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Matthew Arnold and the Nonconformists

IN his autobiography, E. E. Kellett tells how Matthew Arnold's Nonconformist contemporaries regarded him: "Of all distinguished Victorians" he says, "the one most utterly detested by Nonconformists was Matthew Arnold. . . As is the way with humanity, they read what made their blood boil. *Literature and Dogma, Culture and Anarchy, Friendship's Garland*, they studied with fascinated fury."[1] It must have been a trial of charity, indeed, for a body of Christians, who were excluded from the best education the country afforded, to be told that they lacked "sweetness and light," and Arnold adopted an unfortunate tone in dealing with Dissent, even though he sincerely believed that he was working for its good.

Our purpose here is not to make a complete survey of everything Arnold wrote about Protestantism, Puritanism and Nonconformity—he seems to use the three terms as synonyms—but to give an outline of his attitude, followed by a study of some Nonconformist reviews of his two central works in this field, *Culture and Anarchy* and *St. Paul and Protestantism.*

A previous article ("Matthew Arnold's Theology," *B.Q.*, Oct. 1951) by the present writer dealt with his dislike of Calvinism. The works of Calvin (one wonders how much he knew of them) he saw as "narrow, rigid, menacing," and Victorian Calvinism, perverting Paul's teaching in order to support itself, was making Christianity into something that the modern mind could not accept. Arnold regarded Nonconformity as the system that was perpetuating Calvinism; there was Calvinism in the Establishment, but he forgave the Anglican Evangelicals because, in keeping Calvinism, they had kept so much besides, and had left themselves in the way of development.

Arnold's theological objection to Dissent was not founded on knowledge. His social objection was perhaps better founded, for in 1851 he was appointed inspector of elementary schools, and, as the Anglican and Roman schools had clerical inspectors, Arnold's work lay among the schools of the British and Foreign Schools Society, and the Wesleyan schools. Through these schools he came into contact with leading Nonconformists of the various denominations. Nonconformity, he decided, was "the Church of the Philistines"—the enemies of the children of light, who preferred energy to intelligence, doing to thinking, working for practical causes to reflecting on the First Cause. Both "Hebraism"—energetic doing—and "Hellenism" or intelligent thinking, were good, and they were complementary; but Arnold believed that mid-Victorian Britain had a surplus of "Hebraism," and its mainspring was Nonconformity. The Nonconformists

[1] E. E. Kellett, *As I Remember* (1936), p. 217.

must be saved from their Hebraistic leaders, from their narrow, hole-and-corner existence outside the main stream of the nation's life. This was Arnold's mission, and the Nonconformists, rather naturally, did not appreciate it.

The practical remedy that he suggested is interesting today in view of movements towards reunion. He thought that a church of Presbyterian order should be established in England on an equal footing with the Episcopal Church, for "both (Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism) were in the Church of England at the Reformation and . . . Presbyterianism was only extruded gradually."[2] He saw that the severities practised by the Establishment in the Seventeenth century had made "union on an Episcopalian footing impossible," and he believed that:—

> "Presbyterianism, the popular authority of elders, the power of the congregation in the management of their own affairs, has that warrant given to it by Scripture and by the proceedings of the early Christian Churches, it is so consonant with the spirit of Protestantism . . . it is so predominant in the practice of other Reformed Churches, it was so strong in the original Reformed Church of England, that one cannot help doubting whether any settlement which suppressed it could be really permanent."[3]

Arnold was a thorough Erastian; his objection to Nonconformity was simply that it would not conform to the Establishment, for he had no theological opinions on such matters as the "apostolic succession," which so divide us today. He did not understand the argument for a free Church, and he thought that his projected Presbyterian establishment ought to satisfy all Nonconformists, who, freed from the necessity of accepting episcopacy, would stream into it. Yet with all his concessions in the matter of reunion, Arnold was inexorable in his opposition to the Puritan type of religion which, while overcoming the grosser faults of character, is "narrow and inadequate," revealing Hebraism at its worst. The Nonconformists, he thought, were doing much harm by emphasising a quality of which the English had too much already: energy without light. This emphasis prevented any free play of thought, and must be altered. It was time "to Hellenise a little."

> "A more free play of consciousness, an increased desire for sweetness and light, and all the bent which we call Hellenising, is the master-impulse even now of our nation and of humanity."[4]

This was the choice that Arnold saw before Britain: either this discipline of true culture through a right use of criticism, that is, of the intelligence, or—Anarchy.

