

REMINISCENCES

OF

EARLY PIONEER WORK

IN THE GOSPEL IN

UNITED STATES AND CANADA



BY

JOHN KNOX McEWEN

EXETER, ENGLAND

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EXETER: I have received three copies of the AMERICAN PIONEER. I should have acknowledged them before, but am very slow to figure in print in connection with any little God has ever done through me, but if some of my past experiences would encourage young men to launch out into untouched ground—which was one of Paul's ambitions, Romans 15:20, gladly would I contribute to your little paper. I may say that as far back as 1878, I labored in the Orkney and Shetland Islands where God gave us real encouragement. It was while there that I had communications from Mr. James Campbell and his fellow laborer, Mr. James Smith, telling me of the great need of the United States of America. You are no doubt aware that they were among the early pioneers. Mr. Munro was the first. Mr. John Smith and Messrs. Ross, Campbell and Jas. Smith followed, and on the 31st of May, 1879, I left my native land not very strong in body and with little money in my pocket landed in New York. The vessel I crossed in was the S. S. "Pennsylvania," a small boat which took about fourteen days, and during the first four I was deeply moved and felt like dying through sea sickness. However, about the fifth day I made up for lost time and preached both morning and evening of the second Lord's day in the saloon, granted by the Captain. Besides I went from stem to stern of the vessel distributing tracts, and speaking personally to every passenger and all the crew from the Captain down, excepting

one man who fell from the mast and was almost killed. On reaching New York I found that the custom house officers were strong believers in total depravity. Our baggage had to be searched, but I had little trouble, for my valises were plastered with scripture texts and I got through about first. My eldest brother, William, was then in New York and I stayed with him. There was only one meeting in the city at that time, but I felt it cold and looked around for an outside hall, so (I think it was on Fourth Avenue) I rented a store on a corner, hired about sixty chairs and had some meetings there. It was in this hall that I met our dear brother Douglass first, and I can remember to this day his open beaming face. A dear godly youth called Virtue brought him, and the former stood by me all the time I was in New York. Virtue has been with Christ for many years. His life wields an influence on me even yet. One morning I received a letter from Mrs. Simpson, living in Valparaiso, Indiana, urging me to come west, that the need was great and no preachers, so I arrived one morning about 5 o'clock, and though we had never seen each other, she came right to me. I preached there and at Flint Lake, but I thought the U. S. A. was a hard field. There was a very small Assembly in Valparaiso. The first meeting I attended there was a Bible reading on Ephesians 1. Judge Gillette and Dr. Sayles were present, and I remember well when the hour had come to disperse the Dr. sighed, and said, "What a pity we have to leave this." While there I had a pressing invitation to come to Toronto to join our esteemed brother T. D. W. Muir in tent work. The English Christians had given a tent to the Canadian Assemblies, and Mr. Muir was in it alone. This was the first tent on the continent. God gave us a little blessing in it and some converts were baptized on a Saturday evening in Lake Ontario. Our next pitch was in Brantford. It was

there I met dear devoted Wm. Faulknor, who spent some years in Central Africa. His widow still lives in Chicago. After the tent season was over I was exercised about visiting some of the small Assemblies. There were only about ten on the whole continent and sorely needed help. Mr. John Smith encouraged me to go to B— where the brethren were not of one mind, and though it would have been much more to my liking to get in among the unsaved, yet here was a most important work. Two leaders were very much estranged and in my private prayers I specially cried to God for them, well knowing that the *ordinary members* would soon get right with God and with one another if *they* were restored. One Lord's day A. M. (after spending a good part of the night in prayer) I was impressed to go and see G. N. and as I reached the gate leading up to his house, I saw him coming towards me with such a strange look in his eye and putting his arm around me, he said, "John, I have seen the face of God, I thought I was the best man in the meeting, but I have found out I am the worst, and I am going now to see Jemmy B. Come with me." Knocking at the door Jemmy opened it and G., putting his arms around him, poured out such a confession that must have given joy to the heart of God. I went from one to another and all gathered around the Lord's table, and though over forty years have passed since that morning, it's as fresh in my memory as if it only happened yesterday. In that little company there was a young man I loved very much, and it was reciprocated by him. We used to spend hours together and a good deal of the time in prayer. He *seemed* to know more of the mind of God than any other brother. The tears would stream down his cheeks as he would give thanks for the cup at the Lord's table, yet strange mystery, he gave up his profession and turned infidel. Dear Jemmy, I love him still, and hope I shall meet him in heaven. A few miles from

this place I got an open door for the gospel with many adversaries. One night the young men got on the roof of the school house and filled up the chimney with sods, so that we were all *smoked out*. Another night cayenne pods were put on the stove, and that night we were all *coughed out*, yet in spite of all this there was a coloured woman saved. I have only seen her once, but was told that after bearing a bright witness for God she was taken to that land of fadeless day. Hallelujah!

In Northern Ontario I got an opening in a little town in a "Union Church," but after preaching a few nights the door was closed on my getting there to preach one night. However, God graciously stripped a Methodist Pharisee and clothed him with the righteousness of God. He is still alive and bears testimony for God outside of Toronto. A few miles from there a brother joined me who was a fine preacher. His thundering tones of judgment have made many a sinner tremble. We went to stay with an old English family. The children were very ungodly. On the Saturday night before retiring my companion and I were singing, but it was anything but palatable to the youngsters, especially the oldest boy. I said to my friend, "We shall need to give to this lad a strong dose"; so putting my foot on the last step of the stairs as W— was going up to bed, and placing my hand on his shoulder I said, "W—, if you are found dead in bed tomorrow in your present state your soul will be in hell." To my surprise the mother resented such words and passing through the room where we sat she never even said, "Good night." On retiring for the night, I said to my companion, "If God does not come in and display His power here we may be put out of the house." The next morning we were down stairs early and as we sat in the front room reading our Bibles, Mrs. H— came down

