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# EDITORIAL.

AT its last meeting the Society welcomed the Rev. John Telford, B.A., the veteran editor of John Wesley's letters. Mr. Telford drew from his vast stores of knowledge in discussing Wesley as a correspondent. Many members of the Society took part in the succeeding conversation, after which tea was provided in the Library on the invitation of the Rev. A. G. Matthews, M.A., who thus placed the Society still further in his debt. In October, the Congregational Union is holding its Autumnal Meetings in Wolverhampton, in the district Mr. Matthews knows so well. He will speak on "Some Additions to the History of Staffordshire Nonconformity" at a meeting of the Society to be held in the Memorial Hall of the Snow Hill Church on Wednesday, October 5th, at 4.30. Members and friends of the Society will be welcome.

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We have been greatly struck lately by the number of American students who come to this country for research into Puritan origins—and ecclesiastical history generally. What becomes, we wonder, of all the labour spent by these students and by the many young men and women who write theses for University degrees? Probably not more than one thesis in ten breaks new ground, and research is frequently dropped like a hot coal when the desired degree has been obtained. Nevertheless, many excellent theses are written which never see the light of day; if published they would add to our knowledge, and save much time and toil. Is it possible to discover some way in which the denominational Historical Societies can keep track of all the work that is being done in their special fields, and file lists of these showing where these are to be found when remaining in manuscript?

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This number ends another volume. The list of members printed at the end shows that we are a very long way from reaching the thousand members we desire. Until our membership increases we cannot venture on some publications that it should be our first duty to publish. "Publications without tarrying for any," is a motto we are unable to adopt.

# A Hundred Years of Ministerial Training

AT the time when the Congregational Union was projected and formed there were two sharply contrasted opinions regarding the condition of our ministry.[1] Walter Wilson on the one hand deplored that the old stock (" the dissenting interest ") had been impoverished by indifference *alias* Presbyterianism, and enthusiasm *alias* Methodism. The remnant were rustics ministered to by illiterates who neither knew their Bibles, their church principles, nor the exercise of discipline. The ministry attracted few young men of liberal education and good family, and students who were mere boys were allowed to preach.

To this Josiah Conder made answer that the illiterates in the ministry (a result of the emotional side of the Evangelical Revival) were few and becoming fewer, that our ministry was better than that of the Episcopalians or the Presbyterians, and that the Academies were doing good work. They secured students who not only had a genuine religious experience but came to the seminaries well grounded in religious knowledge, which gave them steadiness and prevented heresy. The academic training was usually for four or five years. The weight of evidence seems to be on Conder's side.

Let us see now what institutions were at work in 1831. It is natural to begin with Homerton (1696), Coward (1738), Highbury (1778), which, together with the Harmondsworth Charity (1673), were amalgamated as New College, London, in 1850 (the building was opened on 1st Oct., 1851). Here, too, note Hackney Theological Seminary (1839) and its predecessor the Village Itinerancy (1796), which were blended in Hackney College 1871, the forerunner of the union of 1924 (Hackney and New). Western (going back to Ottery St. Mary, the child of the Congregational Fund Board, 1752), after going to and fro in the West country, was at Exeter under George Payne, who had been at Blackburn. The Countess of Huntingdon's College, begun at Talgarth in 1768,

[1] A. Peel, *These Hundred Years*, pp. 22ff.

had been for forty years at Cheshunt. Of Newport Pagnell (1783) more anon. In Yorkshire, besides Idle, with ten students under William Vint embarking on a new building (Airedale, completed in 1834), there was Rotherham, reduced to two men and passing through a very bad time, though it revived after 1834 under W. H. Stowell. And there was also at Pickering a "Theological Institution and Home Missionary Academy" (1827–1850) under Gabriel Croft, whose aim was to evangelize the North Riding.[1] Lancashire, a smaller area, had its Academy at Blackburn (1816), though its real beginning, like its subsequent history, belongs to Manchester. In Wales Carmarthen (1704) traced its origin back in a double line to Brynllwarch (1662) and to Samuel Jones at Tewkesbury (1719). Scotland had its Academy at Glasgow (1811).

It is worth while dwelling for a moment on two of these institutions. A contemporary report of the Blackburn Independent Academy gives us some idea of the curriculum.

A sub-committee was charged with the examination of the students and sat on a Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m., and on the Thursday from 7 a.m. till 3 in the afternoon. The subjects were Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Chaldee (*Daniel* iv.); Algebra, and Natural Philosophy (Simple Equations and Mechanics), General Grammar, Mental and Moral Science, and Theology (Juniors—Divine Sovereignty; Seniors—Original Sin). It is pleasing to note that the Examiners were "fully satisfied with the diligence and attention of the students, and with the fidelity and success of the tutors." In the evening at a public service in Chapel Street two academic discourses were delivered (by students), one on "The Ruin of Man by Adam" and the other on "The Recovery of Man by Christ."

One of the resolutions passed at the Annual Meeting ran thus :—

> That this meeting is impressed with a conviction of the importance, necessity, and utility of Academic Institutions and considerably rejoices in the success and prosperity of those which are established in various parts of the United Kingdom.

The story of Newport Pagnell furnishes an insight into one of the older and smaller seminaries where the principalship was hereditary, for Wm. Bull held it from 1783 to 1814,

[1] On the Yorkshire Colleges old and new, see E. J. Price in *Transactions*, Vol. X. 195ff.

T. P. Bull (Chairman of the Union in 1835) from 1814 to 1831, and Josiah Bull from 1831 to 1853. Its Report for 1830 states :

> The objects of this Institution are not merely to procure *pious itinerants*, but such minds as are capable of receiving that literary furniture which, under the direction of Divine influence, will enable them when called on to meet the opposers of the truth as it is in Jesus, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints ; avoiding all the flourishes of art or aiming at effect (a practice too common with young preachers), but studying to shew themselves approved of God, workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth and deeply imbued with a sense of the value of immortal souls.

There were about seven students.

In 1840 the name was changed to " Newport Pagnell College or Evangelical Institution for the Education of Young Men for the Christian Ministry." In 1847 Henry Batchelor resigned as a student (and three others with him) because the tutor, backed by the Committee, prohibited him from delivering a lecture at Stony Stratford on Church Establishment. In 1849 five students resigned " because they were not allowed to have mustard for breakfast ;" that is to say, methods, rules and regulations were becoming out of date. Students were fenced round (according to *The British Banner*) with regulations intended to shape their conduct, " such a system being hurtful to their characters exactly in proportion to the conscientiousness with which such regulations are enforced." In 1850 an approach was made to Cheshunt, and the two remaining students were transferred there. In 1853 the amalgamation was completed, and £566 and 1700 books went to Cheshunt. Newport Pagnell's most distinguished student was Dr. David Thomas of Stockwell.

It will be convenient to divide the century of our survey into two equal periods. The years 1831–1881 brought great changes, among them railway transport and universal elementary education. These were also the years of conflict between " religion " and " science," and in academic polemics were marked by the dismissal of Samuel Davidson from the Old Testament Chair at Lancashire College.[1] I think this is our only case of the kind ; we have been very free from " heresy hunting," obviously maintaining the " steadiness " for which Josiah Conder gave us credit.

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[1] See the account in David Ford's Autobiography, below, pp. 277-9.—ED.

The principal changes in the Colleges were the disappearance of the smaller Academies either by extinction or absorption, and the emergence of new foundations. Taken chronologically, we find Brecon and Spring Hill (Birmingham) appearing in 1838, and Cotton End (supported by the Home Missionary Society) in 1839. Here too, may be noticed a group of short-lived experiments, Lancaster Preparatory, Bedford, Huntingdon (Hereford), Fakenham, Holloway Preparatory, and Stamford Street (Jewish). Bala Preparatory (1850) was destined for greater vitality as Bangor College. Meanwhile Blackburn removed to Manchester in 1843, and Western from Exeter to Plymouth in 1845. The union that resulted in New College has been already noted; the *Year Book* of 1850 speaks of the disappearance of Homerton, Coward, and Highbury, and expresses hope and confidence that the concentration "will prove of eminent service to the rising ministry who may be trained there." It also refers to Newport Pagnell, closing down through inadequate support, "but being only a minor establishment its cessation will scarcely be felt." Glasgow migrated to Edinburgh (under Lindsay Alexander) in 1854, J. B. Paton founded the Nottingham Institute "for theological and missionary studies" in 1863, and in the same year the Bristol Congregational Institute began its career. In 1871 Hackney Seminary and the Village Itinerancy were made one, and in 1877 Andrew Martin Fairbairn came to Airedale College, Bradford, an event in itself marking the close of one epoch and the beginning of another. From this time and largely through Fairbairn's influence, the Arts and Theological sides of college training were more clearly differentiated.

Mention has been made of this period in its connexion with elementary education. But there had been great developments in higher education also. The first examination for a degree in Arts at the new London University was held in 1839. By 1850 489 degrees had been conferred in Arts and Laws, of which no less than 119 came to *alumni* of Congregational Colleges (M.A. 16, B.A. 98, LL.B. 5); a year later we claimed 130 out of 546. These were also the years of the establishment of University Colleges, especially in the North, though their rise to University status falls in the next period. As London had not yet set up a Faculty of Theology no Divinity degrees were open to Nonconformists with the honourable exception of the Scottish Universities, which have always been kind in bestowing honorary doctorates on our men, and especially

St. Andrews, which admitted external students to its B.D. examination. To meet this need the Theological Senatus—a joint board of Free Church Colleges—came into being in 1879, and by maintaining a high standard gave its diplomas of A.T.S. and F.T.S. very real worth. It naturally ceased to function with the establishment of B.D. courses and degrees at London, Manchester, and Wales, and the abandonment of obsolete restrictions at Oxford and Cambridge.