Culture and Anarchy appeared first in the *Cornhill* in 1867

[2] *Culture and Anarchy*, Preface.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*

and 1868, under the titles "Culture and its Enemies" and "Anarchy and Authority," and in 1869 it was published in book form. The general reaction was favourable. Concerning the *Cornhill* articles he wrote to his mother, "I am astonished, and so is George Smith,[5] at the favourable reception what I have said meets with, but this shows how ripe people's minds are, for a change, in some of their fixed notions on these matters."[6]

The Preface to *Culture and Anarchy,* in which he strongly criticised the Liberals and Nonconformists, was naturally attacked by these, but Arnold takes this cheerfully as evidence that he has gained a hearing. "The Liberal newspapers one and all attack it," he writes, "and this, too, they are likely to do more and more."[7] A week later he adds, "However much I may be attacked, my manner of writing is one that takes hold of people and proves effective."[8]

In June, 1869, he feels even more confident: "The chapters on Hellenism and Hebraism are in the main, I am convinced, so true that they will form a kind of centre for English thought and speculation on the matters treated in them."[9]

Some idea of the reception given to the book by Nonconformists may be gained from reviews which appeared in some of the Free Church periodicals. The weeklies were not greatly stirred, though the *Christian World,* in a review entitled "A Poet on State-Churchism," took Arnold to task for his indifference to the cause of Irish disestablishment, and for his belief that great men were not reared outside Established churches. The *English Independent* ignored the book, and Edward Miall's other paper, the *Nonconformist,* printed no review until 1869, though it published short notices of the *Cornhill* essays.[10] In the opinion of this paper, Arnold's work was "deeply interesting, but eminently unsatisfactory;" let him continue in this vein if he pleases, for it was amusing and did the "Philistines" no harm. That learned organ of Nonconformity, the *British Quarterly Review,* dealt with Arnold's book more thoroughly.[11] It calls *Culture and Anarchy* "a very racy and suggestive essay," but goes on to upbraid him heavily and, one feels, without a grasp of essentials, for it considers that "the pith and point" of the essay is a desire to arrest the disestablishment of the Irish Church. Though its complaints are often just, a lighter approach might have been more effective.

[5] Of Smith, Elder and Co., publishers of the *Cornhill Magazine* and of many of Arnold's works.
[6] *Letters,* ed. G. W. E. Russell (1901), I pp. 455-6.
[7] *Ibid,* II, p. 4.
[8] *Ibid,* II, p. 6.
[9] *Ibid,* II, p. 13.
[10] *Nonconformist,* Jan. 11, 1868; July 8, 1868; Aug. 5, 1868.
[11] *British Quarterly Review,* April 1, 1869, p. 569.

There was little evidence of agreement with Arnold's ideas from Church or Dissent, but most of the reviewers treat him with respect and they provide evidence that he was making people think. Widespread interest among serious people of all opinions; encouragement from his friends; and the knowledge that he must make himself clearer on some points—all these factors probably urged Arnold to "repeat the dose."

St. Paul and Protestantism, with an Essay on Puritanism and the Church of England, was reprinted, like *Culture and Anarchy,* from the *Cornhill Magazine,* and the first edition appeared in 1870. A convenient statement of its purpose is given by Mr. Herbert W. Paul:—

> "The author desired to contrast Hebraism, the philosophy of morals, with Hellenism, the philosophy of thought. He sought also to prove that Evangelical Puritanism, which grounded itself upon the doctrines of St. Paul, had misunderstood and perverted the teaching of the apostle. Of Evangelical Puritanism the Nonconformists were the chief representatives, and therefore they come in for a peculiar share of Mr. Arnold's attention.[12]

Dissent, Arnold argued, was keeping alive a spirit of contentiousness, and that for the sole reason of perpetuating Calvinism; and, as Mr. Paul continues:—

> "He proceeded to argue in favour of unity, of one Church . . . but it soon appeared that the new universal Church was to be purged of all doctrine. God was no longer to be as the Calvinists made Him, 'a magnified and non-natural man,' but 'that stream of tendency by which all things strive to fulfil the law of their being'."