stairs and passed through the room where we were, in silence. Presently we heard W—'s footsteps coming down, and in looking up we saw the cat in his arms, and I saw the marks of tears on his cheeks. Holding out to him my hand I said, "How are you this morning?" With trembling voice and quivering lips, he said, "Thank God I am well; God saved me at two o'clock this morning." The mother happened to open the door at this moment and as the above words fell from Willie's lips, she began to weep; in fact we all wept for joy. At this moment a horse and buggy was seen outside with two men in it. W— said, "That is my brother; we were not expecting him." But God's purposes are wonderful. That son was brought home that he too might hear His gospel and be saved, for at the close of a Gospel meeting in the afternoon, he came to me greatly agitated, saying, "I want to get saved," and literally pulling me around to the back of the house, away from every one, he said, "You can show me here." As I pointed him to the Christ of John 3:36 he was saved, and I said, "Now tell your mother." This mother (like many others) expected to see her children saved, but made up her mind that it would be at some remote time and in the way she expected. *Parents, take note.*

Several other places I preached the word, among them in the town of G— where there was a small assembly, and where some young men and maidens had been reasoned into a false profession, and after living in actual sin would sit down at the Lord's table—Lord's day after Lord's day. My only resort was prayer. I was conscious that I had the confidence of the three leading men in the little company, and we together cried to God. At the end of some weeks God came in, broke down quite a number, and gave me much joy as I saw His grace so manifested in them. Some of them are now with Christ, and if I had not the prospect of meeting them

again my heart would break. Others gave up their profession and went into the world. One young man died wailing out, "I'm dying, and I'm not prepared."

I visited Bay City with a large tent, and had much opposition, sometimes hands laid on me. One night in the midst of my address I suddenly stopped and said, "Excuse me a moment." Impressed to go to the door, I found a man with one of the main guy ropes undone. Taking it out of his hand, I said "I shall look after this," and on going around the tent, I found two other main guy ropes undone. I made the three secure, went back and finished the meeting. There was a man in the place whose child died, and he asked me to speak at the funeral. I spoke in the house to a company that did not at all relish God's word, for there is something about God's gospel that the natural man hates. (Spurgeon called it the un-palatable gospel.) We formed into a procession for the cemetery. The place allotted to me was in the same seat with the driver of the hearse, and I was impressed to speak to him. But he resented it and got angry and said, "If you don't stop preaching to me I shall pull up the horses and stop the procession." My retort was, "Whether you pull up the horses or not, it won't alter it. If you die as you are you will be in hell." Sure enough, he did pull up the horses and I had to get off and walk back. Ten years afterwards I attended a conference at F—. Met two sisters from B. C. One of them said, "I know you. Do you remember the man who put you off the hearse at R. B.'s child's funeral?" "Yes," was my reply. "I am his daughter; we are all saved now." She got married to a man of God afterward through attending that conference and has three sons and one daughter, and one son out in the Lord's work, and about eighteen years ago I had the joy of leading the second son to Christ.

I had a great desire to pitch this tent in a place in the

Eastern States, and one day when it was 103 degrees, I took it down, packed the canvas and ropes into two big boxes, strapped all the seats together, got all into a truck and sent off by rail to Massachusetts. I pitched it in R—, a town in which George Whitfield once preached. A woman used to drive six miles in a buggy each night and used to upset me a good deal by her restless ways. One night as I saw her turn the corner, I said in my unbelief, "My! How shall I preach with that woman in the tent?" God in His grace rebuked my unbelief by saving her while I was preaching, and laying hold of her uncle by the shoulder she shouted out, "Uncle F., I'm saved just now." Her uncle, a fine man in every way, who had passed through the U. S. A. war, cried like a child. She developed into a beautiful Christian, and after living a bright testimony for God, He took her home to Himself, but not before saving some of her family and one son, a preacher of the old school.

A few miles from there I began meetings in an upper room. The place was stirred and God saved some—one especially—a leader in religion. We have always felt our responsibility to baptize converts and teach them church truths, and this is what enraged the religious mob. An old minister preached nearly every night against the truth. I always managed to find out what he preached from, and having a friend who could print well with a wooden pen, I used to get him to print in large letters that I would preach from the same text. For instance, he spoke one night from Isaiah 50, verse 10, and sought to prove through it that there were many saved and did not know it. I had my notice printed and put up in the post office, that I would preach from the same portion the following night, with the result that the place was packed. Feelings for and against ran high. Those against the truth vowed they would tar and feather me and

put me on a rail—I saw the rail afterwards. An unsaved man, whose wife I baptized, said, “If they put him on a rail they shall put me on one first.” The night came for the above. Special police were sworn in and the crowd marched up and down the street outside the hall, making a deafening noise by blowing ram’s horns and beating a big drum. One of the special police put his foot through the drum, saying “This man has as good a right to be heard as your parson.” We did not preach that night, but sang all the time. I may say here that the Christians in the place acted right nobly and stood by us—sisters as well as brothers. The memory of the love and courage manifested that night shall never be effaced from my mind. Most of them now are with Christ, such as Mrs. W. P. C. and M. J. O., also Mrs. A., but we shall meet again in that land of fadeless day, where all tears are wiped away. It was now getting late and I felt that I should go out and start for my lodging, and though several begged me not to go, I went. The night was dark (there were no street lamps) and as I stepped outside, I could see the forms of about thirty men standing like sentinels around the hall door, and naturally enough I thought my hour had come. One of the men (over six feet) I discerned as the leader. Stepping over to me and stooping down to look into my face, he said, “Is that you, Mr. McEwen?” Tremblingly, I said, “Yes.” “Fall in, men,” he cried. Every man seemed to know his allotted place and mine naturally was in the center. After leaving me at my lodgings, they said, “Good night.” There are many other things in connection with that night that would be very interesting, but I have written enough to let younger men see now how much the truth was opposed in these early days.

