

enactments of 1843 which, amongst others, contained a regulation requiring one-third of the money the chapel would cost to be raised.

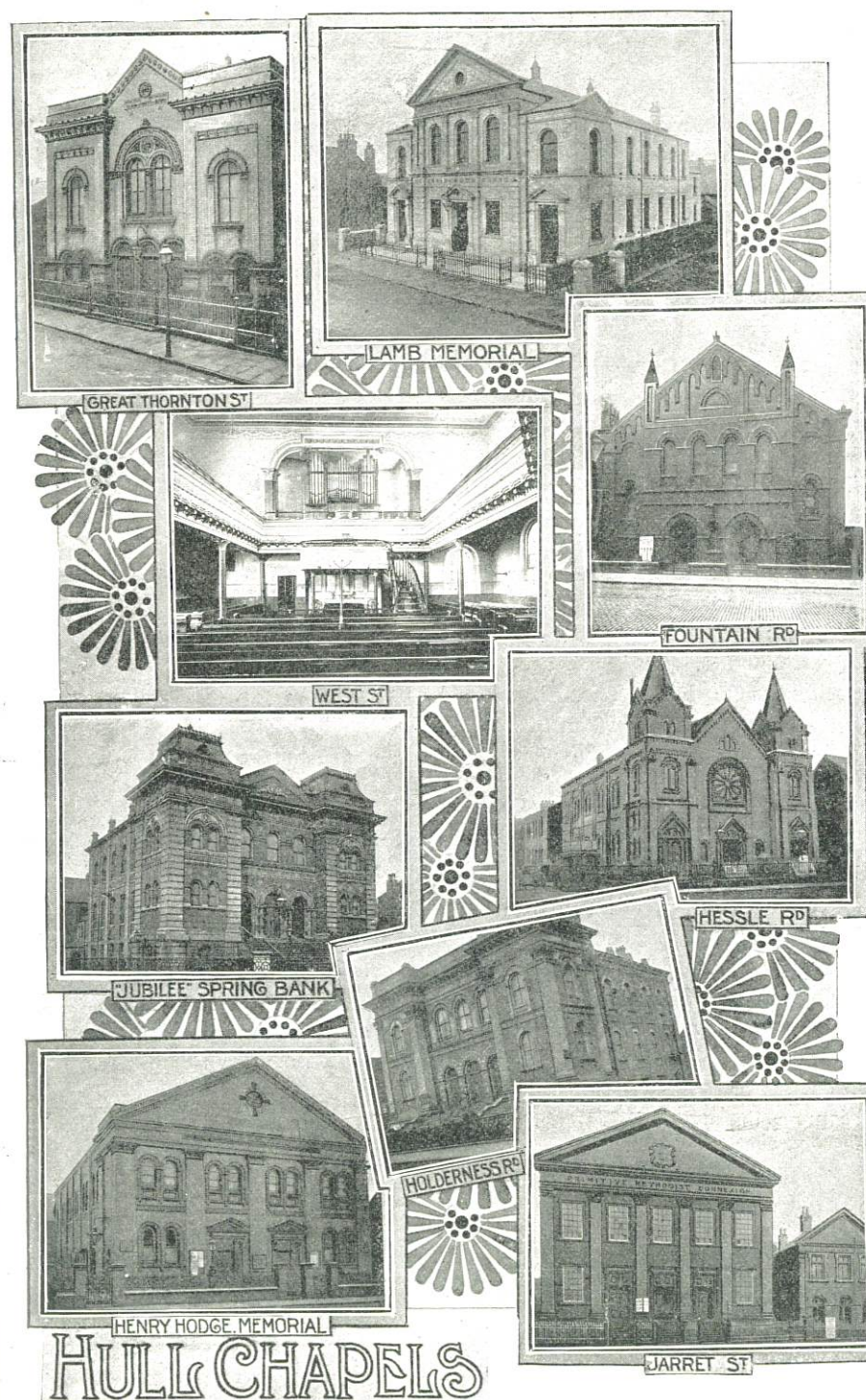
By 1882 the recommendation had stiffened into a statutory requirement, and the "one year after opening" had contracted into "six months." Moreover, the application for leave to build was to show that one-fourth of the estimated cost had already been raised. These more stringent regulations were passed not a day too soon, and the effects of their working were all to the good. They might to some extent react upon building projects—nipping some of them in the bud,—but they also did something to check the accumulation of debt on connexional property, which had long been out of proportion to the money raised, and a source of growing anxiety and weakness to the churches.