It is small wonder that this did not commend itself to orthodox Dissent, warring as it did against central Christian doctrines and against the freedom of the Church from all State control. The more militant Dissenters naturally concentrated on the less important part of the book, the essay on Puritanism and the Church of England. Arnold noticed this and wrote to his mother: "My expostulation with the Dissenters has rather diverted attention from the main essays, but the two things, the position of the Dissenters and the right reading of St. Paul and the New Testament are closely connected."[13]

Foremost among the attackers of the book was the *Nonconformist* the paper founded in 1841, by Edward Miall, and carrying the motto which so irritated Arnold, "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant Religion." The reviews in this journal began in October, 1869, when Arnold had not reached his discussion of Dissent, and Miall considers the *Cornhill* essay "one of the most able and interesting articles of

[12] Herbert W. Paul, *Matthew Arnold* (English Men of Letters), 1902, p. 121.

[13] *Letters,* II, p. 48.

the month." He is pleased with Arnold's recognition of the doctrinal agreement prevailing among Congregationalists. A month later another review appeared, dealing with the second essay. It is far more hostile than the first. Arnold's attack on Puritanism, says Miall, might have injured if his power had equalled his will, but as it is, the Puritan position has not been weakened. Puritanism is "the most active and intelligent part of Christendom, and that which has certainly done most for human liberty and progress." Miall does not neglect Arnold's interpretation of St. Paul, and he writes as a competent theologian. No agreement is possible between him and Arnold on the subject of Biblical criticism, for if, as Miall believes, the New Testament "be a divine revelation," Arnold's treatment is "altogether out of place." On June 8th, 1870, the *Nonconformist* published a further review, evoked by the first edition of *St. Paul and Protestantism*. Miall asks why Arnold does not include the Anglican Evangelicals in his condemnation? "[Their] solifidianism appears to be condoned because of their remaining in the Church." He goes on to say that the Dissenters will never "crucify conscience, subscribe creeds we do not believe, submit to episcopal ordination as a mere State ceremony, and take our places in the ranks of the national hierarchy."

The *English Independent*, another paper under Miall's control,[14] also attacked Arnold's book. The first review, which appeared on October 7th, 1869, gives a slightly twisted summary of Arnold's first essay, and is written in a tone of ridicule:—

> Arnold, it says, having entered the lists, "will proceed to attack the most famous champions of Christendom, driving the lance of Anselm into shivers, splitting the helmet of Augustine. . . laying the burly Luther flat . . . rolling Calvin in the dust, routing the Jansenists, and finally, having dispersed the whole Puritan hordes, waiting meekly to receive the crown of sweetness and light, amid the grateful plaudits of English Christians."

In November of the same year, the *English Independent* deals with Arnold's interpretation of St. Paul. The doctrine of salvation by faith, says the writer, is held by "all the churches of Christendom, with one insignificant exception": is this "insignificant exception" the Church of Rome? A fortnight later an anonymous letter appears in defence of Arnold. "It seems to me," writes the correspondent, "and I am not alone in the thought, that you are not quite just to the new expounder of St. Paul."[15] Unfortunately this only irritates Miall; in the next issue he denies that he has misrepresented Arnold, and returns to Arnold's treatment of St. Paul. The essay on Puritanism and the Church of England is reviewed in this

[14] The two papers were amalgamated in 1879.
[15] *English Independent*, Nov. 18, 1869, p. 1143.

paper on February 17th, 1870. Arnold's purpose says Miall, seems to be two-fold: to show that belief cannot be the basis of ecclesiastical unity, and that errors can be tolerated in a church, so long as it is "national and historic." Arnold's picture of the Church struggling with Calvinistic Puritanism for her openness of mind is a strange new reading of history; but as long as the Authorised Version is in people's hands, both St. Paul's doctrines and Puritanism are safe. The final volley from this quarter came after the first edition.[16] Arnold, says Miall, has a horror of Calvinism and Dissent, and thinks the "Zeit-Geist" will soon have melted both; but it may melt Established churches. Dissenters inherit the "watchful jealousy" which Arnold dislikes from persecuted ancestors; and, though Arnold might cut at many of their acknowledged weak spots, they object to being whittled away.