I visited Boston and had meetings. At that time there was a small assembly in that city. Some men in it though

with a real heart for the Gospel, such as J. F., G. H., Mr. S., Mr. C. A Roman Catholic priest told me that the religion of the New England States was Unitarianism. One night I tried to preach from Job 11, verse 12, but a Boston audience did not like to be put on par with a donkey. As soon as I finished J. G. arose and said, I see, dear friends, you don't like to be put on par with a donkey, but if we put out the D and put in an M—born like a monkey—you'll all receive it.

From Boston I went to Philadelphia to visit my eldest brother. I found a small meeting there, cold and formal, and no aggressive gospel work. My brother said to me, "Why not have some meetings here; you can have the room upstairs." God smiled upon us and I got to know quite a number of old country people, both from England and Ireland, also Scotland, who loved the Lord. This was not my only visit to Philadelphia. I had no gospel tent at this time and for three years I begged Messrs. Campbell and Matthews to bring their tent, telling them I was sure God would give them blessing. At the end of three years their tent was pitched in that city, and God saved souls and a gathering formed according to the pattern in the scriptures. The first conference in Philadelphia was above a blacksmith's shop, and it was a melting time. Faces beamed and tears were shed in abundance under the ministry of God's word. The conference lasted three days. All were entertained freely, money was never mentioned and no prearrangements as regards ministry and no chairman. Is it not a sign of weakness when we have to resort to such things? Surely if God was enough in primitive times He is enough now, but nature either in saint or sinner does not care to be shut up to God alone. J. G., the oldest friend I had in U. S. A., lived in the city and though a hard working man with a family of children, he

and his wife always gave me a welcome to their home. I shall never forget their kindness and I am sure He won't. There are now a number of assemblies in Philadelphia.

The time for the Hamilton (Ontario) conference had come, and breaking the journey at Harrisburg I found a choice number of souls meeting in an upstairs room. After spending a few days with them I started for Hamilton. On reaching there I found I was to stay with a Mr. and Mrs. M—a choice pair, both now with Christ. The conference was held in a small hall, for there were not as many Christians then as now. The servants of Christ who were present—as far as I can remember—were Mr. Donald Ross, Mr. John Smith, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. John Carnie, Mr. H. Ironside and Mr. Alex. Marshall (who had just arrived from the old country.) Then there were Messrs. John Martin, John Grimason, and some others likely who have escaped my memory. All the above (excepting J. G.) have passed over to that land which is fairer than day. Their memory is a blessing. The first two days the ministry was most searching and humbling, but this was God's way in order to prepare us for blessing, and by Lord's day A. M. as we sat around the Lord's table our hearts were bowed and broken under a sense of our own failure and of His love and faithfulness. Men and women would sob and weep as the bread was partaken of, and tears would fall copiously from many a broken spirit on to the loaf.

I had been exercised a good deal about the Maritime provinces through meeting some from Nova Scotia while in Boston, so I left Hamilton by the G. T. Railway. It was a long train journey and very wearisome. Sleeping cars were not the custom for preachers of the old school in these days. Indeed we walked more than we rode then, and that with heavy cowhide Wellingtons through

mud, snow and ice, no man or woman escaped getting a tract, and if they did not get the gospel they were warned of the wrath to come. On getting into the province of Quebec one could feel the difference between it and Ontario, for wherever Rome has sway the people are kept in bondage. One day I distributed tracts through every carriage, and as soon as I finished and came back to my seat, I noticed three popish priests on the train and I gave each of them tracts like the rest. I waited for developments, and had not long to wait for the brakeman collected all the tracts and right before me, he opened the stove door and threw them into the fire, and I thought if he had the power he would do the same with me. We had no dining car on the train and even if there had been, likely I should not have patronized it. I had booked to Amherst, the first town of any importance, and arrived there about 6 A. M. fairly well begrimed as I had not had a wash since leaving Ontario, for the coal that was used on the old I. C. R. was very poor. I had not eaten my breakfast which I had carried in my pocket. At that hour few people were about and I had a great desire to pray. I spied an old stable to the left of the station. The entrance to my first sanctum in Novia Scotia was very low, and getting down on all fours on the snow which was frozen hard as a rock I cried to God to make my coming to Novia Scotia a blessing to many. By this time there were a few more people about and I began to distribute tracts though the cold was intense. I gave a man a tract and looking at it and at me, he said, "There was a man here last week giving similar papers to this away." I asked him where he lived and he replied, "In Leicester twelve miles from here." How could I get there, I said, "The postman drives there tomorrow," was his reply. So finding out the postman I secured a seat.