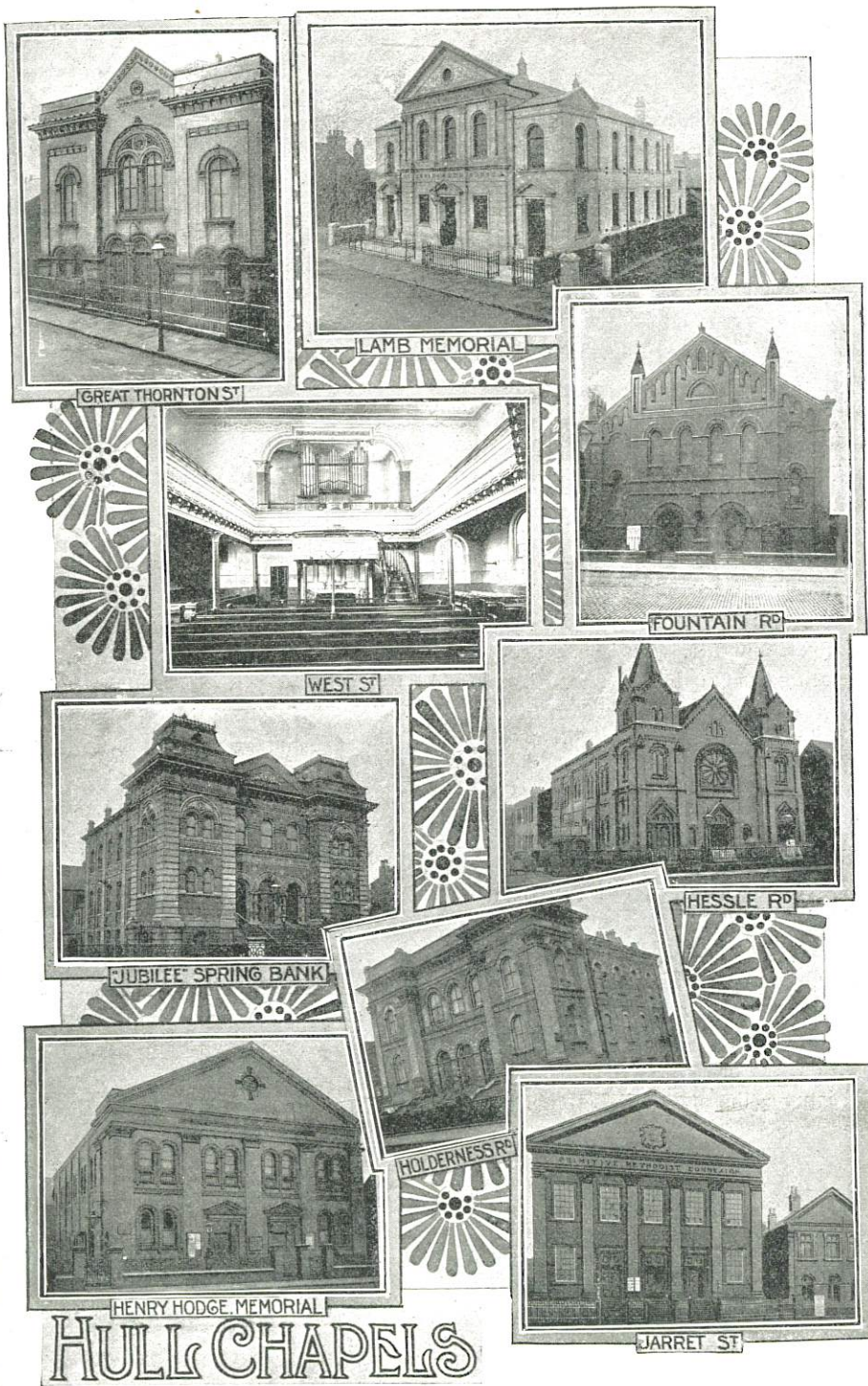
The requisite machinery for the carrying out of these regulations had long been available. District Building Committees had been established in 1835, and District Chapel Committees in 1847. In the same year—'47—the General Chapel Fund was created for the purpose of rendering financial assistance to distressed chapels. Though much crippled in its praiseworthy endeavours by limited resources this fund saved many chapels to the Connexion, and, as the aid it rendered was conditional upon local effort, the fund materially helped to reduce chapel debts. The Loan Fund, which is now a section of the General Chapel Fund, though with a separate Treasurer, was launched as a centenary commemoration of the birth of Hugh Bourne. For many years the Leeds District was the managing committee of the General Chapel Fund. At present it is constituted on a much wider basis, having on it not only persons elected by the Districts and Conference, but also the Secretary and Treasurer of the Connexional Fund, the General Missionary Fund, and two members elected by the Chapel Aid Association, and two by the Directors of the Insurance Company. In fact the General Chapel Fund is thoroughly representative of the improved and Scientific Finance which we take to be a striking feature of the latest period of our history. This will appear all the clearer after we shall have made brief reference to the origin of the Insurance Company and the Chapel Aid Association just mentioned, and what they have done and are doing to help to place our Connexional property in a sounder financial position.