Calmer, and therefore more effective, criticism came from the *Christian World*,[17] which, after summarising Arnold's argument, decides that he has made a great fuss about nothing. Calvinism need not be alarmed; Paul's assertion that all things have been determined by the will of God is not fatalism, and Arnold has left it unscathed. The review shows no appreciation of the good in Arnold's work, and it is not followed by any other comment. The *Freeman*, the Baptist weekly which was later amalgamated with the *Baptist Times*, also joined battle. A short notice[18] of Arnold's first *Cornhill* essay sums up his position, and adds—temperately enough—"We certainly think he misrepresents the Puritans." A longer review follows,[19] in which the reviewer, at one with Arnold in desiring to understand Paul, is utterly at variance with him concerning the apostle's divine inspiration. Arnold's abandonment of the orthodox doctrine of the Atonement cuts away the cause of Paul's attachment to Christ, and leads Arnold himself hopelessly astray. This review is continued in the following issue,[20] when it deals with Arnold's interpretation of the Sacrifice of Christ, and in 1870[21] the *Freeman* reviews the essay on Puritanism under the title "A New Invitation to Conform." This review points out that, contrary to Arnold's belief, the Puritans separated because the Church was too narrow for them.

> "This new step towards comprehension," continues the reviewer, "convinces us more than ever that the greatest obstacle to the unity of Christendom is the system of political establishments."

[16] *Ibid*, May 13, 1870.
[17] *Christian World*, Nov. 5, 1869.
[18] The *Freeman*, Oct. 15, 1869.
[19] *Ibid*, Nov. 12, 1869.
[20] *Ibid*, Nov. 19, 1869.
[21] *Ibid*, Feb. 4, 1870.

The *Freeman*, more moderate and perhaps more constructive than the Congregational weeklies, emphasises the Baptists' proud claim to pre-Reformation origin :—

> "Our protest against State interference with religion is as old as that interference itself. 'What has the Emperor to do with the Church?' cried the Baptists of the Fourth Century."

Heavier artillery was brought into the field by the *British Quarterly Review*, which in July 1870 reviewed *Culture and Anarchy* and *St. Paul and Protestantism* together. The reviewer starts well enough : Arnold's exposition of St. Paul's teaching and rebuke to Puritanism are not to be regretted, he says, for fresh thought must come. But this tone is not maintained; some good points are made, but exaggerated language destroys their effect. There is no sign of an understanding of Arnold's basic ideas; for example, the reviewer, anxious to prove that the Dissenters are not "an obstacle to progress and true civilisation," lists "their evangelising work among the poor in rural villages, and large towns, their Sunday and Ragged Schools, their Home and Foreign Missions, and their educational efforts." But one who has read *Culture and Anarchy* should know that Arnold would regard all this as "machinery," the pursuit of which *as an end in itself* was the bane of "Hebraism." This writer is on stronger ground in charging Arnold with indifference to virtue when it appears in a form that did not attract him :—

> "We much fear," he says, "that the first Church of the Galilean fishermen, as contrasted with the cultured 'sweetness and light' of the Sadducees and Pharisees, would, because of its vulgarity, have found but little favour in the eyes of Mr. Arnold."

A sequal to this review[22] discusses Arnold's interpretation of St. Paul, and is consequently less heated. Arnold, says this critic, thinks he has said enough in pointing out Paul's passion for righteousness; but this is a half-truth, and he misses the core of the religious life, which is union with God. Paul was certainly against Antinomianism, but it does not follow that the doctrines of Calvinism are false. Again on what authority does Arnold take a merely ethical sentence from Paul[23] and affirm that it is the only foundation of the Christian Church? He believes in a Church that is co-extensive with the nation; this forces him to sacrifice doctrine to inclusiveness.

Two groups of Nonconformists at this period lay outside Arnold's criticisms, for they were not associated with narrow Calvinism, and in general they had a higher standard of culture than their fellow-Dissenters. These were the Society of Friends

[22] *British Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1870.