I really don't remember where I stayed that night, though I remember I had a wretched night and rose feeling miserable. I was the only passenger accompanying the postman and we left Amherst in a snow storm for Leicester. What a journey! The poor horse would plunge into the drifts and the sleigh would turn right over and the postman and I were pitched out bag and baggage more than once. Then he would swear at the horse and say to me, "I shall go back," while all the time I was crying to my God to make him go on. Through mercy we reached the wooden farm house on the side of the road, and the driver delivered the goods and left me at the door in a biting frosty wind. When I knocked at the door a quiet looking woman responded and I said, "Is S. W. here?" (the tract distributor). "Yes," was her reply. "Please tell him I want to see him," I said. So S. W. came to the door. Holding out my hand I said, "I'm going to heaven." "Praise God," he said, as he grasps my hand, "I'm going too." Then I told my business as follows: I have come here to preach the gospel. Please ask Mr. and Mrs. L. if they will give me lodgings for a week or two weeks. I shall pay in advance. So I was taken in and a meeting was arranged for that night. A few came in and W. said a few words and I preached. Mr. and Mrs. L. were church members. They had quite a family and all were very agreeable till I began to test the foundation on which they were resting for eternity. Mrs. L. told me there was no need for me there, that I ought to go to the heathen. I had to room with W. and the place was so small that we could not undress and retire together. One night as we retired, I said to W., "How many do you think are saved in this house?" He replied, "I think Mr. and Mrs. L., Josephine, and Milford." "Well," I said, "Do you know what I believe? That there is not a saved one in the house!" I did not know that the young

women's bedroom was separated from ours, by a single wooden partition, and so my words were conveyed to the whole household. The next morning on coming down to breakfast (which consisted of buckwheat pancakes and treacle and the same for dinner and supper with a red herring now and again) I could see their countenances were not the same toward me. But Mr. L. had made up his mind that he would let me see that he had as much religion as I had, so taking up his hymn book soon as breakfast was over he began to sing. No one joined in with him (as the Spirit of God was at work) and when he saw this it so enraged him, that he pitched the hymn book against the wall, saying, "Why can't we praise God the way we used to do?" Looking at him, I said, "Mr. L., I, for one, would indeed praise God if you found out you were a lost sinner fit for hell." He replied, "W. is a man I respect, but I don't you" and he gave me quite a bit of abuse. But W. and I would get together in our little room and cry to God each night, and name each one of the family, and as I look back on it now I wonder we were not turned out of the house. We were each watching for a move. So one morning I said to W., "Take the pitcher and go down stairs for some water; it will be an excuse to see what things are like." I don't think he was five minutes till he put his head in at the door and with a beaming face said, "Praise God Mrs. L. says she is going to hell." I sprang out of my bed, hurriedly ran down, and found Mrs. L. standing at the door of the dining room with God's arrows in her soul. Josephine, her daughter, was standing opposite her wanting to sweep the floor, but she could not get the broom to go. Taking my Bible and opening it at John 3:36—first clause—I pointed her to Christ, and opening my Bible with both hands she said, "Is it there?" "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," and at the same moment they

were both saved. Mrs. L. looking at her daughter said, "Why did the ministers not tell us?" WHY! WHY!

About a half a mile away, there lived an old Highland Scotch woman and after the joy of seeing these two saved. I made for her house. I got her own family Bible and read scripture after scripture to her, but she would always say as tears rolled down her cheeks, "I dinna see it." I took her to Isaiah 53: 5 and turning round I saw her son, Tom, who was under conviction, and as the tears rolled down His cheeks he said, "O, Mother, don't YOU see it? Why, I'm saved; with Jesus' stripes I'm healed." I have a hope that I shall meet dear old Mrs. Duncan in heaven. We walked back to our lodgings and Mrs. L. and Josephine with sorrow in their hearts said, "Mr. L. says you can stay no longer here." So turning to W. I said "What are you going to do?" His quick reply was, "If there's no room for you, there's no room for me." So we packed our belongings, which did not take us long, and getting outside into the cold, frosty wind, I said to W., "Where are you going?" He could not tell, but thought we would go to Tom Duncan's. So off we went up and down, over those snow drifts, which were as hard as granite. Tom took in the situation and said, "We'll give you the best room in the house," but the best there was a poor affair, and we threw off our coats and cleaned the bedroom, including the bed, etc., etc., I had better make no remarks about this. I was really ill through lack of nourishment. W. was brought up on a farm and could digest anything. I asked Tom if he had any wheat. "Plenty in the barn, help yourself," he said. So I washed it, got a big sauce pan and I think boiled it for about eight hours. So our menu was changed and we fared well on it.

From there we went to a place in the woods and it was rough. I remember the day I left it, and when I came out

on a public road and saw the telegraph poles I think there was a tear in my eye. The man who drove us from this place in his sleigh, I think he was a Christian. I had heard of Port Philip and he took us there. I sat in the sleigh while W. went to a house and asked if I could get lodgings there. Mrs. K. came and looked at me and said, "Yes, we'll take him." The husband was a Universalist and she was an Episcopalian. There were six daughters and one son. One daughter (possibly two) was saved—as choice a soul as I ever met. I got a school house to preach in at Port Howe, two miles from there, and for six weeks I sang and preached every night, and at last there was a break. We had much opposition from the professors and the lies and slanders which were BELIEVED and TOLD all over the country from PULPIT and PRESS are incredible, yet in spite of all this God worked for the honour of His Son.

I got notice to leave my lodgings and that same evening I walked over to Port Howe I went away into the woods to pray and God made me so happy that I made the woods ring as I sang,

Redeemed! Redeemed! O sing the joyful strain,
Give praise! Give praise and glory to His name,
Who gave His blood our souls to save
And purchased freedom for the slave.

