm having expired, and his landlord, who had promised him a new one, having just died, the relative to whom the prosperity descended, refused to ratify the promise, and Mr. Horne had to turn out, not knowing where to go. An abandonment of Methodist practices would have removed all difficulties in the way of his removing, the object of the landlord and the squire being to root Dissent out of the village. But just at this juncture, the owner of a small freehold, desirous of parting with it, had verbally agreed to sell it to the adjoining squire, for such a price as Mr Horne should put upon it, his judgement and integrity being relied on by both parties. This price having been fixed, the buyer demurred, and offered a

smaller, and perhaps again a smaller sum. The seller was naturally indignant, and appealed to Mr. Horne, who rejoined that if he felt at liberty to depart from the former bargain, which the other party seemed to have repudiated, he should himself be glad to become the purchaser. This he accordingly did, to the no small chagrin of the squire, and his friends. Upon this little freehold Mr. Horne built a house, where he lived and died, and before many years, on a corner of it, he had the pleasure of seeing a sanctuary created for the worship of God. It would be well if the tyrannous spirit that dictated his eviction from his tenancy had died out ; but too many instances of its recurrence are constantly turning up to allow to hope for an early realization of so desirable a consummation.

His pecuniary means were at no time large, but he was always cheerfully contented, and possessed the confidence and respect of all that knew him. For a short time in later years he held the office of circuit steward, which his friend Austen had occupied in the earliest years of the Circuit history. But the spiritualities were more in accord with his tastes and talents than the temporalities. He seemed to live to do good to the souls of men ; and yet he did not, according to his opportunity, neglect to promote any interest of the church. We have already noted that he gave the ground on which the Wesleyan Chapel at Normandy stands ; and just before his final illness, when it was in contemplation to change the humble edifice, he offered to give what additional ground might be required. The first missionary meeting in the Circuit was held at his house in 1834, and the assiduity with which this object was fostered may be gathered from the fact that with a chapel seating not more than one hundred persons. Normandy furnishes from £15 to £20 per annum to the Mission House.

The style of his pulpit addresses was simple and unadorned, more remarkable for earnestness than any attempt at originality or eloquence. Here as elsewhere his native modesty was apparent, and his loving heart was felt. A ready command of appropriate language, which a more extended and more grammatical education might have improved, was kept within sufficient control to be effective to the purpose of calling sinners to repentance, and of pointing them to the Lamb of God. For he preferred to dwell upon the love of God, rather than his wrath, to woo rather than to denounce. He was sufficiently apt at illustration,

and could handle an anecdote with effect. He never attempted to soar beyond his reach, but believing that the truths of the gospel were of their own inherent force, able to awaken men's souls and make them wise unto salvation, he sought to unfold them in the plainest, simplest, and most direct language that he could possibly employ, feeling as well as knowing that the "excellency of the power" must "be of God, and not of men."

We must now bring this narrative to a close by giving some account of the last days of Mr. Horne. The life of James Horne was not full of remarkable incidents, but it is a record full of historical interest in connection with the Church of his choice, and the spread of religion in a part of the county still greatly destitute. He was faithful to that Church which had been the means of his personal salvation ; he did not desert Methodism because another member could not be found in a day's march. He sought to *supply* that which was lacking ; and it is not too much to assert, that if all the sons and daughters of Methodism placed in Surrey and the neighbouring counties had been equally faithful, this "Methodist Wilderness" would ere this have presented a different aspect. James Horne lived to see himself surrounded by a host of Wesleyan ministers, local preachers, leaders, and members ; but neither Methodism nor any other church has rightly cared for these rural districts. In the south of our happy and enlightened England there is a space of 2,000 square miles, including nearly all Hampshire, Surrey, and Sussex, and parts of Kent, Berks, and Wilts, with little or no Wesleyan Methodism. The population cannot be less than 750,000 ; Wesleyan ministers 12, or one to 62,500 of the people; Wesleyan members 1,200, or one in 625 !" This was written in 1871.* A great effort is now being to extend Methodist ordinances in London ; when this noble effort has been crowned with success, let us hope that God will put it into the hearts of His servants to do something for these rural districts. They help to swell the population of London ; they receive back again a part of its surplus population, whom fortune enables to retire from business that they may spend the rest of their days amid these lovely hills and valleys. Methodism is "debtor to both."

Mr. Horne's last illness was not of long duration. Like other of God's servants he was not without premonitions that his end was approaching. The last time he preached in Guildford Chapel, though not then ailing he had a conviction that it would be his last sermon there - and so it turned out. He was appointed to preach again on Christmas day, 1870, but when asked if he would be able to do so, said, "No ; my work is done." At first he felt it a great trial to be laid aside from a work in which he had taken such delight for more than half a century. Blest with a robust frame, self-reliant, and possessed naturally of great force of character, he found it difficult to be compelled to say "no" when "duty" called. During his illness he delighted to speak of the work of God. Early in January, 1871, he met his Class for the last time. It was a most affecting time ; he gave an unequivocal testimony to the grace of God ; he spoke with the greatest tenderness to each of his members. Before the month closed he paid his last visit to the house of God, and though in great pain, joined in the service with his usual fervency.