[23] "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (*II Timothy* ii, 19)

and the Unitarians; and both bodies contributed fairly disinterested reviews of *St. Paul and Protestantism.* The *Friends' Quarterly Examiner,* a journal of high intellectual quality, published an article, "Paul and Christianity," signed by Edward Pearson.[24] The attention of the "intellectuo-religious" world has been drawn to Arnold's book, and there is much beauty in it; Pearson strongly sympathises with the main argument, though he feels bound "to reassert, on behalf of the Apostle, those utterances of his which we think are most prominent with him, and to object to the introduction into his words of meanings which cannot be proved to have been within his intention." The Unitarian periodicals received Arnold's essays calmly having no fear of his view of Calvinism. The *Inquirer*[25] deals kindly with his criticism of St. Paul, and fears that the value of his articles may be overlooked: "They are in truth elaborate and masterly, [and] cast . . . in a literary and critical mould; and they have rendered an important service to Christian truth and progress." The *Inquirer* reviewed the essay on Puritanism later,[26] praising his "noble vindication of St. Paul" and partly accepting his view of Orthodox Dissent. A fortnight later another review appeared, this time defending the Dissenters. Arnold must remember that "the true schismatics are they who compel separation;" unlike Carlyle or Kingsley, he seems unable to appreciate the nobler qualities of Puritanism, and he does not understand the power of religious ideas. Comprehension is impossible now; the only solution is equality which means disestablishment. Unitarians also deplore the narrow rigidity of some Dissenters; but Arnold must drop his ingenious nicknames and acrid sneers." On October 8th, 1870, the *Inquirer* mentions with approval a "vigorous reply to Mr. Matthew Arnold's notorious philippic against the Nonconformists" by Leslie Stephen, in *Fraser's Magazine,*[27] and a week later it praises the articles in the *British Quarterly Review.* Arnold must by now regret his "dilettante onslaught on Nonconformists" and "heartily repent his scornful philippic against a class of men so well able to defend themselves." Finally the *Inquirer,* in an article entitled "Dissenters and Disestablishment,"[28] disclaims "that watchful jealousy and suspicion of the Church of England which Mr. Matthew Arnold, with some rhetorical exaggeration, describes as the normal attitude of the Dissenting sects." The *Theological Review,* another Unitarian journal, published a weighty article by Kegan Paul, "Arnold and

[24] *Friends Quarterly Examiner,* Vol. 5, 1871.
[25] *Inquirer,* Nov. 27, 1869.
[26] *Ibid,* June 4, 1870.
[27] *Fraser's Magazine,* October, 1870.
[28] *Inquirer,* April 22, 1871.

St. Paul." [29] Paul approves of Arnold's method without accepting all his conclusions, and sugests that the new book be reprinted with a paraphrase of the harder Pauline passages, and "docked of personalities" which, amusing in an article, blemish a permanent work. His agreement with the "whole drift and spirit" of Arnold's book counterbalances minor disagreements, and all Kegan Paul's suggestions are full of a constructive spirit rare in reviews.

Outside the denominational press, three of the more thoughtful reviews printed a defence of Nonconformity. The best is probably that by R. W. Dale, "Mr. Matthew Arnold and the Nonconformists," in the *Contemporary Review*.[30] Dale at once goes to the root of the controversy; Arnold, he says, misses the true "idea" of Puritanism, which is not a set of doctrines, but a sense of the value of personal religion and of unfettered access to God. The Puritans did not seek to bind the Church to Calvinism; they left it because they could not remain in it honestly. Dale explains Congregational church order, and shows why the Puritans rejected the Anglican liturgy. The whole article is as good a defence as could be made, displaying more critical ability than most of the reviews mentioned above. His conclusion is characteristic of this great man :—

> "Let us part good friends. Mr. Arnold bears a name which Nonconformists regard with affection and veneration. . . . From his own writings we have received intellectual stimulus and delight, for which we are grateful. . . . We can but bid each other God-speed." [31]

In the following year this journal published another defence of Puritanism, "The English Church and Dissenters" [32] by the Nonconformist leader, J. Baldwin Brown, who argues that the Roman and Anglican Churches represent attempts to support Christian truth by political action, which support, useful in the past should now be withdrawn. Arnold, the "franc tireur" of the Establishment, is a champion of comprehension who dreads excess, one of the "apostles of culture" who think that contact with a wider world would benefit Nonconformists. "We agree with them profoundly," he adds "but we pray them, instead of lifting up their bars to let us into their pale, to cast down their walls, and let us out together into the wider world." The third article in this group is "A Puritan's Apology" in *Macmillan's Magazine*,[33] by A. S. Wilkins, a Congregationalist classical scholar and Professor of Latin at Manchester. The *Guardian* called this

[29] *Theological Review*, Oct., 1871.
[30] *Contemporary Review*, July, 1870.
[31] Because of his father, Dr. Thomas Arnold, of Rugby.
[32] *Contemporary Review*, Jan., 1871.
[33] *Macmillan's Magazine*, Aug., 1870.