I preached that night and at the close (as usual) started for my lodgings at P. P. P. O. I went in to see if there were any letters. The old gentleman, though unsaved, was very tender hearted, and calling one of his daughters he inquired "Where is the preacher staying tonight?" "He doesn't know, Father," was the reply. "Tell him to come in," he said, and for three weeks God kept me in that house, but at the end of that time I was asked to leave. In the meantime

God had saved a number, amongst them a Mrs. M. from the U. S. A., but originally from N. S. and who was staying with her parents. She and Miss F. K. were a great cheer to me, and stood by me right nobly. They shall have their reward. The former got me lodgings with her brother and the first night I stayed there God saved my new landlady at 2 A. M. and the following Saturday night God saved a daughter of my former landlady and there was great joy in our hearts. This young lady was a school teacher, her sister the same. I had the joy of leading her to Christ one morning as she was leaving for school with her books under her arm. One Lord's day morning I baptized thirteen in the sea at Port Philip. There had never been a baptism in this place before. The first person I baptized was a Mrs. H., a widow—one who had a great heart for souls, and was so anxious for them I have had to turn out lamps and request her to go home and pray. Indeed I owe much to her prayers and tears. She is still alive and though very aged she retains the dew of her youth. God saved a few of her relations. She opened her house for the breaking of bread and Bible readings, where in spite of all the opposition, we enjoyed the days of heaven on earth. After the baptism named, we had a very large meeting in Port Howe school house, and at its close a special police officer in civilian clothes came to me and said, "Consider yourself under arrest." His young sister (under age) holding up her bible before him said, "Jemmy, I'm going by this book no matter what you do." He and some other men went to magistrates—one of them a Presbyterian minister—to see if the baptisms could not be stopped, but shortly after that I had another baptism and the crowd was so great that the above minister had to sit in his buggy on P. P. bridge while I baptized the converts. Hallelujah!

Our numbers began to increase so much that I con-

templated erecting a hall; but Novia Scotia is a poor country. However, Mrs. H. and some others and I prayed about it, and one mill worker — a Scotch sister — on hearing of our purpose sent me 50 dollars from the U. S. A. Another Scotch sister send me 50 dollars and I received some other sums. One evening I called a meeting of the brethren to confer about the hall and laid some 135 dollars on the table, saying, "Now that is what I have in hand toward the hall, and whatever amount any of you have you can put it along side this, then we shall see how we stand." I fear I pretended to think they did not understand me and I repeated the same words, but not one of them had a penny. One of them said, "It's foolish for us to talk about putting up a hall." Looking at them I said, "The hall will go up if not one of you ever give a penny." So it did, to His praise be it said. I remember well our first conference in it. The walls were not whitened. There are some yet who may read these lines and I am sure they look back with joy to these days. 1 Thes. 2-8, describes my feelings exactly toward these Novia-Scotians. They were born in the midst of fiery persecution and became dear to us so that twelve and even more miles were walked through snow and hail storms, in snow drifts and icy roads to the meetings.

D. K. of P. P. was a true man. His wife lived in the same house with his mother and brother and when the gospel come to that country it divided the home and they lived in separate parts of the house. For years J. K. never crossed the threshold of D. V.'s rooms. The old lady hated the gospel and those who brought it, but God triumphed as you shall hear. One day a telegram was sent to Mrs. M., (now in U. S. A.) asking her to come and see her dying mother (now over eighty). This is the Mrs. M— referred to above. She told me from the time she had the wire she never stop-

ped praying till she knelt at her mother's bedside. Hindrances were put in the way of her speaking to her mother about eternity. Such as, "The Doctor says your mother must be kept perfectly quiet and she must not hear anything that will excite her, as she may die through it. Mrs. M— brushed all this aside and said, "My darling mother is not saved and I'm going to speak to her about her soul." So on entering the chamber she found the minister there. Mrs. M— listened to him as he spoke to her mother, and looking at him she said, "Mr. M—, I have often wished to ask you if you were born again, but I don't need to now, as I have heard you speak to my darling mother and you are deceiving her." This roused his ire and also that of the old woman. Mrs. M— kept at God and also at her mother and one day her mother with broken heart and weeping eyes said, "Oh M—! What am I to do to be saved?" Mrs. M's joy knew no bounds. She pointed her dear mother to that loving Saviour dying on the tree, and now living on the throne, and the old lady over eighty was gloriously saved. Mrs. M— ran out to the field to tell her brother D— and they rejoiced together. I may say that previous to this Mrs. K— hated my presence. On hearing of her conversion I made for the house. I had sent word I was coming, and every now and again she would go to the window and look if I were coming and would say, "Oh I hope he'll come," and when I did arrive we sang and wept for joy. She wanted to hear me sing the hymn "Christ is all" and I sang every verse through. She wept, and her unsaved son, J—, a great opposer, sat and listened while tears streamed down his cheeks. One day shortly after that, D— came in from the barn, and found his mother and John in each other's arms weeping. God saved John. The old lady and he were baptized in the open sea, and took their places outside the world's religion, and as-

sociated themselves with the little company gathered to His name at P. H. The household was once more united and all lived together and F. D.'s wife more than once said to me, "The days of miracles are not over." The whole four are now at home with Christ and if it were not for the resurrection I would feel sad at heart." Our loved ones before Lord; their sorrows are o'er, Lord; I'll meet them once more at thy coming again. The blood was the sign, Lord; that marked them as Thine, Lord, and brightly they'll shine at Thy coming again.

In these days I used to spread out the map before me and kneel before God and ask His guidance as to where I should go. There was a place called Mt. Pleasant about ten miles from P. H. and I had a desire to preach God's gospel there. One day as I was distributing tracts a man overtook me, driving a fine horse and buggy attached. In a very gruff voice he said, "Jump in sir, I'll give you a lift." I saw that he had taken drink and as his wild looking eyes would gaze at me, I was a little nervous. However I gave him a tract and asked him to read it. His reply was, "I can only spell," and as I left him I said, "Spell out John 3:16 and God can save you." Sometime after that I met him in a snow drift and he said, "You have not come to Mt. Pleasant yet." "No!" I replied, "but am ready any time." Well, he said, "I'm one of the trustees of the school house and you can have it any time." On getting there I found he had nearly all the young fellows in the country present, as he said to me, to have a good time, but the power of God fell on the meeting and they were unable even to move. The following Lord's day afternoon I went again and it was a real pleasure to preach. Souls were weeping as I depicted Christ in the love of His heart dying for the ungodly. Jim M—the farmer pugilist—who gave me the lift in the buggy, got saved the following week

in his own field. In contrast to J. M. was J. T. who used to "conduct revivals" and one night on his way to L— he dropped into one of our meetings and every one who prayed made mention of him and asked God to awaken and save him. He was in terrible distress and many a time I have in the dead hour of the night cried to God to spare the reason of more than one. When a man sees his own sinfulness and the holiness of God, and the hell awaiting him, is it any wonder that reason is almost dethroned? God sent me quite a number of helpers at times; George and Allen Simpson of Galt—the former now is with Christ, the latter still lives; then John Mitchell now laboring in Spain. Sam Johnson of Liscard, Cheshire, England, was a true helper. These were all used of God and roughed it for Christ's sake and the gospel.