1881–1931. This remaining half-century saw no new foundations. The period is marked by further amalgamations and by closer connexion with the universities. Spring Hill moved to Oxford (Mansfield) in 1886, a most significant event. Airedale and Rotherham were linked up (as Yorkshire United Independent) in 1888 at Bradford. The Bristol Institute amalgamated with Western in 1891, and Western came to Bristol in 1901. In 1905 Cheshunt migrated to Cambridge. In 1924 Hackney and New became one college under the double name ; for some years they had (apart from the principals) the same staff, and their students had shared class life. Other unions have been suggested but have not materialized.

A tabular comparison may be interesting, as bringing into relief the points already touched upon.

| 1831. | 1931. |
|---|---|
| Homerton | London (Hackney and New) |
| Coward | Bristol (Western) |
| Highbury | Oxford (Mansfield) |
| Hackney | Cambridge (Cheshunt) |
| Exeter | Bradford (Yorkshire Ind.) |
| Newport Pagnell | Manchester (Lancashire Ind.) |
| Cheshunt | Nottingham (Paton) |
| Idle | Carmarthen |
| Rotherham | Brecon |
| Pickering | Bangor |
| Blackburn | Edinburgh |
| Carmarthen | |
| Glasgow | |

It has to be noted that London has unified its training, as has Yorkshire. Wales has increased its colleges from one to three. The Scottish College is, of course, more intimately connected with our Scottish churches and the Scottish Union. Carmarthen is a joint institution, our senior partner being the Presbyterians, or in stricter modern parlance the Unitarians.

Cheshunt is technically the college of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. In almost every case the Colleges are neighbours to Universities or University Colleges, and the connexion is often very intimate. Bradford has long, however, allied itself with Edinburgh for its Arts training. Brecon students take their Arts course at Cardiff.

This brief survey would be incomplete without some reference to the relations between the Union and the Colleges. Most of the latter, like the churches which they were brought into being to serve, are older than the Union. But it was only natural that the Union when formed should gradually become more and more concerned with its ministerial personnel and with the training of the ministry. During the century there have been a number of Conferences and Commissions on the question. The first, in 1845, arose from a review of the situation by John Blackburn, minister of Claremont, in which he urged that a committee in each county union should examine candidates for admission to the Colleges and give testimonials to them at the close of their course. He also argued for a Central Committee of College representatives. This Conference listened to many papers and passed many resolutions ; instead of a central preparatory seminary it favoured small groups of men in the homes of competent ministers. This practice was followed to an unwise extent, for the " competent ministers " often sent their men not to college but directly into the pastoral office.

Thus in 1864 Henry Allon pointed out that in the previous year only 30 College students entered the ministry as against 47 others. The upshot of this was another Conference at which twelve colleges were represented under the presidency of Thomas Binney in January, 1865. Little or nothing came of it and Allon took the matter up again in 1871; his figures for 1870 were 63 from the Colleges and 41 others. This was better, but still far from good, and Allon put forward an ingenious plan for three Colleges in the North and three in the South. In each group one institution was to be preparatory, one for Arts and Graduation, the third for Theology. Another Conference followed in June, 1872.

In 1876 another move was made. The Union asked the Counties to consider the supply of candidates. In 1877 Thomas Robinson spoke on " Desirable Reforms in our College System," and deplored an arrangement " so contrived as to

obtain the minimum of results for the maximum of outlay." Out of this came a Special Committee of 45, 30 from the Colleges and 15 from the Union. Henry Spicer was chairman and Alexander Mackennal secretary, and things began to move. The Committee urged that use should be made of the new University Colleges, and that two Boards should be formed (North and South) for common action. These Boards did something to promote contact between the Colleges and the Churches and, in connexion with the Senatus Academicus, to raise the intellectual standard. They were discharged in 1889, having seen the formation of Mansfield and the amalgamation in Yorkshire.

In 1910 a College Board was formed. Each College sent six representatives and the Union five. The first task was to bring College procedure into line with the new Union rules for admission to the ministry which had been drawn up in connexion with the Central Fund. This Board functioned for twenty years and discussed many points, including the ever-pressing problem of a preparatory institution. Its chief value perhaps was a fuller understanding of the conditions and problems and methods of the various colleges. After the war, in 1921, another full-dress Commission appointed by the Union, with representatives of the College Board, tackled the question of possible amalgamations with a view to increased efficiency and economy. Nothing was found possible here, and the other question of an adequate supply of candidates solved itself in a few years when the short-lived commercial boom had passed.

In 1931 the Union withdrew from the College Board and set up a permanent Committee for Ministerial Training. The Colleges have each one representative on this (the Principal or his deputy) and the Union ten. For the present attention is being focused on the curriculum, and there is a strong feeling in some quarters that academic interests have preponderance over practical ones. In friendly debate we may be assured that the balance will be truly adjusted, and that the Colleges which have not unworthily served the denomination for 250 years will continue, with understanding of the times, to fulfil their trust.

A. J. Grieve.

# The Autobiography of David Everard Ford.

[See *Transactions*, XI. 237–255; *Congregational Quarterly*, X. 226–232].

We resume the Autobiography at Chapter VI., entitled "Probationary Days," which deals with the writer's last months at Wymondley College.

THE good old English hospitalities of Homerton were my Christmas cheer, long after the youngest of my cousins had outlived the age of snapdragons. Those were happy gatherings. They cheered the dark days of my apprenticeship; and they gladdened my heart in the years of student-life. Each returning Christmas found me a guest at Homerton, where my aunt and uncle always welcomed me as with parental kindness.

It was on the occasion of such a visit, at the close of 1820, that calling upon Mr. Wilson,[1] he remarked to me that my time at Wymondley was growing short; and inquired whether I had anything in prospect. I replied that I had not; and that for the present I had no wish to have, as I had yet another half year to spend at College. He assured me that he would be the last to advise any student to leave before the regular time; but intimated that, nevertheless, there could be no harm in thinking a little about the future. He then asked me whether I would prefer the town or the country; pointing out one vacancy in the metropolis, and two in the provinces, to any one of which he could at once send me on probation. I told him that locality was with me a matter of indifference; but that I should like to spend my days where I could be both happy *and* useful. Lymington was one of the places named. He described it as beautifully situated by the sea-side, and therefore possessing many attractions; but added—"the church there has a very bad name. They have been falling out for years; and some people question whether they will ever agree. But, if anybody can make them live in peace, I think you will. At any rate, there can be no harm in paying them a visit for a sabbath or two."

I assented to the proposal; but with the request that my engagement should not take place for some two or three months. At

[1] Thomas Wilson, "the chapel builder," Treasurer of Hoxton Academy, and the Arch-Moderator of Congregationalism a century before Moderators were thought of! See Peel, *These Hundred Years*, p. 46.

length, an application came ; and the authorities of the college sent me thither in April, 1821.

During the interim, I had made some few inquiries as to the character of the people ; and the result was, that I went down, with almost a determination that, should I receive a call, I would not entertain it for a moment. They had been ten years without a minister, with this brief exception,—that they had invited the Rev. Ingram Cobbin, and he accepted their invitation ; but, between his probationary visit and his return, that affliction overtook him, to which the public are indebted for his prodigious literary labours ;—he lost his voice, and he never preached there afterwards. They had had about seventy ministers during that long interregnum ; perhaps, half of them as probationers :—and Dr. Bogue made no secret of his persuasion, that the man was not born who would ever remain there three years.

I well remember my long journey, in those old days of coaching, when the rival Times and Telegraph used to placard the streets with monstrous handbills, headed—"Splendid Travelling, from Southampton to Hyde Park Corner, in eight hours, stoppages included." On reaching Southampton, I found that I had yet eighteen miles to go, by a pair-horse, branch-coach. The driver, Jockey Beale, as he was called, perceiving that I was a stranger (we knew each other better afterwards, as I endeavoured—with what success, eternity must be left to tell—to show him in the last stage of his earthly sojourn, the only way to a better land), asked me to sit with him on the coach box, and was very communicative as to the beauties of the road, a delightful drive through the New Forest. How little thought I then, that in the vicinity of those sylvan glades I should find, for more than twenty years, a happy home !

He received a cold welcome, but gradually the people warmed up.