HULL LEADS THE WAY.

From facts and figures and regulations relating to chapels let us turn to some typical examples of chapel building. We cannot do better than begin with Hull, since, as the late Dr. Wood contended, it was there the chapel-building era of the Connexion commenced. Dr. Wood furthermore claims that to John Bywater belongs the honour of inaugurating this era. Other men of mark might be chapel-fillers; John Bywater was pre-eminently the chapel-builder. Such honoured men as Flesher, Sanderson, and Lamb might build chapels occasionally, but they did not take to the business as though "to the manner born," as did Mr. Bywater. Such are the views of Dr. Wood who, we must remember, had been the colleague and intimate friend of Mr. Bywater in Hull, and who writes as one thoroughly conversant with the facts of the case.*

* See a series of valuable articles on—"Recollections of Rev. John Bywater and early chapel-building in the town of Hull."—*Aldersgate Magazine*, 1898.

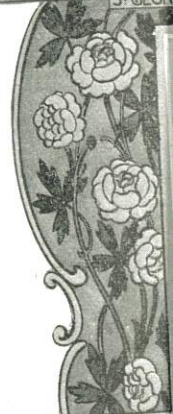




When Mr. Bywater went to Hull West Branch in 1847, there were three chapels in the town—West Street, Mason Street, and Nile Street—and all of them were crowded.* He soon saw what was needed, and he had the requisite courage and ability to push forward and carry through a new chapel project. Thornton Street Chapel, situated not far from the Pottery at which William Clowes had worked, was opened in 1849—that year of ill omen, when no less than two thousand persons were swept off by the cholera in Hull in the short space of three months. Thornton Street proved a great success but, unfortunately, after a fire which broke out on Easter Sunday, 1856, all that was left of the Chapel was bare blackened walls. The congregation found shelter in a vacant Episcopal Chapel hard by, which was lent gratuitously, and the new Thornton Street Chapel, improved and somewhat enlarged, was opened in September of the same year.

