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Welsh Revival

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## REVIVAL IN WALES.

### CROWDS PURSUE THE EVANGELIST.

#### SCENES AT MERTHYR VALE.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

ABERFAN, Wednesday Night.

The scene of the Revival mission conducted by Mr. Evan Roberts shifted to-day into the main Rhondda Valley. Merthyr Vale and Aberfan, on the two slopes opposite each other, are practically a single town, having ten chapels, which had joined in inviting the evangelist.

Extraordinary scenes of excitement signalled the arrival of Mr. Roberts and his band. For weeks the district has been in a ferment of religious enthusiasm. At the Calvinistic Methodist Church there have been prayer meetings night and day for three weeks, and the minister, the Rev. J. M. Davies, has received 144 converts already, while the other Churches have all had notable additions to their ranks.

The Rev. W. Jones, of Brynhyfryd Baptist Chapel, has had a hundred and seventy converts. Last Sunday week he baptized over sixty by immersion, and on Sunday admitted eighty-one new members to the church. The converts have shown wonderful fire and zeal, singing and praying before the public-houses, and calling on the drinkers to come out. At one place in particular they implored the Holy Spirit to save the prodigals within from perdition. A customer came out in a spirit of defiance with a bottle and glass, and poured out and drank beer before their faces. The landlady, a decent soul enough, has appealed to the police for protection against the revivalists. "God knows," she says, "I do what I

how, bathing as a boy, he ducked at the coming of a wave. "There is a wave coming up the valley," he cries. "Duck! All of you, duck!"

#### A Tabloid Sermon.

Somehow the stranger often fails to unlock the door of these yearning Welsh hearts. At a moment when half the congregation were melted in tears this afternoon a young American minister rose and gave a pointed little sermon. It was so neat, so clean in its points, that one might almost describe it as a tabloid sermon. The text was "Come now let us reason together"—and the rest of the passage. "Observe," said the preacher, "there are five C's in this text—the Call, the Conviction, the Cleansing, the Confession, the Communion. And he expounded them all; but the tear-stained eyes became dry, the labouring chests had ceased to heave. The people had ceased to feel and had begun to think. The Holy Spirit had been exorcised by a text.

#### A Domestic Touch.

Soon, however, praying and singing resumed their sway. A woman, who had come in at eleven, on the way to buy materials for her husband's dinner and forgotten all about it, began about teatime to waken from her oblivion.

"Sing, woman, sing," said a happy collier, thumping her on the shoulder, as he saw her restlessness.

"What's the time?" she asked, wondering what her husband would think.

"Time, woman?" said the collier; "no time at all—Eternity."

The Rev. D. J. Hiley, of Bristol, asked for prayers for that town. The Rev. W. Jones, of Brynhyfryd, Treharris, whose massive head, crowned with an aureole of red gold curls, seemed like that of some old Norse king, poured out supplications for England, which were taken up on every hand in Welsh, and the Rev. J. M. Davies appealed for professions, and went round exhorting the doubtful.

#### At Last Mr. Roberts.

It was evening when Mr. Evan Roberts arrived, and a great multitude, disappointed by his failure to appear earlier, surged about the





EVAN ROBERTS, THE WELSH EVANGELIST.



can to keep the place straight. We never have any gambling here, and our customers do not get drunk. Why should these people come and raise the place against me? I don't hold with their 'revivals.'

The tone of the district has undergone an immense change. The public-houses are emptying, cursing and swearing are no longer heard in the streets, and the miners sing praises and hold prayer meetings in the pits.

### Like a Public Holiday.

Intense expectancy has prevailed at the prospect of a visit from Mr. Roberts and his singing band. The shops are placarded with a poster such as would be put up for a public holiday. It reads:

MERTHYR VALE CHAMBER OF TRADE.

REVIVAL MEETINGS.

THIS ESTABLISHMENT

will be

CLOSED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15

for the

VISIT OF MR. EVAN ROBERTS.

This morning crowds turned out for the revival meetings as early as ten o'clock. By noon the Congregational, Calvinistic-Methodist, and Baptist chapels were packed, and the meetings went on without interruption till between four and five. Mr. Evan Roberts did not turn up, but there was no lack of fervour, and a number of converts were made. Ministers from all parts were present, and many of them helped in gathering in the harvest of souls.

The Rev. T. Ferrier Hulme, of Bristol, formerly of Wesley's Chapel, City-road, spoke at two chapels, and two American ministers were among the speakers. Several who had come from distant parts thanked "The Daily News" through me for the part it has played in spreading in England a true view of this remarkable revival. But the Welsh themselves, with their wonderful musical prayers, rising from a solemn chant to a great sobbing wail of supplication, need no help from the visitors who come to partake in the spiritual outpouring. To see a whole congregation, grizzled old men, sturdy young colliers, gentle-faced women—all with buried faces, and sobbing together, is a sight

A woman will raise her voice and describe the storm raging in her heart till all are moved to agonised sympathy. A collier will break out into magnificent rejoicing: "I was on the brink of the pit, but God caught me by the hair." Another pleads: "Oh, Holy Spirit, this is Thy washing day. Cleanse us all." A third tells

streets from chapel to chapel in search of him, and followed him when he arrived at about five o'clock. Shy, as ever, he escaped into the house of a friend, and a great crowd surrounded it. Messengers were sent in to ask which chapel he would visit, and at Calvaria, where he had been announced to speak, there was a dense crowd waiting. For some time he remained within, but finally had to emerge and proceeded to the meeting place, followed by a curious multitude.

At Pontypridd it is market day, and a young vendor of braces and other goods interlarded his cheapjack orations with revival sermons, and said if any man in the crowd was on the Devil's side he would step out and fight him.

### At Treorchy.

A number of Baptists were publicly baptised to-night at Horeb Chapel.

The decrease in the sale of drink is having its complement in better business in food and clothing. I have been assured by commercial travellers that many retail traders are having debts paid which they had never expected to recover. In one case a debt of £35, written off as "bad" long ago, was paid in full by the debtor, now a convert. At an education meeting in Cardiff, at which Mr. Lloyd-George was present, the close of the business was signalled by a profession of conversion by one of the best-known public men in the district. He had been to no revival meeting, but had suddenly felt moved by the Holy Spirit some days before, and had determined to speak out before his associates in this public way.

### GENERAL BOOTH'S TOUR.

Continuing his North Wales tour, General Booth visited Cefnawr, near Ruabon, yesterday afternoon, when several thousand workers engaged in twelve local collieries and brick manufactories made holiday, and accorded the veteran Salvationist a typical Welsh reception. Hours before the advertised time Cefn Tabernacle was thronged, and the General's entry evoked an intense outburst of enthusiasm. His stirring address, although delivered with feeble voice, raised a vigorous chorus of "Amens" and "Hallelujahs."

Giving a retrospect of his life, General Booth said that sixty years ago Satan continually thwarted him, but he quickly rose after stumbling, and became determined to play football with the Devil. After recounting many pathetic anecdotes, he resumed his seat, and the immense congregation burst forth into impetuous singing of Welsh hymns.