Beginning now to know the people, I also began to understand the true position of affairs, and to hear from testimony, on both sides, the history of the place. The church had been of long standing. There was living, at that time, an old lady, whose grandfather was present at a thanksgiving meeting, held by them, on the death of Queen Ann, whose notorious Schism Bill has transmitted her name to the execration of all Christian posterity. Two Pearsons, James and Nicholas, father and son, had been successively pastors. James was the grandfather, Nicholas the uncle, of Dr. Pearson, late dean of Salisbury. Their history, like his, was anything but satisfactory. They lived in the days when Arianism was laying waste the fair fields of nonconformity ; and theirs was not armour of proof. The sad declension of those times, some, from

ignorance, or malice, or both, would attribute to the very nature of dissent, or ascribe to the absence of human creeds and confessions of faith. It was no such thing. The radical defect, in our old Presbyterian churches, was that the trustees had the choice of the pastor; or, at least, a veto on his appointment by the people. Trust deeds were, at that time, very expensive things, their renewal always imposing a tax which the poorer churches were little able to bear, and from which even the richer were accustomed to shrink as from a most intolerable burden. The consequence was that at every reinforcement of trustees, the new list consisted of healthy little boys, whose names were selected in the hope that half a century, or more, might elapse, before the trouble and expense of renewal should again occur. As might be expected, these embryo office-bearers, in many instances, grew up, the unconverted children of a pious ancestry; but, according to the custom of those times, their hereditary profession bound them to the walls where their fathers worshipped. There, if they received no good, they might have done no harm; but the trust deed had transferred from their fathers' hands to theirs, a power which even under the most favourable circumstances was perilous to the well being of the church. The pastor died. His faithful ministrations had long been voted a bore by this "enlightened" portion of his audience; and now came the time for reprisals. No such long-winded puritan should be his successor, let the church, or the people, say what they might! The fashion had obtained, even in the celebrated Academy at Northampton, under Dr. Doddridge, of blending lay and clerical students in the same institution. Hence the introduction to our pulpits of some whose religious standing would never have procured them that distinction. Their class-fellows were trustees; and, when arrived at their majority and called upon to exercise their functions, they naturally thought of their early associates. Thus, a race of preachers was introduced, not by the churches but in spite of them, that ultimately laid those churches waste, or betrayed them into deadly heresy. Many of these communities literally died out, and ceased to be. Others, chiefly those which were sustained by endowments, ultimately fell into the hands of avowed Unitarians; so, that over the graves of some of the confessors of our faith, who would have gone to prison and to death on its behalf, there is preached "another gospel," and one which those holy men would have accounted an embodyment of soul-destroying error.

Lymington was partially endowed; but not sufficiently to render it independent of the contributions of the people. The glebe produced £12 *per annum*, and turnpike bonds about £30 more; the remainder of the minister's salary being made up by seat-rents and subscriptions. Probably it was only the poverty of the place that saved it from the fate of Ringwood and Portsmouth, where noble edifices, of the old school, have passed over into other hands.

The times of the Pearsons were dark days as to the interests of pure and undefiled religion. The father fell down dead, one evening, on leaving a card party. The son forfeited his character, and retired to live in obscurity, at Lyndhurst, where he died.

The next, in succession, was a Mr. Rice. Of his theology, I stand in doubt. Portsmouth was then all but gone from the orthodox party ; but, during this state of things, Mr. Rice was in the habit of exchanging pulpits with the minister there, a circumstance which would seem to indicate that his own views, as to sundry vital questions, were not exactly sound. I was once shown, by his daughter, a portion of his diary, written as if under the influence of a genuine piety. That fact has given me a more favourable impression concerning him than I otherwise should have entertained, as the old people of my time hardly scrupled to regard him as a blind leader of the blind. They used to say that in the latter portion of his ministry he would neither preach himself, nor let any one else take his pulpit. On the Sunday morning, it was no uncommon thing for the pew-opener to be sent round, to the few families which constituted the congregation, to say that, as Mr. Rice was very poorly, there would be no service. Prayer Meetings were never held. One of the grievances laid to his charge was that he was very wroth with the people for wanting Sir Harry Trelawney occasionally to supply his lack of service. But if they had nothing worse to say of him than this, it might only have proved that he was a wiser man than his neighbour, good Mr. Kingsbury, of Southampton, who sanctioned the ordination of that versatile baronet, whose erratic course ended in Romanism and a monastery.

To Mr. Rice succeeded the Rev. John Lloyd, a man of high character, but of feeble powers. He maintained his ground about twenty-two years ; but his pastorate was a time of vexation and misery. He had been introduced, against the will of his predecessor, who had been at last compelled to resign a post, the duties of which he could no longer discharge. Mr. Rice, therefore, owed him a grudge which was not forgotten by the next generation, when his three children, a son and two daughters, constituted the principal supporters of the place. Worried out by a series of unkindnesses, Mr. Lloyd resigned, May 20, 1804, and went to reside at Dedham, in the county of Essex, where he died in peace.

His successor was the Rev. John Davies ; afterwards of York Street, Dublin ; and finally of Hare Court, London. He was a man of no common order. Dr. Styles, his most intimate friend, and no mean judge, assured me that he considered him the most perfect preacher he had ever heard, as to style, taste, and manner. Poor fellow! his was a gloomy course. Few, perhaps, ever passed through deeper waters ; and, surely, none had ever greater reason to blame themselves for having drawn the sluices.

He was a student at Gosport, and took his turn with the rest when an occasional supply was wanted at Lymington. His popular method of address soon rivetted the attention of the people, and they became anxious to have him for their pastor. They had to wait till he had completed his term of study; and then he came. His ordination was to be held on the morrow, when at a large party, —including several of the ministers who were come to take part in the service, at the residence of one of the principal friends, about two miles out of town, on the Southampton road,—the company were promenading on the lawn to enjoy the pleasures of a calm and delightful evening. The lady of the house,—who was standing at the entrance gate, a spot shut out from the rest of the grounds by a serpentine walk through a little shrubbery but facing the public road, —was accosted by a woman who asked her the way to Lymington, and the distance. She replied accordingly; the stranger thanked her, and quickly disappeared. On returning to her visitors, she was alarmed to find that Mr. Davies had suddenly fainted away. On his coming round, it was eagerly inquired—What was the matter. "Matter!" said he, "Why, that woman is my wife. She has found me out, and I am a ruined man." "Your wife?" exclaimed the lady, "Why, she is a common tramp!" "No matter," said he, "what she is; she is my lawful wedded wife. I have not heard her voice for years; but I could distinguish it among ten thousand."

This untoward incident put a new face upon affairs. Mr. Davies explained that he had married this woman before he went to Gosport, —that his reason for so doing was that she, being old enough to have been his mother, had shown him great kindness when he was a little boy,—that after having lost sight of her for a considerable time, he met her accidentally, one day, in some street in London, when he was a lad about twenty years of age. She told him that she was reduced to utter destitution, having lost all her property, and that she had no prospect before her but the workhouse. He was moved with compassion, and told her that he would do anything he could, to help her; but that he had only £50, in the world. He would either give her that, or marry her, which she liked. Thinking the latter proposition more substantial than the first, she chose the husband, and took the money too. In a little while, they parted. She ran away, and Mr. Davies knew not where she was, or what had become of her, till he heard her voice that evening.

The question now was, what must be done? A gentleman present volunteered his services, to go into town, to give directions at Mr. Davies's lodgings that this unwelcome visitor was not to obtain admittance there. But he was too late. Mrs. Davies had preceded him, and had already taken possession of those comfortable quarters. A parley was attempted; but it was a failure. "The law says, Sir, that my husband's lodgings are my lodgings; and I defy either you, or the constable, to put me out of them."

The news of the affair was beginning to get abroad, and it was apprehended that the town would be in a uproar. A council of war was called; and after various proposals had been made and rejected, the enemy promised to capitulate, early in the morning, on the payment of £30. The money was forthwith subscribed; but it was to be given into her hands only on condition that she should instantly leave the town, in a conveyance which was standing at the door, a single horse chaise, driven by Dr. Styles. On mounting it, she said to him,—"I should like to know where we are going." "There is no doubt," said the doctor, "where you are going." "Where is that?" she replied. "To hell; to be sure," was his answer. "What a lucky thing, then," she rejoined, "to have a driver so well acquainted with the road!"

Poor Davies was ordained. The day passed off without disturbance; for his tormentor had disappeared. But the whole affair shook the confidence of the people. They thought that he ought to have informed them that he was a married man, especially as jokes had already been passed as to his matrimonial intentions. Nor was this instance the worst. Mrs. Davies, having fared so well before, came again. For a while, he pacified her with fresh subsidies; but, unable to give her more, he, at last, firmly refused. She then went round to the neighbouring gentry, chiefly worldly churchfolks, who would gladly retail such a piece of scandal, and told them that she was the wife of the Independent Minister, and that he had turned her out of doors, to starve in the streets. Some, in their compassion, gave her money; others sent her to dine in their kitchens, where she would narrate her grievances, to the amusement of the servants, and the sore mortification of all Mr. Davies's friends. The venerable Dr. Bogue used to say that three of his students had wedded badly. One had married "the world;" another, "the flesh;" and a third, "the devil." The Rev. John Davies, of Lymington, was the last of these unfortunates.

In spite of all, his popularity was so great that it was determined to meet the wishes of a crowded congregation by altering and improving the dark and ugly old-fashioned meeting-house. The pulpit actually used to stand against the front wall of the building, whereas the entrance was at the back of the premises, up an entry little more than three feet wide. The chief subscribers would not entertain the thought of changing the site, or even of altering the shape of the venerable place in which they and their fathers so long had worshipped.

After more about Davies and the church at Lymington, Ford begins to describe his own ministry there. He had received a unanimous call, and he was ordained on 11 Oct., 1821, the service beginning at 10.30 *a.m.*, and lasting nearly five hours.

The difficulties and temptations of a young minister are described, and the Autobiography goes on:

The perils of my early pastorate were all the greater, in consequence of my natural buoyancy of spirits. Temptations to levity, I could not, or at least did not, always resist. I have, many a time, on retiring from the social circle, wept bitterly, to think that I had contributed nothing to the profitableness of the occasion, beyond conducting family worship. The young people of those days used to pay me the doubtful compliment of regarding me as the most entertaining minister they ever knew. Divine discipline cured me, at last, of my sad infirmity. I had a series of accidents, such as few have experienced, and fewer still have lived to remember. Sundry trials and disappointments at length so thoroughly sobered down my temperament, that the latter portion of my life, has, I believe, in this respect shown few traces of my earlier tendencies. . . .