In the beginning of February he began to be much worse. He suffered a great deal of pain, which medical skill could do little to alleviate ; but he was enabled to bear it without murmuring. At his request the Rev. H. J. Sykes ; administered to him the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. His wife and other

*** *Vide* a series of Letters in the "Watchman."**

members of the family, with one or two Christian friends were present. They felt how good it was to be in "the chamber where the good man meets his fate." The hymn

"Now I have found the ground whereon," &c

was sung, in which he joined with great earnestness, especially the verse---

"O Love ! thou bottomless abyss," &c

His responses to different parts of the service showed that his intellect was as clear as ever. He seemed like one already in heaven. At the close he bid each one a solemn "goodbye." Grasping the hand of the minister he said, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee ; the Lord cause his face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace." He then prayed earnestly for the Circuit, and all his fellow labourers, to whom he sent messages of love.

A few days later Mr. Sykes visited him again, in company with Mr. Pocock. when he gave the last proof of his love to the cause of God, by signing a document, giving a strip of land additional in case the chapel at Normandy should be enlarged. He was now much weaker, but his mind was clear and his faith strong. The twenty third Psalm was read, every word of which he seemed to make his own, dwelling with marked emphasis in the verse ; *“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.”* Mr. Sykes asked him if he had any doubt about the doctrines of Methodism which he had preached for fifty years. He replied, “None whatever. If I had life to begin again I should study them with greater diligence, and preach them with greater earnestness, because they are the doctrines of the Bible. He requested Mr. Sykes to preach his funeral sermon, and selected as the text, “By grace ye are saved,” &c. “From that” he said, “you can set forth the *pure gospel* of Christ to the people, as we believe,”-- in opposition to some in these parts, “who hold the truth in unrighteousness.”

During his illness the Psalms of David and Wesley’s hymns were the constant vehicle of his thoughts and feelings. He would call one of his daughters by his bedside and ask for one of his “*favourite*” psalms or hymns. The 116th psalm and 273rd Hymn were repeated again and again. James Horne, like many dying saints, found Wesley’s Hymns to be the language of the heart, the language of genuine Christian experience, furnishing him with a

“Watchword at the gate of death”

On Thursday, January 23rd, it was evident he was sinking fast. He attempted to repeat the verse---

“When passing through the watery deep,
I ask in faith His promised aid:”

---but found himself unable to go on; -- his daughter completed the verse for him;--

“The waves an awful distance keep,
And shrink from my devoted head:
Fearless their violence I dare :
They cannot harm for God is near.”

During the same day he repeated the verse—

“O remember me for good,

Passing through the mortal vale ;
 Show me the atoning blood,
 When my strength and spirit fail ;
 Give my gasping soul to see
 Jesus crucified for me!"

He added, "Ah ! it is '*gasping soul*' now ; but I have firm hold." His religion was not to seek on a death bed ; he had served God for a long life, and God did not forsake him then. On Friday he appeared to be sinking fast. He said " I am now in the valley." When asked if God was with him "Yes" he replied; " Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me ; I will fear no evil." During the day he was too weak to converse much, and had a restless night. As the morning dawned he was heard to repeat in a whisper—

" Let it not my lord displease
 That I should die to be his guest."

When raised up in bed he repeated the lines---

" When I walk through the shades of death,
 thy presence is my stay ;
 A word of thy supporting breath
 Drives all my fears away."

During the whole of Saturday he was unable to converse much. He lay calmly till the Chariot of Love should convey him to be

"For ever with the Lord."

The Sabbath came, and it proved to be his eternal Sabbath. His mind was full of Sabbath thoughts. "Is the preacher come?" he asked "I cannot preach to-day," he added. When

told that the preacher had arrived he appeared satisfied. The preacher, a student from Richmond, visited him, and prayed with him, to which he responded. He then whispered to his daughter to tell him that his whole desire was to

" Catch a smile from Jesus,
 And drop into eternity."

He had already bid farewell to each of his children, and grandchildren, admonishing each to meet him in heaven. His last act was to bid farewell to Mrs, Horne, who had been the companion of his earthly and heavenly journey fifty-two years.

“Good-bye,” he said, God bless you. The Lord will take care of you. Look up !” With the word he *pointed to the skies*, and his spirit passed away into the presence of God,

**“Our friend is restored
To the joy of the Lord---
With triumph departs :
But speaks by his death to our echoing hearts.
Follow after,” he cries,
As he mounts to the skies,
“To the blissful enjoyments that never shall end.”**

**Thus died James Horne, February 26th, 1871 in the 73rd
year of his age.**