

# **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

BY

**GEORGE HEROD**

B I O G R A P H I C A L  
S K E T C H E S  
O F S O M E  
O F T H O S E P R E A C H E R S  
W H O S E L A B O U R S C O N T R I B U T E D T O T H E O R I G I N A T I O N  
A N D E A R L Y E X T E N S I O N O F T H E  
P R I M I T I V E M E T H O D I S T  
C O N N E X I O N .

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B Y G E O R G E H E R O D ,  
*Minister of the Gospel.*

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“ Let Biography be the Minister's handmaid to study and devotion ; for the tale of a  
good man's life is food for a godly soul.”

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN the fact of the church of Jesus Christ being divided into numerous sects some persons find a plea for professedly disbelieving the reality of religion; and there are others who have arrived at the conclusion that no sect ought to be allowed to exist but the one with which they are united. But it is our opinion that if the church were confined to one particular mode of worship, or form of government, a diminution of usefulness would inevitably follow; and probably mankind would be in danger of sinking into darkness and superstition. The awful state in which the world was placed, with respect to true piety, whilst Popery universally prevailed, and the mighty re-action, or spread of religion, which took place upon the reformation, exhibit a strong proof of the correctness of this opinion; and, indeed, it would seem from the following considerations that the wisdom and goodness of God are displayed in permitting the church to be thus divided:—all men cannot be brought to think alike on the same subject. It is said by one that angels may thus agree, who see nothing through an imperfect or false medium, but to man this is impossible. Therefore a diversity of means of grace has been permitted, and established; a variety also of forms of church government has been brought into useful operation, and hence men are gathered into the church, and preserved from apostacy, who would perhaps have been following a course of vice, had things been otherwise ordered. Again, if there were no parts there could be no union—if there were no variety the beauties of harmony would not be perceived. “Uniformity of sentiment,” says a modern author, “may be viewed much in the same way with equality of property; in each case the thing itself is perfectly imprac-

ticable,—and could it be attained, would prove injurious rather than useful: it would abrogate many divine injunctions, contract the sphere of relative virtue, and exclude various duties which go far into the amiableness and perfection of christian character. If all were seeing, where were the hearing?—the hands and the feet could not dispense with each other, or even exchange their place or office. If persons acted from hypocrisy, formality, and education only, then might their sentiments become alike; but if they shall think for themselves, as they are not only allowed, but required to do, it is very easy to see that, with the differences there are in the structure of mind, and outward opportunities, and advantages, they cannot fall into precisely the same views." Some may ask the grave question which St. Paul put to the Corinthians—"Is Christ divided?"—Can he be split among different sects or parties? Has he different and opposing systems? Or is the Messiah to appear under different persons? We answer—*no*; the church is not known to Jesus Christ by any of the names which are the result of human invention;—the primary, and, substantially, the only marks of recognition acknowledged by him being spirituality of mind, and holiness of life. The members of the church are described as branches grafted into Christ as the living Vine, deriving spiritual vitality from his death and resurrection, so as to be one with him, as he is one with the Father. And though we may, perhaps with propriety, in some degree, value our privilege in being of, or belonging to, any given community, we shall be saved only as members of the true church universal; and if our hearts are right with God we must prize the name of a Christian, as properly applied to ourselves, a thousand times more highly than any other name, however it was introduced,—or however extensively esteemed the religious body may be to which it is applied.

It is not our intention to make any remarks on the origin of the different sections of the church which have come under our notice in the course of our observation and reading, but we may observe that whenever Providence has raised up a people to be useful, either in early or late years, history bears testimony to the great opposition they have sustained. This opposition is not found to have arisen through the creation of divisions in other communities, but on account of the efforts made to overthrow

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## LORENZO DOW.

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### CHAPTER I.

His Parentage—Religious impressions in his childhood—The cause of his asthma—His Dreams—The introduction of Methodism into his native town—His convictions for sin—His conversion.

LORENZO Dow was born October 16th, 1777, at Coventry, Tolland County, State of Connecticut, North America. His parents were born in the same town, and descended from English ancestors. They had two sons and four daughters, towards whom they were very affectionate, and whom they endeavoured to educate, both in religion and learning. His mother was a member of the Congregational Church, and his father a constant hearer. The former taught Lorenzo the shorter catechism, the creed, and some hymns.

When he was between three and four years of age, one day while playing with a companion, he suddenly fell into a "muse" about God, and heaven, and hell, (having heard people talk about them,) so that he forgot his play. His companion observing this desired to know the cause; when Lorenzo asked him if he said his prayers morning and night; to which he replied, no; "then," said Lorenzo, "you are wicked, and I will not play with you."

Young Dow gave indications that the good spirit influenced his mind, and was drawing his affections towards his Creator, until he was eight years of age: after this he exemplified that scripture which says, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." His parents having to remove to another neighbourhood, the youth of which were very profligate, he began to associate with them; and very soon partook of their spirit, and shewed the effects thereof in his demeanour. In this state he remained until he was twelve years of age, but not without feeling the anguish of a guilty conscience, especially in retirement: and also when he thought of dying, death caused him such terror that he desired to be translated, as were Enoch and Elijah; and at other times he wished he had never been born. At the age of twelve his impetuous mind received a check. He had been labouring hard, and over-heated himself, and while in a profuse perspiration, he drank a quantity of cold milk and water, which brought on him an asthmatical complaint, from which he was never afterwards fully freed; and this not only caused him great suffering at times, through difficulty of breathing, but he had generally to sleep upon the floor, or something that was hard. In his afflictions he endured much pain, but he did not consider the hand of God was in the matter, until he had the following dream: "he dreamt that he saw the Prophet Nathan, in a large assembly of people, prophesying many things. He thought he got an opportunity to ask him how long he should live, and the prophet said until you are twenty two." This dream was so impressed on his mind that it caused him to think seriously on his dangerous state.

When he was between thirteen and fourteen years of age, in the year 1791, it pleased God more fully to awaken him to a sense of his wretched and lost condition as a sinner by another dream. He says, "I dreamt one night that an old man came to me at mid-day, having a staff in his hand, and said to me 'do you ever pray?' I replied no; he said 'you must;' and then went away. He had not been long