Amidst all, I was enabled to "continue stedfast in the faith"; and never, even in my merriest moods, did I joke at the expense of truth, or trifle with sacred things. Through the preventing grace of God, I was preserved from bringing a blight upon my character, or giving the enemy occasion to blaspheme. It is even possible that, in the review, I am rather disposed, than otherwise, to exaggerate my early infirmity. Some who knew me then, would so persuade me. But if, as an apostle says, a deacon should be "grave", so should a bishop.

One great disadvantage was that, with one solitary exception, the chief supporters of the place made no public profession of religion. In fact, the church was regarded much in the same light as a sabbath school,—a mere adjunct of the congregation,—a blessed accident, but not the necessary centre of life and energy. All affairs, excepting the admission, transfer, and exclusion of members, were managed by a self-appointed committee, over which the church had no control, and where the existence of the church was recognized no further than that the deacons were regarded *ex officio* members.

Some ministerial neighbours are described, especiallyRichard Adams,[1] an eccentric saint, a bachelor, and a "walking library":

John Williams, "the martyr of Erromanga," after spending an evening with him at my house, pronounced him the rarest exception he had ever seen to the saying, ascribed to Whitefield, that cleanliness is next to godliness. Yet, notwithstanding all, he was a perfect gentleman. He had a peculiar courtesy of manner which

[1] See *Memoir*, by Thomas Mann, 1849.

won the attention, not only of the rough and the rude, but even that of more fashionable sinners.

A description of the pastor's work follows :—

My second out-station was Hurst ; where I used to preach on Friday afternoons. It was about the same distance, from Lymington, as East End, but in the opposite direction,—westward. As a portion of the journey was by water, my going depended on the weather and the convenience of one of the light keepers, who used to meet me with his boat at Key-haven. Punctuality there was not of the same importance as at most places, where a single disappointment might injure the attendance for weeks. The people lived within so small a circle, that I could gather together a congregation at any time. None of my hearers had to come more than three or four hundred yards. With the exception of two light-houses, the High and Low, a public house, and two private dwellings, the whole population of the place lived in the rounds, or the keep, of the castle. We held our service in the gun-room ; and the congregation chiefly consisted of the coast-guard men, with their wives and children.

Hurst Castle stands on the outermost coast of a little peninsula stretching into the Solent and forming its western boundary, opposite to House Point and Freshwater Bay, and is barely a mile from the Isle of Wight. It was, for a short time, the prison of Charles the first, who, after his attempt to escape from Carisbrooke, was placed there for safer custody. The strong room in which that unhappy monarch was confined still remains, at least, it did so in those days. Since then, the fortress has been improved and strengthened ; and probably the alterations may have required the removal of the royal dungeon. Tradition used to tell of a Roman Catholic priest, who was incarcerated there by Queen Elizabeth, and who remained in durance about thirty years, when death opened the door of his narrow cell.

During one of my visits, an incident occurred which might have been attended with serious consequences. I had finished my discourse and was proceeding with the closing hymn, when one of my hearers, on leaving the gun-room, rushed back again, and told us to run for our lives, or we should all be blown to atoms. The congregation dispersed in a few seconds, and the preacher was not far behind the rest. When we reached the yard, it appeared that our alarm was but too well founded. The old gunner who had sole charge of the magazine was, as we knew, lying at the point of death. I had visited him, and prayed with him, in his apartments over the gun-room, before I commenced the service. While we were engaged in public worship, his sons, two idle lads, instead of being with us, as their father supposed them to be, had taken the keys from his bedroom, and obtained access to the magazine, in which there was

a very heavy stock of gunpowder. They had knocked out the head of one of the barrels, (if I remember rightly, with a large iron hammer,) and they had been carrying up its contents, in double handfuls, into the castle yard, spilling it all the way, and there they had damped it, to make what they called fiz-gigs, which they had been letting off with a red hot poker! While the rest were hesitating what to do, or which way to run, I threw off my shoes, went down into the magazine, turned out the young rascals, took possession of the keys, and after having dusted down the loose powder from the stone steps with my pocket handkerchief, locked up the place, and, having seen all safe, remained on the spot till the return of the chief officer of the coast-guard station, who happened at that time to be away with his men on duty. Considering him the fittest representative of the crown, (then worn by George the fourth,) I delivered the keys into his hands, advising him to retain them on his own responsibility, until the appointment of a new gunner.

Chapter VIII. is called "A Chapter of Accidents," and the headings of the pages in turn are: An Awkward Bite, A Split Toe, A Dislocated Knee (twice), Another Smash, A Dislocated Shoulder (twice), A Contused Thigh, A Surprising Cure, Nervous Debility, Consequent Aberration, Ideal Duality, Down Again, Sink and Recover, Narrow Escapes (twice), A Slight Affair.

Some of these accidents by land and sea were extremely serious, and show the dangers of travel. Ford was especially unfortunate through bolting horses. After one such accident his life was despaired of, but he recovered, as he believed, through his church's prayers.

Chapter IX., "Travels Among the Churches," begins by telling how Mrs. Ford started a school, which quickly proved to be a great success. It was as well it did so, for the salary was small, and the family was now six in number. The very success of the school, however, made it difficult for Ford to consider any change of sphere.

I was thus situated when, in the latter part of the year 1839, the Spirit of God came down upon us as the "whirlwinds of the south". The movement was, first, in the congregation; and, then, in the school. The dew of heaven, at first, fell on the ground round about; but the fleece was dry. It then came down, in both directions, at once. This was a time of deep and awful interest, in which eternity came nearer to my consciousness, than probably it ever will again, until I enter it. It was not what I did, or what any of us did; but what God was doing in the midst of us, that filled our souls with awe

and our lips with praise. Sabbath after Sabbath, sinners were brought to Christ, and, in so continuous and striking a manner, that we began to look for it as a matter of course. The conversions, for the most part, were of a very marked character, in which sorrow, "after a godly sort", held a very conspicuous place. Careless sinners, of all ages, were awakened; and, as is usual in such "times of refreshing", some old professors were brought to suspect the reality of their conversion, and to "do again the first works."

After an interval of many years, I am able to report that this movement fully answered every reasonable expectation. I am not aware that any who were brought into the church (churches, I should rather say, for our pupils who were then added to the Lord mostly joined the churches of which their parents were members,) disappointed our hopes concerning them. Certainly, some hopeful inquirers went back, as might be expected. In going up from captivity, the tribes of Israel will always be accompanied by "a mixed multitude." But "what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." If all had been received into fellowship who thought themselves fit subjects for Christian communion, or who were so thought by some of our zealous friends, the disappointment would have been great. But, from the first, I proceeded on the principle that times of special success should be times of special caution. The consequence was that our accessions were real. Of those who were received into fellowship, in consequence of that remarkable visitation, I am not aware that more than one was ever excluded for subsequent inconsistency. And he had previously lost his reason.

No one, who has not witnessed such a time of mercy, can imagine the wear and tear which it imposes on the body, soul, and spirit, of any pastor who in anywise watched for souls as one that must give account. The anxiety, attending every step of such a process, is inconceivable. At least, so I found it. The fear of quenching the Spirit, on the one hand; or, of sanctioning fanaticism, on the other; —the responsibility of distinguishing between the genuine work of grace and its pretentious imitation;—the fear of administering comfort too early, or of delaying it too long;—altogether formed an aggregate of intense excitement, under which my voice broke down, and my health gave way. This, was early in the Spring of 1840.

About that time, this gracious revival died out; but only in the way in which the fire from heaven died out in the days of Elijah, after it had "consumed the wood, the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." Our materials were actually exhausted.

At the end of 1841 Ford closed his ministry at Lymington, and for two years was a travelling agent of the Home Missionary Society. His wife maintained the family by means of her

school, and the minister was willing to forgo all salary from the Society but £50. He was given £75, but he was amused at the cautious and minute instructions given him by the Secretary of the Society, Dr. Matheson, " a timid man always anticipating difficulties." The Autobiography speaks of

> . . . my Sermon Register, a volume, to me of deep interest, which contains a record of every sermon I have delivered in public.[1] Each page comprises twenty-five lines, and is ruled in five columns. The first gives the general number ; the second, the text ; the third, the place ; the fourth, the number at the place ; and the fifth, the date and time ; the last column being headed by the year. The following line is a specimen.
>
> 4618 I Kings 18. 21 Spafields 35 S.E. Jan. 15
>
> The first number, corresponding with the text as marked in my Register Bible, (whether one verse or more, or only a part of one,) shows the total number of times I had preached at that date ; the second number, how many times I had then preached at Spafields Chapel ; the fifth column, that the sermon in question was preached on sabbath evening, January the 15th ; and the heading of the page gives the year,—1843.
>
> This plan was adopted by my father, from whom I copied it ; and I would take the liberty of recommending it to every preacher who has not himself invented a better ;—and this, for two reasons. First—as a matter of prudence ; lest he should so far forget himself as too often to take the same text ; or, in going from home, should preach the same sermon more than once in the same locality. Secondly,—as a matter of piety ; that he may remember all the way in which the Lord, his God, has led him ; especially when, in the quiet of old age, he shall look back on a lengthened life-time, and think of the souls which have preceded him to glory, to whom, in the gracious providence of God, he first showed the way. One use of such a volume, perhaps, would be a more moderate estimate of

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[1] Mr. Gerard Ford sends me the following note about this register :

" Earliest and latest entries :—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1816 |
| 1. | Psim 65. 4 | Glemsford | 1 S.E. Mch 31st |
| | | | 1875 |
| 8395. | Acts 9. 6 | Union Stretford | 5 S.E. June 27 |

" The first sermon was preached when my father was 19½ years old. The last sermon was preached on S.E. June 27, 1875, as recorded above, and father died on the following Oct. 23. The last entries are in my handwriting as he had become almost blind. The first 38 sermons recorded are all from different texts ! He preached at Lymington 3,090 times."

his labours. No one keeping such an account will ever talk, as Mr. Jay has done, of having preached thousands of sermons, under twenty-one. Sermons, like hearers, are very mythological as to their reputed numbers. Correcter reckonings might be humiliating; but, assuredly, they would be more instructive.

