

EXPERIENCE OF LATE STEPHEN
McMULLIN, OF HARTLAND

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(Hartland Observer)

I was blown ashore at Woodstock on a raft of logs twenty-one years ago, and spent that first evening in the bar rooms. I hunted up a lot of rowdies, my old chums, and we had a usual "good time." Little did I think that night that I was having my last drink.

The following evening, however, I fell in with the Salvation Army on the street and followed the music to their "open air." It was while Capt. McClein was singing that an arrow of conviction, like lightning from heaven, pierced my heart. Nine years previous, I had watched my sainted father die, and received his last exhortation without shedding a tear, but now I could not refrain. I resolved on the spot that never again would I raft logs on Sunday, nor drink, nor swear, and I kept this vow. I did not know what caused such a pain in my heart and began to think it must be heart disease. So I asked my rafting chum, who was thus afflicted, next day: "I wish you would tell me what your symptoms are, as I fear I have the same trouble." "Well," replied he, "I have spells, and feel like I am smothering." "But mine is only a sharp pain," I said.

The following Sunday found me home with the same pain and a desire to again hear the Army. But wife said, "why not attend church here in Hartland?" I replied, "there is something queer about the Army and I want to hear them again." But my boys, joining in with wife, laughed me out of it.

Next Sunday, however, the Army "opened fire" at Victoria Corner, and there was no keeping me home. I was at their all day meeting and even went out for prayer, but could not seem to pray myself. The Devil said to me, "there is plenty of time," and I 61 years old! "Do you use tobacco?" asked the Capt. "No," I replied. "Well, I don't see what is holding you; you had better go home and read your Bible." I took her advice and began with Ezek. 33rd Chapter. The first week my Bible was kept upstairs under my hat, but later I brought it down stairs and did not care who saw me reading it. For six weeks I searched the scriptures reading all the time I could get, but no let up in the "pain in my heart."

During this time there was a big fight on at Hartland about "holiness" and "sanctification." But I found it everywhere from Genesis to Revelation. Rev. B. T. Gaskin and Brother F. Shea came in to see me while we were having dinner. "What are you doing for your soul?" they asked. "The best I can," I replied. "Do you pray?" "No." "Well, let's pray, and you pray with us." "If you will pray for the unbelief to depart I will try," I said. So they prayed and yet all looked as black to me as a stove, and my heart pain continued, until I made the effort and began to pray. I had said only two or three words when the light broke into my soul. The heart pain left me (never had it since) and I was up walking up and down the room. About the second step I took my father appeared to me, and walked by my side as I marched the room, clapping my hands and praising God. I said to my boy sitting by, "Hitch up the team. I want to go through this old world and tell what God has done for me." I then went and told my son

who lived nearby in his own home. I felt like taking Bros. Gaskin and Shea, one on each arm, and marching up through the village, praising God. But when I got home these brethren had gone, and wife suggested that I was acting the fool. I entertained this thought and soon came to the same conclusion. When immediately, there fell a darkness upon my soul and I was willing to give up the whole thing. This experience I call my "first slap," but I soon got the "second slap" that cured me of doubting.

That afternoon I went to work in an open field out back of the house. And while there in that level field I heard a voice distinctively say, "Go over the river and tell the boys what God has done for you. There were two or three stumps where a person might hide, so I went and looked behind these, and finding no person, concluded that God had spoken to me. So I went over to Victoria Corner to the Army meeting. I said in my heart, "Now, Lord, if I am really converted I want you to handle me like you did this noon." When the meeting was opened I got down to pray. But as soon as I had begun the fire fell upon my soul, and I was on my feet praying and praising God and exhorting sinners. I threw off my coat and dared any one to go out of that room without making their peace with God. When I began to march up and down the aisle there were only a few people in the building, but soon the news spread, "Stephen McMullin had gone crazy," and in a short time the house was full. The women were afraid that something would happen, but the men said, "we can hold him anyhow," though some in the hurry of dressing for church had forgotten and left their pant legs rolled up to their knees above the boot tops.