"a weak and thin paper," contrasting it with the powerful defence, "not unworthy of its distinguished author, Dr. Dale." Indeed, this article is an "apology," in every sense of the word, though Professor Wilkins does attempt to show that "it is impossible for honest men to accept formularies which they believe . . . lead to errors against which they feel most bound to protest." The essay does not dig deep; it does not examine Arnold's interpretation of history, and assumes he is right in thinking that the Puritans separated because the Church was not narrow enough for them.

These reviews are representative of the reception given to Arnold's two books by the Nonconformists, and it is clear that he was pleased with the result, sharp though much of the criticism was. Arnold was an educator, and his object was not so much to win approval as to prick complacency and force people to reconsider their "stock notions and habits." This he felt he had achieved, and he obviously read his critics with interest, writing to his mother after the appearance of "St. Paul and Protestantism" in the *Cornhill*, he says: "It is not worth while to send you the lucubrations I receive, but the newspapers I forward (the organs of the Independents and Baptists) will show you how entirely I have reached the special Puritan class I meant to reach. Whether I have rendered St. Paul's ideas with perfect correctness or not, there is no doubt that the confidence with which these people regarded their conventional rendering of them was quite baseless, made them narrow and intolerant and preventing all progress." [34]

On December 5th, 1869, Arnold writes that "the better Dissenters" are "amiable" towards him, and to his friend Lady de Rothschild he says: "I should like to have shown you some of the Nonconformist speeches at the recent May meetings,[35] full of comments on my preface to *St. Paul and Protestantism*. We shall see great changes in the Dissenters before very long." [36] Throughout 1870 his confidence grows; he is apparently unprepared to reconsider his view of Puritanism, and he is sure that he has reached the Nonconformists, and that his arguments will prevail; he believes that "more than half the world can never frankly accept the person of whom they learn, but kick at the same time as they learn." [37]

Arnold would elucidate, but not retract. The last *Cornhill* essay, "Puritanism and the Church of England," was written

[34] *Letters* II, pp. 23-4. Arnold's letters provide evidence that he was reading the *Nonconformist* several years before this.

[35] I have not been able to trace these yet, and I should be indebted to any reader who can help.

[36] *Letters* II, pp. 34-5.

[37] *Letters* II, pp. 51-2.

" to clear away offence or misunderstanding," and to show " that the aim at setting forth certain Protestant doctrines . . . is the main title on which the Puritan churches rest their right of existing." The idea of a " free church," he says, came later. The favourite objection to the first two essays had been that the Nonconformists were not the only ones to hold Calvinist doctrines; but, Arnold replies, the Nonconformist Churches are founded on those doctrines alone. He is no enemy of the Puritans: " Our one feeling when we regard them, is . . . of regret at waste of power; our one desire is . . . comprehension." To Arnold, " the Church exists, not for the sake of opinions, but for the sake of moral practice," and the only justifiable separation is " on plain points of morals." In this defence, Arnold quotes " a Nonconformist newspaper " which called the Church of England " a Church that does not know her own mind "—but this, to him, is her greatest praise. He quotes twice from an address by the Rev. G. W. Conder, which was reported in the *Lancashire Congregational Calendar* for 1869-70. In conclusion he repeats his wish for union, but affirms that this can never be on the basis of " Scriptural Protestantism." If he can convince the Puritans of this he will not have written in vain. The reader is left with the impression that Arnold, while ready to do all he can to clarify his position, still holds it tenaciously.

The old spirit of bitterness has gone, and it is easier for the Baptist of today to be fair to this confident critic, and even to agree with him in some things, than it was for his grandfather. But at the risk of stating the obvious it must be said that Arnold's manner belied his spirit: he was no dilettante, but a sincere seeker after truth, and much of the narrowness which he saw in Nonconformity did unfortunately exist; its disappearence may be partly due to his influence. It seems fitting to conclude with his tribute to a Nonconformist minister in the sonnet " East London," written in 1867:

" 'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver, through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited.
I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
'Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in this scene?'
'Bravely!' said he, 'for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, the living bread.'
O human soul! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam—
Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home."

JEAN A. SMALLBONE.