About this time Ford's mother died at Homerton, and was buried at Bunhill Fields by Dr. Pye Smith, "the Doddridge of the 19th century," Ford calls him. The mention of Bunhill Fields leads to this story:

My grandfather, Mr. Everard, was executor to a man of the world, who left in his will a special request, that he might be buried in Bunhill Fields, whatever the cost of the grave might be, as he conceived that in the resurrection, at the last day, there would be such a rush to the gates of heaven, from that burial-place of the faithful, that he should possibly have some chance of slipping in, among the righteous, unperceived!

The disadvantages of a roving ministry were soon obvious, and in Oct., 1843, Ford settled at Richmond Chapel, Manchester, of which he was the first pastor. Chapter X. is devoted to this "Second Pastorate." The distractions of town life are thus described:

As to spiritual statistics, figures are of little avail. But, in that direction, our returns were by no means discouraging. People who are running after excitement, almost every evening in the week,—at public meetings, lectures, concerts, and oratorios, and who have no objection to a friendly dance,—are not the most workable materials in the world, for building up a spiritual house. And yet, of the hundred and ninety-five members, received during the last ten years of my pastorate (the only period of which I have preserved the memoranda,) an apostle might say—"and such were some of you."

During his Manchester years Ford played a prominent part in a famous controversy at Lancashire College. This first-hand account is, therefore, of great value:

In the years 1856–7, the affairs of the Lancashire Independent College engrossed a very undesirable share of public attention. Of such institutions, when all goes well, nothing is said; and, with the exception perhaps of an Annual Report, no one ever hears one syllable about them. But, when anything is amiss, the kingdom rings with the news. And well it may; for our colleges are the

bulwarks of our churches; and, if they are untrustworthy, we cannot be aware of it too soon. Better far to know our danger and to meet it, than to be handed over, drugged and bound, into the hands of the enemy.

Dr. Samuel Davidson was our professor of sacred literature; and he was generally thought a competent man, although of a very crotchety turn of mind. As to every important political question, the public always knew where to find him. As sure as Dr. Vaughan, our principal, (whether right or wrong), was on one side, Dr. Davidson, our second in command, would be on the other. It was not however suspected by anybody, not in the secret, that this spirit of antagonism would be carried into the regions of theology, and that, in order to spite Dr. Vaughan's jealousy for "the faith which was once delivered to the saints," (as shown in his "*British Quarterly Review*"), his colleague would become the patron-general of German monstrosities. The circumstances which brought that fact into notice were these. Dr. Davidson was engaged, by a London publisher, to re-write the second volume of Horne's *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*. An enterprise more strange perhaps, was never undertaken; and, stranger still, the author himself consented to the arrangement of having two volumes of his deservedly popular work in four, out-written and set aside by new authorship,—Dr. Davidson undertaking to supply the Introduction to the Old Testament, and Dr. Tregelles that to the New. Hardly, however, had the sheets escaped the press, before Mr. Horne and Dr. Tregelles discovered that Dr. Davidson had committed himself to opinions with which they could hold no sympathy. The fact transpired, through the newspapers; and examination proved the case far worse than even their representations had given the public to apprehend. The work was a crude amalgamation of the most heterogeneous materials, where now and then the iron and the clay were overlaid with beaten gold, in most instances so finely beaten too, as to constitute but a very flimsy gilding.

On Monday, November 24, 1856, our College Committee met in unwonted numbers, and in very silent mood. It was felt, by every one, that something serious was pending; and yet no one dared to mention it to his fellow. The business was mere routine, and was soon despatched. There was nothing before the chair to account for so large a gathering. But every one knew what it was, although no one liked to ask, or say. The few little matters settled, which came in regular course before us, we reached a full stop. After an awful pause, Dr. Raffles, our chairman, said—"Gentlemen! is there any other business to be brought before us, this morning?" Deep silence; not a word. "Gentlemen! again I ask,—is there any other business to be brought before us, this morning?" A silence,

unbroken as before. " Gentlemen ! for the third and last time, I ask,—is there any other business to be brought before us to-day ? And, if I receive no reply, I shall at once pronounce the benediction, and declare this meeting adjourned." Although with deep reluctance, I now felt it my duty to rise. Very highly had I esteemed Dr. Davidson, and he had expressed himself concerning me, (in the letter which first obtained his admission to the fellowship of our body,) in such a manner as might have accounted for a very large measure of mutual friendship ; and I would that the first stone had been thrown by any other hand than mine. But friendship must never interfere when Christian honesty forbids. " Let God be true, but every man a liar ! " Our biblical professor had been suspected of holding such parley with our enemies in the gate, as involved an attainder of treachery ; and it was only right, as an act of justice to him, to ourselves, and to the cause of revealed religion, that the matter should undergo a thorough investigation.

In the course of the discussion which followed my speech, it came out that others were prepared to take the same course, only they had been hesitating how to introduce the question ; and that one had come with a resolution in his pocket, only he was unwilling to take the initiative in this unhappy business. After mutual explanations, our conference ended in the appointment of a sub-committee to examine the book and its author ; and, as the result of many weeks of hard labour, that sub-committee at length gave in its report, but with the understanding that it was to be considered a confidential communication. This gave rise to a long discussion in the general committee, as to the expediency, or even the lawfulness, of such a course. We were put in trust by the public, and ought not that public to know what we were doing in relation to a case of such importance ? The issue of a long debate was that, although the document itself was never printed, a circular was sent to the entire constituency, containing a summary of its contents, with the expression of a hope that Dr. Davidson would explain himself as to many points in which he maintained that he had been misrepresented, or misunderstood. The result was a half-crown pamphlet, in which he corrected some of his blunders, but at the same time manifested little humiliation for his errors, and completely ignored the existence of the committee which had called him to account, and of the institution from which he derived his professional status. Committee after committee sat, and sat again, without coming to any positive conclusion ; till, at last, as the long vacation was coming on, and Dr. Davidson had been understood to intimate that we had no power to dislodge him, it became necessary to proceed to extremities. On Monday, June 1, 1857, we were convened, from half past ten in the forenoon, till twenty minutes past six in the evening ; and then we adjourned till Wednesday, the tenth ; when,

after a long debate, a resolution was carried, by a majority of eighteen to sixteen, which led to the doctor's resignation. On behalf of that minority, it is but fair to state that two unsuccessful amendments served to show, that not more than ten would agree to a resolution endorsing his teaching, even in very measured terms; while the rest merely hesitated to proceed to so extreme a measure as to vote a want of confidence.

When the division was pending, Dr. Raffles told us that, for the first time in his life, he should avail himself of the privilege allowed by the trust-deed to the chairman, of first voting as a member of the Committee, and then of giving a casting vote should it be required. As soon as the votes had been taken, a lay member rose, and said,—"Is it to go forth, Mr. Chairman, that your vote was one, in this majority of two?" "Yes," replied Dr. Raffles, "let it be published in all the religious newspapers in the kingdom; let it go forth to the four winds of heaven, that I, Dr. Raffles, voted, this day, against my dear friend, Dr. Davidson. I never performed a more painful duty; and I never did anything with more satisfaction."

The Lancashire Independent College was saved; but some of the men who rescued it from destruction had a heavy penalty to pay. At least, I had. The occasion cost me more than any crisis I had previously known; but never have I, for one moment, regretted it. And now, on calmly looking back on the whole affair, so thoroughly am I convinced of the importance, to our churches and the world, of the interests then at stake, that if during a long life I had rendered no further service to the cause of truth and righteousness than on that occasion, I should feel, on a dying bed, that I had not altogether lived in vain.

The two remaining chapters deal with pastoral life, and with reminiscences of well-known men with whom Ford had been brought into contact. It may be possible to print some of these at a future date.

ALBERT PEEL.

## Cromwell's Toleration.

["I had rather that Mahommedanism were permitted amongst us than that one of God's children should be persecuted."]

IT is to be hoped that the day is passed when Cromwell could be described in a so-called history book as "a brave, bad man"[1]; not infrequently, however, he is still spoken and thought of as an intolerant persecutor, as a hypocrite whose much-boasted freedom of conscience applied only to his own narrow party. The author of a book in the "Home University Library," a series whose reliability is acknowledged, can hardly write in language so false to history, but he can be judicious (or rather prejudiced) enough to skim over the period without so much as once mentioning Cromwell's name, laying emphasis on "the tyranny of the Commonwealth," not least in its "cheap and obvious method . . . of retaliation" in the ejection of the clergy. Certainly Canon E. W. Watson[2] would not lead his reader to expect what is written by another historian in the same series:

> Finally, strong though the front of politics was against its opponents, toleration was wider in practice than in law. A London Episcopalian could hear his service with impunity, Catholics were not persecuted, the Jews were allowed to trade and open a synagogue.[3]

First, then, as to the Anglicans. The traditional attack sums itself up under three heads: the ejection of the clergy, the inhibition of the services, the defacement of the churches and cathedrals. Now the first of these charges represents what may be called a fact with less qualification than can the other two, but even it must be qualified in several ways. It is rarely, however, that a High Anglican will admit these qualifications as generously as has been done by the late Canon T. A. Lacey, whose words deserve quoting at some length:

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[1] Clarendon, *History*.