I had a place much on my heart, namely, Doherty Creek, also Pugwash. A converted R. C. and an old man—both Baptists—took sides with the gospel in the latter place and begged me to give them a sermon in their church; so as there was no assembly, I decided to do so. The night came round for the meeting and the bell tolled fifteen minutes before the service commenced. The people began to gather and the minister arrived. I was introduced to him by my converted R. C. friend. He did not seem very cordial and said to me, "I wish to say a few words." I began to be suspicious, and I thought it would be well if I would ask him to say it at once before all the people were gathered, so that as few as possible would hear it. So I said, "Well sir, you had better please say it now as I am about to commence." So he addressed the audience as follows: "Our Baptist churches are well known throughout the land and I am always glad to receive any minister who recognizes them." Poor man: He was ill at ease. I sang a solo for the simple reason that no

one joined in, and I did this often. I then prayed and read 1st Cor. 2:2 and addressing that large audience I said, "I come here not as the representative of any sect under heaven, but in the same way that Paul went to Corinth, as a servant of Christ—to preach Christ—to honour Christ." I saw a doctor in the audience who was a great opposer, but I visited his wife on her dying bed many years afterwards, and spoke to her of Christ the mighty to save, and as late as 1927 when on a visit to N. S. he came to see me and told me he was saved. A nurse in my audience was saved during the preaching that night and her mother was saved previously while I had meetings in a place called Centreville. I had only one night in the B. C., but spoke in the school house nearby, but the religious professors gave me notice to leave. The last night I was there I spoke to Mr. S. at the close of the meeting and told him that he might die before twelve o'clock and if he did in his present state his soul would be in hell. I gave him longer than what God gave him, for thirty minutes after I held him by the hand he died in his chair. The way was open for me to go to Doherty Creek. Two trustees of the school said I could have it by paying for the fire and light. I got an old man to drive me there one very dark night.

We arrived at the school house, but I did not know we had reached it till the old man said, "This is the place." I had to grope my way to the door as there was no light in the school, so striking a match I saw a white haired old man sitting in one of the seats, as yet my only audience. Away in the distance in the darkness I saw a light. This was a lamp being brought to the school house by a widow, a Baptist professor, but whom God saved afterwards, also her daughter and some of her sons. The preaching of God's word night after night caused great opposition. Dear George Simpson

was a true helper. We used to sing, "Would You Know Why I Love Jesus?" and I think the folk thought we were most wonderful singers. The meetings grew larger each evening and people came for miles. I have counted over thirty horses and buggies tied to the fences and at times could scarcely get standing room. God came in and moved by His Spirit in a wonderful way, but we had to fight for every inch of the ground. We felt that God was for us and Satan was against us. We had a few cases of conversion. Mr. J. E. opened his house for the breaking of bread. One night in my address I happened to say, "That child that God took from you lately—you will be separated from it for all eternity unless you get saved." Mrs. E. went home in deep distress and that night God saved her. G. S. came to me the next night at the close of the meeting, and whispered in my ear, "I believe Mrs. E. is saved. She looks different." At that moment she came over to us and with eyes full of tears, and filled with emotion, she said, "You will never tell me again that I will never meet my boy," and opening her Bible at Romans 10:9 she said, "I got saved through that last night." Going outside the school house I found Mr. E. standing at the buggy weeping. Mrs. E. lived a grand life of true devotedness to Christ. The last time I saw her was outside of Columbus, Ohio. Dear soul, her love for Christ was as strong as ever, though her physical frame was weak. She is now at home with Christ and in 1927 her son, Mr. Cyrus Eaton, entertained me and made arrangements for me to see her grave, and as I stood by it with sorrow in my heart and an uncovered head, I silently thanked God for the resurrection of the sleeping saints. Standing by the grave of my dear friend Mrs. D. K. in Rockley, N. S., I did the same. Mrs. E.'s sister also got saved about that time. G. S. married her, but God took him. She is still spared and lives in St.

Louis, U. S. A., with her two daughters whom I understand are both in Christ.

I had arranged a meeting for the following Lord's day at a place about three miles from D. C. and on reaching the building I saw that no one was inside and the people looked excited. I soon discovered the reason. The Pharisees had nailed up the door and boarded up every window, but we rejoiced, for when God works Satan opposes, and I have not much confidence in any work being genuine if there is not opposition. So here we were shut out. I heard a big stalwart man say, "We shall soon open it for Mr. McEwen," and about five men threw off their coats, tore down the boards, opened the door, and every window, and God gave us a good meeting. There was in that district a religious woman who attended class meeting previous to the above gathering and warned the people to stay away from our meetings. She came to this building on the Lord's day bringing three children with her (three miles) and one in her arms. God alarmed her and one Lord's day morning while I was praying with Mr. and Mrs. E. she came to the door and knocked so loudly and repeatedly that I ran to the door and found her in distress. She was blessedly saved and she too is with Christ. God saved some of her children and one is able to preach the Gospel.