After marching the aisle for some time I went on the platform, and, just as I stepped up my sainted father again appeared to me, and with him several others of the heavenly host whom I had known when they lived and worked for God. There were Elder Hartt Kronk, Pennington McMullen (father whom I have mentioned), and a number of others. Also a host of bright children I continued to clap my hands, holding them up a little just above the heads of the glorified children. That platform will never be so full again.

I believe this experience to have been my sanctification, "second slap" I call it. God here took charge of me, and has run me ever since. I have been too busy to backslide—busy hunting up my old chums and trying to lead them to God. The only meetings I care to attend are the ones where something is being done for God, and sinners getting saved. I always went in with all my might for the devil, and now I do the same in God's service. I was once out on the road driving two colts I was breaking. I saw a man coming along who proved to be an old chum I had wanted to see. I at once told him what God had done for me and said, "Come, get down on your knees here in the road while I pray for you. God will save you if you will let him, as he did me." So I prayed while holding the colts with one hand.

Another time I had just a few minutes to call on an old chum, as I had to catch a certain train. He came to the door when I knocked and I had prayer with him on the verandah while I held the horse with one hand, there not being time to tie the horse and go in. "Yes, I expect that (in answer to a question) God has enabled me to win a hundred or more souls to him. I only wish I

had let God take charge of me when I was a boy."

"I was healed, too. When saved I was broken in health and full of aches and pains and rheumatism, but I saw in the word that Christ could heal the body. I prayed and trusted and was perfectly cured so that I have no aches nor pains since. God is my healer and I have no use for doctors' medicines.

Some day I will join the triumphant company and have a robe and a crown and march the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, clapping my hands and praising God for saving a poor hardened sinner that might have been in hell now had I been cut off in my sins. Once I fell just in front of a loaded sled in motion but was pulled out by the men just in time. God has done great things for me, and I want to give him all the glory. I want all to know what a wonderful Saviour he is and so I send out this my testimony praying that God may use it for his glory. I hope the local papers may copy and be read wherever I have been known. Yours in the blood, and filled with the Spirit,

STEPHEN McMULLIN

YOUTH OUR GREATEST TREASURE

In one of his inimitable word pictures the late Elbert Hubbard wrote: "I have a profound respect for boys. Grimy, ragged, tousled boys in the street often attract me strangely. A boy is a man in the cocoon—you do not know what it is going to become. Yesterday I rode past a field where a boy was plowing. The lad's hair stuck out through the top of his hat; one suspender held his trousers in place, his form was boney and awkward; his bare legs and arms were brown and sunburned and briar scratched. He swung his horses around just as I passed by, and from under the flapping brim of his hat, he cast a glance out of dark, half-bashful eyes and modestly returned my salute. When his back was turned I took off my hat and sent a 'God-bless-you' down the furrow after him. Who knows? I may want to borrow money from that boy tomorrow, or to hear him preach, or to beg him to defend me in a lawsuit, or he may stand with pulse un hastened, bare of arms, in white apron, ready to do his duty, while the cone is placed over my face, and Night and Death come creeping into my veins. Be patient with boys—you are dealing with soul stuff. Destiny awaits just around the corner. Be patient with the boys."

This is half the picture. Christian homes are also sending forth into life girls just as interesting, as charming, as fine in soul and mind and body as our boys. We must at all cost do our best by them and for them, and we are especially concerned that the Church should succeed in the problems of their religious welfare and development. We really must have for a future men and women who are dependable, and who have such a love for God and the Church that they will not be interested in the numerous propositions that usually come to people of recognized ability to go elsewhere. Those who have grown up with us will in the future as in the past be our greatest resource for the talent and consecration necessary to carry on. God bless our young men and women, and our boys and girls! The best we have is not too good for them, and the best they have is not too good to invest in our beloved Church.—The Wesleyan Methodist.