[2] See his book *The Church of England*, where he also speaks of the Restoration "scheme of faith" as "commended by graceful and romantic piety." Has Dr. Watson ever read Pepys?

[3] Keith Feiling, *England under the Tudors and Stuarts*, p. 177.

> The sufferings of the loyal clergy were great, but have been grossly exaggerated. In his modestly entitled "attempt" to ascertain the names of sufferers, the industrious John Walker, sparing no pains, could not reach the number of 3000, yet he freely quoted and believed the estimates of 8000 or 9000, made by less scrupulous calculators. His lists, moreover, need careful combing. Not by any means all of those whom he enumerates were sufferers for conscience sake. The Committees of Parliament and other commissioners who did the work removed large numbers of "scandalous ministers," quite properly so called, whom the laxity or tenderness of episcopal administration had overlooked; and . . . we are not to claim the victims of such judgement as martyrs or confessors. Others, again, were attacked on merely political grounds, and must be reckoned as suffering rather from party rancour than from religious persecution. . . . Anthony Wood rashly asserted that the "fifth" of the sequestrated endowments, reserved for the dispossessed and their families, was never paid. That some did not receive it is probable, but there is no evidence of general default.[1]

We may indeed be grateful to Canon Lacey for such a clear statement of the facts.

In connexion with the second charge, it would, of course, be idle to deny that Anglican services were frowned upon. They were, in fact, illegal—the Instrument of Government expressly limited the toleration granted, as Anglican writers are naturally fond of reminding us, by the phrase "provided this liberty be not extended to Popery or prelacy." So long, indeed, as the Book of Common Prayer remained the very badge of Royalism,[2] complete toleration could hardly be given to the faith which it represented. At the same time, there is evidence for the general reader in Evelyn's *Diary* that Episcopalian services were not altogether prescribed; and the author of the article on the Church of England in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, himself an Anglican clergyman, bears out the passage we have already quoted from Mr. Feiling, when he writes:

> . . . the toleration insisted on by the Independents did not extend to "prelacy." Churchmen, however, occasionally enjoyed the ministrations of their own clergy in private houses, and though their worship was sometimes disturbed they were not seriously persecuted for engaging in it.[3]

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[1] T. A. Lacey, *Herbert Thorndike*, p. 14.

[2] S. R. Gardiner, *Cromwell's Place in History*, p. 112.

[3] Rev. William Hunt in *Enc. Brit.* (13th. edn.), IX. 450.

The damaging of the churches is perhaps the most popular accusation against Cromwell. So much is laid to his charge in our cathedrals and even in many smaller churches that an ignoramus might well imagine he was an itinerant minister who had a passion for defacing all the churches which he visited. On this point an interesting article appeared in *The Spectator* some two years ago. The author wrote :

> There is no trustworthy evidence to show that Cromwell was an iconoclast. His whole career proves the opposite. . . . He did not approve of Laud and the High Church party, but he was no fanatic with a bitter hatred of the Establishment and all its works.

After recounting the incident at Ely in 1644, when Cromwell suspended the choir service to prevent the soldiers from carrying out a reformation " in any tumultuary or disorderly way," the writer continues :

> Had Cromwell been a wrecker, Ely would not have remained untouched, as it did. To blame him, as is usually done, for what happened at Peterborough and forget his consideration for Ely is clearly unjust. . . . When all is said, our cathedrals and churches probably suffered infinitely less in the Civil War—whether from intentional defacement or from damage by fire or cannon-shot—than they did in the Reformation period.[1]

This last point—the amount of damage done a hundred years before Cromwell's time—is far too often left out of account. Those of our cathedrals which before the Reformation were monastic[2] suffered grievously at the hands of Oliver's ancestor, *Thomas* Cromwell ; and, early in Edward VI's reign, a royal command was issued for the general removal of images and the destruction of painted glass. There was no corresponding order during the Commonwealth.

Further, as with the ejection of the clergy, the political question was sometimes involved. The story is often told of the injuries done to Lichfield Cathedral—horses were stabled within the walls and the central spire was demolished—but it is only fair to add, as is not always done, that the cathedral was a Royalist stronghold in the centre of a Parliamentarian city.

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[1] E. G. Hawke in *The Spectator*, Aug. 30th. 1930.

[2] *i.e.*, Bristol, Canterbury, Carlisle, Chester, Durham, Ely, Gloucester, Norwich, Oxford, Peterborough, Rochester, St. Alban's, Southwark, Winchester, and Worcester.

Again, those who are mystically inclined are apt to place no importance in things which to other minds are real aids to worship and which thus take on a sanctity of their own.[1] Too often forgetful of this, the Puritans did not hesitate to use (or abuse) sacred buildings as if they had no special sanctity.[2]

The Puritans were also remarkable for their strong moral sense, and it was not unnatural, if unfortunate, that they tended to be proportionately lacking in æsthetic appreciation. Few men can have travelled up and down England more continuously or extensively than George Fox, yet his *Journal* is never concerned with the beauty of Nature or of Art in the places through which he passes. Even "there great cathedrall" at York did not inspire him to anything more noble than to lift up his voice "when ye preist had donne."[3]

So much, then, for the Anglican charges. Cromwell's treatment of other denominations, the Roman Catholics, the Friends, and the Jews, we may consider more briefly, for the simple reason that by them he is not so persistently maligned. There were good reasons to fear and therefore to persecute the Roman Catholics, reasons both political and religious; yet during Cromwell's Protectorate they had an easier time than either before or for another hundred and fifty years afterwards. The late Earl of Iddesleigh, whose studies were specially devoted to seventeenth century Roman Catholic history, writes as follows:

> On the outbreak of the Civil War the Catholics naturally sided with the king, and a great many fell fighting for the royalist cause; towards the survivors Cromwell was unexpectedly merciful. Very few were put to death, though a number of estates were confiscated.[4]

The Roman Catholics had, in fact, learned that the best way to avoid persecution was to lie low and create no disturbances. The early Friends, on the other hand, were nothing if not

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[1] *Cf.* A.M. Fairbairn, *Catholicism Roman and Anglican*, p. 299 for an interesting comparison of Newman and Keble in this respect.

[2] The unkindness is still repaid, a little unnecessarily, by such a sentence as this: "The room was as crudely ugly as such a place could well be, for the Hall had been some kind of Dissenters' Meeting House." (T. G. Fullerton, *Father Burn of Middlesbrough*, 1927, p. 268.)

[3] Cambridge *Journal*, I. 20.

[4] *Enc. Brit.*, XXIII. 497.

determined to carry out to the letter all the principles to which they witnessed. Again and again they invited imprisonment by disturbing other services, by transgressing (or seeming to transgress) the Blasphemy Laws, and by going naked for a sign. Even so, Cromwell did much to protect them, as the official Quaker historians freely admit. His touching interviews with Fox are well known, and many other self-invited guests he treated with consideration and respect.[1] Three times he released Fox from prison,[2] once by special messenger, and it was against his will that Nayler was persecuted so abominably.[3]

> There can be little doubt that Cromwell's moderate carriage towards Friends endeared him to them, and that he and they felt mutual esteem for one another.[4]

The Jews, once more, had been exiles from this country for some three hundred and fifty years since their expulsion by Edward I. Charles II continued the Protector's tolerant policy in this one respect, but it was Cromwell who recalled the Jews. A conference was held to consider the matter in 1655, and, though it did not find itself able to come to such a large-hearted conclusion as the Protector would have desired, he invited the Jews to return, promising them his protection in their worship.[5]

The purpose of this paper is not to claim that all denominations enjoyed an equal freedom during the Commonwealth; in particular, Anglicanism, which was so intimately bound up with Royalism, suffered the penalties of illegality. Its purpose is, rather, to protest against the constant exaggeration of the persecution of the Anglican and other faiths, and to show that what persecution there was is almost negligible compared with the cruel treatment of Nonconformists by the Clarendon Code after the Restoration. The way of tolerance was still in its infancy, indeed the very idea was anathema to most religious people, including the Presbyterians. Cromwell's Parliaments and the Puritan party in general were far less tolerant than the

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[1] W. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 435.

[2] *Journal* (1901 Edn.), I. 207–211, 318–322 : II. 3.

[3] W. C. Braithwaite, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

[4] *op. cit.*, p. 440.

[5] See Israel Abrahams, art. "Jews," in *Enc. Brit.*, XV. 406, 409.

Protector himself, and he had more important things to do than to spend his time investigating every case of imprisonment or persecution on its religious or political merits. As it was, he persistently used his influence to temper the persecuting zeal which his followers shared with the great mass of their contemporaries, and his interference on behalf of the heretics of Piedmont reflects his attitude to the persecuted at home. Like his secretary, he was content " though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field " and believed that " a gross conforming stupidity . . . is more to the sudden degenerating of a Church than many subdichotomies of petty schisms."[1]

We may express the substance of this paper by a paragraph from an impartial article on Cromwell, which bears out the main points of its argument.