Meanwhile—in 1850—John Bywater had removed to Hull East Branch where a still weightier task awaited him, and a still stronger title to grateful remembrance was to be won. All were agreed that increased chapel accommodation was urgently needed, but opinion was divided as to the particular policy to be pursued in supplying that need. Some were of opinion that a Chapel should be built beyond the bridge in the Holderness Road direction, while others advocated the replacing of Mason Street by a large central Chapel. Mr. Bywater was strongly in favour of the latter policy, and by his tact he so far disarmed opposition as to be able peaceably and strenuously to proceed. A splendid site was obtained in Kingston Square in the centre of the town; Mr. William Sissons was called in as architect, Mr. Musgrove was the bricklayer, and Mr. Margison, a trustee and official, undertook the joiner-work. It is interesting to note that Messrs. Sissons and Margison were respectively the architect and contractor for the Thornton Street Chapel of 1856 just mentioned. Mr. Clowes was fully in sympathy with the views of Mr. Bywater, and some of the last meetings he attended were in connection with the Jarratt Street project. The foundation-stone of "Clowes' Chapel," as after the death of Mr. Clowes it was decided to call it, was laid on the Good Friday of 1851. There were troubles and accidents as the big building (it was to seat 1400 people) went up. The far-end gable gave way, killing two workmen and injuring others. The arch that supported the massive stone-steps subsided under the superincumbent weight. There began to be pessimistic whisperings and head-shakings. When a heavy thunderstorm passed over the town, and the rumour spread that the unfortunate gable had been struck by lightning, some said it was plain to see God was against the project. Amid all this the calmest and most cheerful man was John Bywater, although he had been struck down by illness. When the news was brought him that the gable had fallen—"Then," said he, "they must build it up again, and do it better next time." July, 1852, saw the opening of Jarratt Street, when sermons were preached by Mr. Bywater and Dr. Beaumont, whose impressive death took place (1855) in the pulpit of Waltham Street Chapel, not far away. It is but natural that something like a halo of sentiment should invest Jarratt Street Chapel, as though it were a personal entity. At its inception Clowes assisted. He bore the undertaking up before God in prayer. His shadow seemed to rest on its

* For previous references to these chapels see *ante* vol. i. pp. 373, 386, 457.



HULL CHAPELS



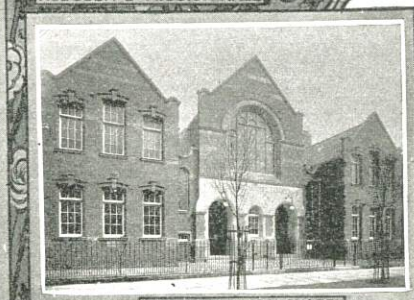
ST. GEORGE'S R.C.



HODGSON ST. MISSION HALL



BOURNE ANLABY R.C.



BETHESDA SCHOOL CHAPEL



LINCOLN ST.



HEDON R.C.



SELBY ST.



EBENEZER

foundation and opening services. It bears his name and stands as his memorial. Ministers of power have preached from its pulpit. Three Conferences have held their sittings within its walls. It is right we should speak of it here; and although it has now stood more than half a century, and many sanctuaries fair to look upon have sprung from it, yet, to our partial eyes, this mother-chapel in its goodly proportions recalls Milton's words concerning our first mother Eve—"fairest among her daughters."



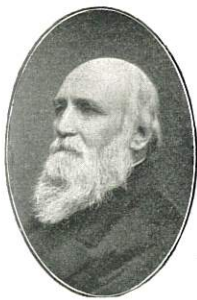
MR. SAMUEL HODGE.

Since the erection of Jarratt Street the multiplication of chapels and the division of circuits have gone on apace in the town of Hull. As long as Mr. Clowes lived there seemed to be an indisposition, even on the part of some of the stronger Branches, to part company with Hull Circuit which, one may say, was at that time a congeries of Branches. But, in 1853, the two Town-Branches of West and East became respectively Hull First and Second Circuits, while Scarborough and Brigg Branches were formed into separate stations. The only Branches still retained were Barton and Patrington which were attached, the one to Hull First, and the other to Hull Second. By successive divisions and sub-divisions the two Hull Circuits of 1853 have become the eleven of 1905, employing eighteen ministers, who minister to some twenty congregations within the borough, as well as to a number of country congregations.