The enemy still raged and a Mr. M——, a minister, preached against us. One night he announced that on the following Thursday he would preach against what he termed "Plymouth Brethren." By this time my brother of former days, J. G., to whom I have already referred, had joined me once more and I said to him, "What if we go and take our seats in the front row and hear what he has to say?" "Well," was his reply, "if you go I will." We kept this to ourselves. We called at the post office previous to this for

our mail. The postmaster, though unsaved, was a great friend of mine and wanted, as he said, "fair play." He suggested our going on the Thursday to hear Mr. M. The night and hour came around and Mr. M. was in good time. The house was filled, so we stepped on the porch and when prayer was over went inside. Mr. P., who was sitting in the front seat immediately, rose and made room for us along side himself, hanging up our hats and coats. My companion J. G. donned a pair of green spectacles and no matter what way Mr. M. turned his head J. G. followed him with the green spectacles. I took my note book and pencil to take notes, for we were *determined* to carry out Jude 3. Mr. M. began such a raid of abuse, lies, misrepresentations that if I had been a man in the flesh I fear I would have pulled him off the platform, but to His praise I may say I was not the least perturbed, and was kept happy and calm. He had his followers around him and made the following statement: "If you don't pray for salvation you will never get it." This is not God's way, for it puts God in the wrong attitude toward the sinner, and the sinner in a wrong attitude toward God. We had preached that God was so satisfied with the work of the cross that the praying was on His side, 2 Cor. 5:20. On hearing the above remark, I shouted out, "Scripture for that last statement," but he paid no attention to me. I repeated it. However, at the rear of the building a man I know quite well shouted out "Silence." Mr. P. sprang to his feet, saying to him "Why can't you let the men talk," and J. G. holding up his Bible, said, "People are being deceived." Some of the women ran over to me saying, "Mr. McEwen, we know too much now through you to believe Mr. M.," and they had to hold Mr. P. I could hear a young man behind me saying, "He (Mr. M.) is telling lies," prefacing it with an adjective. I heard another man say, "God

has strengthened my arm, and I should like to straighten it on one of them." An old Pharisee cried out, "There is law for this," and his associate arose to carry away his lamp when a man jumped to his feet and said, "If you don't sit down I shall tell them of the pants you stole," and while all this was going on Mr. M. stood, saying "What is all this?" A Mr. S. sitting behind me spoke up and said, "Let Mr. M. finish and then we shall hear our men." Mr. M. continued. Poor man! He felt his predicament and tried to get out of it. He gave out the hymn, "Jesus the name high over all in hell or earth or sky; Angels and men before it fall, and devils fear and fly. But we never feared nor fled. Nehemiah said, "Should such a man as I flee?"

The benediction was pronounced at 10 P. M. and Mr. P. turning to me said, "Do you want to say anything?" Looking at my watch I mounted the platform and held out my hand to Mr. M. He took it and said, "I don't know you." "No sir," I said, "my name is McEwen." "Oh," he replied, "I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear and now mine eye seeth thee," I retorted, "You have condemned a man and his teaching without either hearing or seeing him." J. G. stood by me and taking him by the shoulder said, "You have given us no scripture tonight; sit down and we will give you some." Mr. P. shouted, "We'll have another meeting, and placing two stalwarts at each door, and one on each side of the platform he mounted one of the desks himself. I turned to J. G. and said, "We'll sing the hymn, "Tell Me More About Jesus." So we began (our voices being in fine form) "'Tis known on earth and heaven too 'Tis sweet to me because 'tis true; The old, old story is ever new. Tell me more about Jesus." We sang it through, and no one moved while we both told out the gospel. Not one left, excepting Mr. M. and the farmer in whose barn he had put his horse.

The farmer's son is one of the chief men in a meeting now in Massachusetts. We preached till 12 o'clock. At the close the husband of the woman whom I previously had mentioned about knocking at the door in distress about her soul, gave me a push. Mr. P. sent him flying against the fence. It is not necessary to say that this kind of fighting was not in our line. The next morning we walked down to the post office (two miles) singing all the way for joy of heart, for God had given us the victory, and from that till now the enemy has been kept in abeyance.

Shortly after this I was arranging for some to be baptized at Port Howe, and amongst them an old man—Dan McLeod—as deaf as a post. Looking at me he said, "My dear sir, I don't want to be baptized in Port Howe. My wife and children are not saved and I want God to speak to them as they look on." Accordingly, we arranged for the following Lord's day afternoon and a great crowd assembled. As I marched into that water I held up my Bible and challenged the company for scripture, or inference from scripture for baby baptism. Three ministers were present and they came to hear me in the school house that evening.

From there I went to Wallace Bay, Wallace River and used to take long journeys to River John, River Herbert, Tatamagouche, The Slade Settlement, Picto and Truro scattering God's word and sleeping in hotels, and preaching to folk personally and collectively. One day I was wearied out as evening came on. A little pony I had was the same, and I was within twelve miles of my lodgings, but felt I could go no further, so turning into a farm yard I saw the farmer looking at me, and I said, "Can you keep me and the pony all night, I can go no further?" "I suppose so," was his reply. But a red-eyed savage looking bull dog was growling and this kept me in the trap. The farmer said, "Don't

look at him, sir, and he'll not harm you," but I could not help keeping my eye on him. When we got to the house the farmer said, "You will have to sleep with me." The bed was a narrow affair and only about the height of a sofa from the floor, and he was stout, so that when he got into bed there was not much room left. Then to my horror the bull dog got in and lay at our feet, and with the light of a smoky lamp I could see him watching me, and it was mutual. God blessed that family, and so it was worth while passing through the experience to convey life to the dead. One night I preached in P. At the close of the meeting a man came to me and said, "Do you remember being in R. S. thirty years ago?" "Yes, indeed I do," I said, and wondered also if I would ever see any results from the sowing there." "Well," said he, "you gave me a tract and warned me of judgment and I never got rid of it till I was saved."