> Cromwell himself, however, remained throughout a staunch and constant upholder of religious toleration. " I had rather that Mahommedanism were permitted amongst us," he avowed, " than that one of God's children should be persecuted." Far in advance of his contemporaries on this question, whenever his personal action is disclosed it is invariably on the side of forbearance and moderation. It is probable, from the absence of evidence to the contrary, that much of [the] severe legislation was never executed, and it was without doubt Cromwell's restraining hand which moderated the narrow persecuting spirit of the executive. In practice Anglican private worship appears to have been little interfered with ; and, although the recusant fines were rigorously exacted, the same seems to have been the case with the private celebration of the mass. Bordeaux, the French envoy in England, wrote that, in spite of the severe laws, the Romanists received better treatment under the Protectorate than under any other government. Cromwell's strong personal inclination towards toleration is clearly seen in his treatment of the Jews and Quakers. He was unable, owing to the opposition of the divines and of the merchants, to secure the full recognition of the right to reside in England of the former . . . ; but he obtained an opinion from two judges that there was no law which forbade their return, and he gave them a private assurance of his protection, with leave to celebrate their private worship and to possess a cemetery.[2]

GEOFFREY F. NUTTALL.

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[1] *Areopagitica.*

[2] *Enc. Brit.*, VII. 493.

## Collections for the Piedmontese, 1655.

DR. MASSON, in a note on Milton's famous sonnet, says that some £40,000 was collected in 1655 for the Piedmontese. It would be interesting to know how this fund was administered. How the money was raised is illustrated by the following list of collections in sundry parishes in Leicestershire (culled from Nichols's monumental history of that county). There were more than 300 parishes in the county. Probably all the parishes contributed, but in many cases the records are lost.

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Allerton | | 3 | 5 |
| Ansby | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| Arnsby | 1 | 16 | 8 |
| Asfordby | | 16 | 1 |
| Ashby-de-la-Zouch | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| ,, Magna | 2 | 10 | 10 |
| ,, Parva | | 16 | 8 |
| Ayleston | 1 | 7 | 0 |
| Barkby | | 12 | 9 |
| Beby | | 16 | 3 |
| Belgrave | | 14 | 3 |
| Billesdon, Rolleston and Goadby | 1 | 14 | 8 |
| Bitteswell | 1 | 7 | 9 |
| Blaby | 1 | 16 | 5 |
| Blackfordby | | 8 | 7 |
| Blaston | 2 | 3 | 7 |
| Bosworth, Husbands | 4 | 8 | 5 |
| Bowdon, Great | 3 | 7 | 9 |
| Bradley | 2 | 10 | 11 |
| Bredon | | 16 | 5 |
| Bruntingthorpe | | 18 | 4 |
| Burstall | | 4 | 1 |
| Burton Overy | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Caldwell, Wikeham and Wartnaby | 1 | 17 | 9 |
| Calthorpe | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Carleton Curlieu | 1 | 17 | 10 |
| Claybrook and Ullesthorpe | 6 | 9 | 5 |
| Coleorton | | 13 | 3 |
| Cosby | 3 | 12 | 2 |
| Cossington | 2 | 12 | 3 |

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cottesbach .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 13 | 8 |
| Cranoe .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 8 | 2 |
| Croxton, South .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 8 | 0 |
| Dalby Magna .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| ,, Old .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Diseworth .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 9 | 0 |
| Dunton Basset .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 10 | 0 |
| Enderby .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| Evington .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 12 | 11 |
| Fleckney .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 13 | 2 |
| Foston .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Foxton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 | 14 | 9 |
| Frisby .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| Frolesworth .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 15 | 6 |
| Galby .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 15 | 2 |
| Gilmorton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| Glen .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 12 | 4 |
| Glooston .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 4 | 10 |
| Grimston .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 3 | 6 |
| Gumley .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 | 14 | 6 |
| Hallaton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 | 14 | 6 |
| Hathern .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Hoby .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 14 | 2 |
| Horningshold .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 15 | 3 |
| Houghton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| Humberston .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 6 | 3 |
| Hungerton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 7 | 0 |
| Isby Walton .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 4 | 4 |
| Kegworth .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 | 16 | 0 |
| Kibworth and Smeeton Westerly .. .. .. | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| Kilby .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 15 | 8 |
| Kilworth, North .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 13 | 8 |
| ,, South .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Kimcote and Walton .. .. .. .. .. | 5 | 10 | 3 |
| Knaptoft .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 4 | 17 | 10 |
| Knighton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| Knossington .. .. .. .. .. .. | | 14 | 9 |
| Langton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 11 | 10 | 6 |
| Laughton .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 8 | 0 |
| Leire .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 1 | 10 | 7 |
| Leicester, All Saints .. .. .. 3 18 0 | | | |
| St. Leonard's .. .. .. 10 0 | | | |
| St. Margaret's .. .. .. 4 5 7 | | | |
| St. Martin's .. .. .. 12 7 8 | | | |
| St. Mary's .. .. .. 2 19 4 | | | |
| St. Nicholas .. .. .. 1 5 6 | 25 | 6 | 1 |

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Loughborough | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Lubbenham | 2 | 11 | 5 |
| Lutterworth | 7 | 1 | 10 |
| Market Harborough | 11 | 9 | 5 |
| Medbourne | 2 | 5 | 10 |
| Misterton | | 16 | 7 |
| Norton and Little Stretton | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Oadby | 1 | 10 | 10 |
| Osgathorpe | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| Ouston | 1 | 9 | 8 |
| Peatling, Great | | 16 | 8 |
| ,, Little | | 16 | 2 |
| Pickwell | 1 | 10 | 7 |
| Ratcliffe | | 5 | 9 |
| Reresby | 2 | 18 | 4 |
| Sadington | 1 | 13 | 11 |
| Scraptoft | 7 | 11 | 0 |
| Seale | 1 | 5 | 9 |
| Shankton | | 7 | 5 |
| Shawston | 1 | 0 | 10 |
| Skeffington, Loseley and Newton | | 17 | 7 |
| Snareston | 1 | 8 | 11 |
| Staunton Wyville | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| Sutton and Thorpe | 3 | 7 | 6 |
| Swanington | 2 | 2 | 10 |
| Swebston, Newton and Burgenland | 1 | 8 | 11 |
| Swithland | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Syston | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Thedingworth and Hoothorpe | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| Thorpe Aire | | 16 | 6 |
| Thurlaston and Cropston | | 13 | 4 |
| Thurnby, Stoughton and Bushby | 1 | 18 | 0 |
| Walton | 1 | 6 | 9 |
| Wanlip | 1 | 10 | 10 |
| Welham | | 5 | 9 |
| Whalton | | 15 | 7 |
| Whetstone | | 13 | 6 |
| Whitwick | 2 | 11 | 6 |
| Wigston | 3 | 8 | 8 |
| Willoughby and Waterless | 2 | 14 | 6 |
| Wimeswould | 1 | 18 | 0 |
| Wislow | 2 | 4 | 1 |

W. J. Payling Wright.

## Our Much Speaking

ONE of the advantages of living to a decent age is that, on the strength of it, one is entitled, or more or less grudgingly allowed, to have a few ideas of one's own —the harvest of one's own "quiet eye"; though commonly, I am afraid, the ideas which are, in this special sense, one's own, come, somehow, to be thought of as one's crotchets. Still, there was bullion sense in the remark of the famous Père Hardouin, as reported by Renan, that

> he had not got up at four o'clock every morning for forty years to think as all the world thought.

And he, indeed, is a poor creature who can see no points in which the system under which he has worked for fifty years could be improved. Even a burglar, fifty times convicted, would be in a position, one thinks, to offer suggestions on the needless cost of police red-tape which would not be beneath consideration by His Majesty's judges.

The idea, or, if you like, the crotchet which I am taking the opportunity to expound is one which—possibly in common with most ministers—I have thought about, and wasted not a little good indignation on, during the whole of my ministerial life—*the tyranny, the wastefulness and the general futility of the traditional Congregational demand for pulpit discourses.*

That demand, which, speaking generally, is for three *new* sermons a week, is, I maintain, to-day preposterous—outdone in absurdity only by the conduct of the preachers who pretend to approve the superstition. For a superstition it is, on the part of the vast majority of those who make the demand: persons who take it as just as much the Ordinance of Heaven that there should be two sermons on a Sunday as that there should be four seasons in the year, or twelve hours in a day: the same sort of people who would throw up their hands in horror if it were proposed to abolish the week-night service, though they never, by any accident, attend it: people who, as a rule, have no more conception of what it means to produce three good discourses in a week, and week after week,

than they have of what it means to be a skilled lithotritist or to navigate a Cunarder. All they know is that it is the minister's business, for which, as he undertakes it, they have a right to suppose him competent.

Lest it should be supposed that I am alone in denouncing the excessiveness of this demand and that this is just a personal " squeal " on the part of one who, in undertaking the duties of the ministry under the Congregational system, " bit off (to use a vulgar expression) more than he could chew," I would remind you of a few, out of many, expressions of opinion on this subject by men who cannot possibly be convicted, or even suspected, either of incompetence or of pusillanimity.

It was Geo. MacDonald, the voluminous author, the erstwhile Congregational minister of Arundel, and the hero of that most fictitious of fictions, *Salem Chapel*, who wrote, knowing well whereof he affirmed :

> Two sermons a week—enough to darken the entire face of Nature for a conscientious man !

And Professor Mahaffy of Dublin, in his monograph, now nearly fifty years old, on *The Decay of Modern Preaching*, and speaking, by the way, not of Congregationalism but of the Irish Episcopal Church, declares emphatically :

> To expect from anyone two good sermons every week, or even one, is unreasonable. . . . This duty of having one or two sermons ready every Sunday under all circumstances of mind and temper, of business or recreation, of indisposition or depression is the most intolerable tyranny conceivable, until the victim of it learns to do it in a slovenly and inefficient way so that it comes to weigh lightly on his conscience and his time.