We will borrow from Dr. Wood's informing articles a brief account of the course chapel enterprise took in Hull after the erection of Jarratt Street:—

"The two chapels next in time to Clowes' Chapel were Holderness Road and Jubilee, Spring Bank. The one was undertaken by Rev. William Garner, and the other by Rev. John Petty. Each seats more than a thousand persons, and is a noble and commanding structure; and each since its erection has had considerable additions made to its schoolroom accommodation. The Rev. Thomas Whitehead had the honour of building our largest chapel in Hull, the fine Gothic building in Anlaby Road, which seats 1420. The year after, Henry Hodge's Memorial Chapel, Williamson Street, with seating accommodation for 1400 persons and a splendid suite of school-rooms and class-rooms, was built under the superintendency of Rev. Parkinson Milson, to provide for the overflow from Holderness Road, and this has now become the head of Hull Sixth Circuit. About the same time, the writer was busy in getting a better home for old Church Street society by the erection of Lincoln Street Chapel—the Samuel Hodge Memorial—to seat 950 people, with commodious school and class-rooms. Rev. R. Cheeseman commenced and Rev. F. Rudd completed the Fountain Road premises which provide for 800 worshippers, and a large Sabbath School, and are situated in the midst of a rapidly-growing population. This was the second great offshoot from Clowes' Chapel, and it very much weakened for a time the old congregation there. In 1878 our early companion and intimate friend, Rev. Thomas Whittaker, had to provide for the overflow of Jubilee Chapel, and courageously did he undertake the erection of Ebenezer on Spring Bank, one of the finest Methodist structures in the town, seating about 1200, and having first-class accommodation for all departments of Sunday School work. In 1881, a second offshoot from Great Thornton Street, under the vigorous superintendency of Rev. W. Robinson, undertook

the erection of Hessle Road Chapel and Schools, another magnificent pile of buildings of which any Church might be proud, and where there are seats of the most approved style for 1000 worshippers. Lastly, St. George's Road in the Fifth Circuit, and Lambert Street, seating 850, another branch from Clowes' Chapel, are noble monuments of the skill and enterprise of Rev. Thomas Mitchell. All these were large and expensive erections, involving an outlay of from £3000 to £8000 or £9000; yet they are all plain Methodist chapels, without spires and costly ornamentation. We could go on when Mr. Bywater had set the example and made a beginning; but we claim him as the leader of the forward chapel movement in the town of Hull."



MR. J. WRIGHT,
Architect of the principal
Chapels in Hull and
District.

It must be admitted that for one city this is a goodly record, amply justifying reference being made to it here. And yet, since Dr. Wood wrote, the work of material extension has gone on, as the reader who inspects the views of Hull chapels inserted in the text will discover; and we may add further—the work is still going on; for some of the most recent acquisitions to our chapel property in Hull are not shown in our illustrations. As supplementary to these we give the portrait of Mr. J. Wright, formerly the well-known architect of some of the principal Hull chapels of the 'sixties and 'seventies. Towards the erection of Williamson Street Mr. Henry Hodge gave no less a sum than £600 and, quite properly, that chapel stands as his abiding memorial. His grandson, Mr. Edward Robson, worthily maintains the honourable traditions of the family for liberality, and activity in various forms of service.

There can be little doubt that Hull, by the number and still more by the position and character of its chapels, provided an object-lesson for the Connexion at a time when it was needed much more than it is to-day. Hull in these respects set a high standard and an inspiring example which must often have had its influence. That it had in one case is clear, from the following little anecdote, with which we may appropriately end the present section:—

"In the year 1874 Mr. T. W. Swindell and the late Mr. Robert Bell visited Hull during the sittings of the Conference, the latter in the capacity of delegate, the former merely as a visitor. They were impressed with the proportions and imposing exteriors of the chapels, more especially with the Jarratt Street edifice, as they sauntered up and down outside it.

"'We're not up-to-date at Yarmouth!' remarked Mr. Swindell, in which opinion Mr. Bell concurred. Whereupon the former, waxing eloquent and enthusiastic on the subject, made up his mind, on returning, to lay before the Yarmouth trustees the startling proposition to pull down the old barns and build greater."*

The outcome of this resolve was the transformation of the Yarmouth "Tabernacle" into the "Temple," as already told (vol. ii. pp. 223-9).

* "From Hayloft to Temple," by Arthur H. Patterson," p. 88.