Very few preachers remain in Nova Scotia. The menu and the accommodation is not of the highest order and many a time an empty pocket is the portion of the gospeller and persecution allied with long journeys through snow and sleet, etc., etc. A certain preacher went there to preach. He was feeling the rough condition of things and communicated his circumstances to a relation in the U. S. A. who sent back a letter saying they were wanting a Baptist evangelist, and offering him a salary and a rise later on. Meeting beloved D. R. Scott at the hall door, he handed him the letter to read, and as soon as brother Scott read it, he handed it back to him, saying, "Man, the devil offered far more than that to the Lord Jesus." Personally I love the people, and even in my old age, if it were not for family circumstances, I think I could spend the evening of my life with them. For twelve years after coming to this land, I prayed that God would raise up some servant of His to carry on the work there, and

to my joy I had a letter from D. R. Scott asking for information about work in N. S., so I wrote immediately saying I had a canvas tent with poles and it would give me pleasure to let him have it. I thought perhaps he might be compelled to pay duty and freight on it, but he had neither. I went to Liverpool to see him and his beloved wife begin their journey. This was surely of God, for our brother was used wonderfully in conversions and in blessing to His people, even though he seldom wrote letters to any monthly about it. Indeed our names were never seen in the monthlies, nor did we ever get our need supplied in this way. For health reasons D. R. S. had to go west. A large hall has been erected in D. C. (now Pugwash Junction) since I left. A conference of three days is held there every year. All meals are cooked in the basement and money is never named. No collections are taken from guests, excepting the ordinary one on Lord's day A. M., and this is given to gospel work. An upstairs room above the hall gives sleeping accommodation for twenty-eight. Each man has his own little cot. When I was there in 1927 I stood and wept for joy as I thought of the early days, and all I could say was "What hath God wrought." God sends His servants from the United States generally to minister the word at these conferences. I know some Christians who come great distances to these meetings. Two sisters drove a Ford all the way from Toronto, a distance of about a thousand miles. There was a town called O. in which I had the desire to preach the gospel, so I rented the public hall for one night only. I got a man to drive me and we stopped opposite the Temperance Hotel. I sent him in to see if I could obtain lodgings, but they did not detain him long, though I said I would pay in advance. When they saw who it was they said, "No, we shall never house a crazy preacher." I must say I felt a lonely stranger, an outcast

with all my earthly belongings in the buggy. I asked D. K. to drive me to the public house. I rented a room for the night, and I had strange feelings praying, while I could hear them down stairs swearing in the bar room. While thus engaged I heard a knock at the bedroom door and upon opening it found the man who put me out of his house years previously when his wife and daughter were saved. He said, "Do you know me?" "Certainly," I replied, "Are you not saved yet?" "Yes," was his reply, "and I have built a new house and want you to come and preach in it," and I did—at the funeral of one of his daughters.

After being in these parts I had the desire to get away in another direction, so I went to Amherst, but a snow storm came on and I was shut in at Lamys Hotel from Friday till Tuesday. The Lord's day was most trying as I was debarred from any Christian fellowship and could find no one who knew the Lord. Many of my meals were taken in hotels on these journeys. I visited Springhill, Sackville, Sussex, Dorchester, Salisbury, Moncton and went north as far as Shediac scattering the good seed. Then I came to Bai-Verte, Elgin, and joined three dear brethren at a place called Timber River, N. B. Two of them are now with Christ, Henry Goodwin and Byron Strange. The third, Ansley Goodwin, is still alive, but is getting old, faint and yet pursuing. He holds the fort at D. C., Pugwash Junction. Then a brother-in-law of D. R. Scott's, brother Milne, an Englishman, settled in D. C., a good solid man who stayed in the country and was a true laborer, but the Lord took him home, and this is a sore loss to these Maritime provinces. His lonely widow still remains there. The only other laborers are brother Brennan and brother McMullen. The former had a good position, with the prospect of even a better one, but he left it and went forth with the gospel. The latter

had a business in Toronto. He also left it for the gospel's sake. Then brother McCullough spends his summers there and God has given him blessing near Truro and he has erected a gospel hall there. They held their first conference in Truro last year, 1928.

As one now advanced in years and who loves the Nova Scotians, I would put in the plea that saints would pray for labourers (not preachers or platform orators), but men who will give God a full day. This is the class of men who are needed there, and men who are prepared to endure hardness, and stick to their work. There is in these days but little of the early ways of carrying on gospel work, and sometimes I think Christians are to blame for putting preachers into a false position by pressing them to come to their large centers, instead of seeking to encourage them to fulfill Romans 15, verse 20. Every time I visit Canada and United States I am depressed as I look upon the cities, towns, villages, and settlements, and no gospel; and maybe not a great distance away some two or three preachers are spending their best days preaching to a large company, mostly Christians. Over 40 years ago Mr. Donald Ross said to me in Scotland, "God does not send preachers to the church to preach the gospel, He sends them to the world," and Dr. Matthews asked me some years ago, "How many preachers would be around if there was not an assembly to receive them?" Our Lord says to us, "Launch out into *the deep*," and again I would add, "They that go down to the sea—that do business in great waters, *these* see the *works* of the Lord, and His *wonders* in the deep." Psalm 107, verses 23 and 24. I apologize for all the defects in these few reminiscences (and they are many), also I regret to use the personal pronoun so much which could not well be avoided owing to my being alone in the gospel for months.

John 4, verses 34, 35, 36.

J. KNOX McEWEN