Principal Caird of Glasgow University, author of the famous sermon on " Religion in Common Life," writing on the subject of " The Declining Influence of the Pulpit in Modern Times," said, many years ago, that the average congregation of that time insisted

> on a measure of productiveness which would exhaust the most fertile brain in a single year, and which could only be kept up by dilution or repetition.

Writing to his son at the time of his ordination, Principal Tulloch said :

> You will find preaching twice a day very hard, and you should

> take care not to attempt too much. . . . Expound in the morning. . . . In any case you must not attempt two sermons. One sermon a week is ample.

The most intellectual man who has ever, in my time, honoured the City of Sheffield by making it his home—the late Dr. Keeling—wrote me once in reference to this very matter :

> I don't know how it is done. If I have a paper to prepare for our Medical Society which should take me twenty minutes to read, I am nearly three months over it.

This, no doubt, was an exaggeration, but it expressed a real feeling on the doctor's part with regard to ministerial productiveness. On another occasion he wrote :

> The thought has often occurred to me how heavily the non-liturgical Levite is taxed as compared with the Levite who has the Church Prayer Book to help him, and also how much more he seems to be at the mercy of the pew-folks. Well for them that so many good and capable men are found willing to shoulder the burden.

If I may be allowed to quote my own experience—and, in a case like this, it is hardly to be avoided—I may mention, in illustration of the wastefulness of our system, that I estimate my production in the way of written preparation for the pulpit at something from six to seven million words—equal in bulk, that is, to the MSS. of some two hundred *King Lears*, or forty to fifty *Advancements of Learning*. Of course, I know and expect the inevitable retort. All the same, I think it beside the mark. I take it that, when I am doing my best and utmost, Shakespeare's writing, or Bacon's, was certainly not harder to him than mine is to me and probably was a great deal easier. Sam Weller's letter to Mary the housemaid cost him, for the length of it, no less mental travail, and much more facial contortion, than went to the production of the epistolary masterpieces of Horace Walpole or William Cowper or my lady Mary Montagu.

Such an amount of writing as I have named, by anyone who has a high ideal of what preaching ought to be—an amount which the most prolific of novelists would think it ridiculous to attempt—cannot possibly be done, even passably, without seriously, and even fatally, limiting the time that can be given to other necessary branches of a minister's activities. In the

letter addressed to the Church at Carrs Lane, Birmingham, on the occasion of the "Call" to Melbourne, Dr. Dale[1] expressed his deep regret for the imperfect way in which he had fulfilled many of his more private ministerial duties, and said:

> For this neglect I am unable to reproach myself very seriously, but the consciousness of it has been a constant source of distress to me. . . . For the *pulpit* I can find time and strength. . . . Nor could I think of delegating to another the responsible and perplexing duty of conversing with those who are troubled by anxiety about their peace with God. But as far as private visitation is concerned I cannot see my way to doing very much more than I have done already and this is so inadequate to the requirements of the congregation as to occasion me constant disquietude.

I shall have occasion later to mention the remedy which he suggested for this state of things. And here I may remind you in how much worse case are our ministers in regard to these matters than those of the Episcopal and Methodist Churches. Most of the Church of England clergy divide the labour of preparation for the pulpit—which, with them, is commonly not excessive—with their curates. Methodist ministers, with their circuit system, have the opportunity and the enviable privilege of preaching their sermons over again, it may be even scores of times, between their early manhood and old age, and were it not for the *blandum venenum* of intellectual sloth which gets the better of them most of them would be the master preachers of the world. But in our case, with our *one man ministry*, and the progressive multiplication of channels for the minister's activity, no sooner is a sermon preached—and I, for one, never know whether a sermon deserves to be preached till I have preached it—than down it must go, straightway into the Limbo of the Ephemerids, the things which only breathe to die.

The inevitable result of the demand from the minister of three, or even two, discourses a week, taken along with the demand that he should organize and direct and be the intellect and living soul of an ever-increasing number of Church and Sunday School activities, is the *dilution* spoken of by Principal Caird. The minister cannot do impossibilities, even if he pretend that he can, and if a proportion of his people think that he is doing them. He cannot do his best in the way of pulpit preparation; but only, if very conscientious, his best

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[1] *Life*, pp. 181f.

under the circumstances. Having to bring in his tale of bricks up to time, he must abandon the hope of making them of the best material, must scramble indeed to get them fashioned at all ; and, though not for exactly the same reasons, he is liable to adopt the same method as the parochial minister satirized by Milton in the *Areopagitica*, who, " at his Hercules pillars in a warm benefice " was

> easily inclineable to finish his circuit in an English concordance and a topic folio . . . a harmony and a catena, treading the constant round of certain doctrinal heads attended with their uses, motives, marks and means ; out of which, as out of an Alphabet or Sol-Fa, by forming and transforming, joining and disjoining variously, a little bookcraft and two hours' meditation, might furnish him unspeakably to the performance of more than a weekly charge of sermoning : not to reckon up the infinite helps of interlinearies, breviaries, synopses and other loitering gear.

Let me say in passing that Milton, I am afraid, was, as a hearer, hard to please. He certainly could not tolerate " a voluble and smart fluence of tongue," or " the finical goosery of your neat sermon actor." On the other hand, he was too apt, perhaps, to see the " learned " preacher " wading laboriously to his auditors up to the eyebrows in deep shallows that wet not the instep." But the presence of Miltons in the audience is not the present-day preacher's trouble. In his half-desperate endeavour to come up to time with his bricks, the poor minister is driven too often to seize on anything in the nature of straw that comes his way, especially if it take the form of anecdotes, things which, a sad experience has taught him, are of all things most affected by his hearers, and for the sake of which the most of them, being childish-minded, will pardon well-nigh every sort and degree of pulpit defect.

This kind of " sermoning," to which, I maintain, many ministers are driven in spite of themselves—even so gifted and well-furnished a preacher as Dr. Elmslie had to confess : " Since coming back (from Paris) I have had constantly to preach very badly prepared "—helps to justify the disparagement and even contempt with which sermons are too commonly alluded to, even, as we know, by preachers themselves, which is a singular phenomenon ! Imagine a skilled cricketer, a Sutcliffe or a Bradman, crying : " Don't be alarmed ! I am not going to play cricket ! " ; or a trained violinist, pianist, or

vocalist attempting to creep into the good graces of an audience by saying: "Pray calm your fears; I shall offer you no specimen to-day of my musical wares!" The first person that ever tempted me to think meanly of preaching was a glib and vociferous brother who, after a week of great activity in conducting his well-paying school, was wont—as I unhappily knew—to sit down for an hour of a Saturday evening to prepare their Sunday pasture for his flock.

Poor preaching—by which I mean preaching in which there is little or nothing to justify the demand that serious and thoughtful people should regularly sit to hear it—preaching which is "more in word than matter," and which satisfies none of the tests of good speech which St. Augustine, following Cicero, would apply, *viz.*, that it should "instruct, delight, and convince"—such preaching has brought preaching itself, which is "a precious and a glorious thing," into widespread contempt, and begotten that listlessness, that "stolid unreceptiveness," with which, I am afraid, the majority of hearers receive the attempts on the preacher's part to satisfy the demand which they themselves have made. That listlessness and unexpectancy are naturally apt to react on the preacher and to make him feel that it is not worth his while to do as much and as well in preparation even as he could. The growth of knowledge and taste, the great increase in the habit of reading, the growing familiarity of hearers with the writing of men whose whole study is how to say things, have made the task of preaching harder in some ways than it ever was, and given new force (so far as the preacher is concerned) to Ben Jonson's pithy counsel, "so to apparel good matter that the studious of elegancy be not defrauded"—the thing of prime importance being, of course, the goodness of the matter. Talk "off the top" was never more out of place than now. One reason, at any rate, why many seem to prefer to sit to-day under wireless preachers is that they can generally take it that the preachers will give them of their best.

Here, perhaps, it is in place to ask: What is the commonly accepted idea of the preacher's function? Answering my own question, I feel compelled to say—to entertain. "How have you *liked* him?"—the question, if any, usually asked on emerging from church, especially if a stranger has been preaching—has reference chiefly to the *entertaining qualities* of the minister, his elocutionary and histrionic abilities, and the degree to which he avoids the offence of putting the hearer to

the trouble of serious and sustained attention. This, by the way, this demand of entertainment first, midst, and last, is the charge brought by our best dramatic critics against the theatre-goers of to-day and the reason assigned for the extreme difficulty of keeping, or even of putting, the best plays on the stage. This being so, it is little wonder if preachers sooner or later (if seldom deliberately) abandon the earnest and conscientious attempt to *teach* their people, and lay themselves out to be *liked*. And the short and easy way to that—in this age of tit-bits and cheap novels and talkies—is to tell plenty of anecdotes. But, as there is a limit to the number of true and really profitable stories, the man who lays himself out to be entertaining—as I could show by examples—is in constant peril; for, as in dram-drinking, he is bound to increase the dose to produce the same effect—he is in danger, I say, under pressure, of losing the fine edge of his scrupulousness and making pulpit use, as facts, of patent and sometimes even pitiable fictions; reminding one of Burns's scathing reference, in "Death and Dr. Hornbook," to those ministers that

> ha'e been kenned,
> In holy rapture
> A rousing whid at times to vend,
> And nail't wi' Scripture.

It is not every minister, by any means, who can tell any such story of himself as that which is told by Dr. Dale in the preface to his *Christian Doctrine*. The story is that, three or four years after he left College, he met, in the streets of Birmingham, an eminent Welsh Congregational minister:

> He had reached middle age, and I was still a young man, and he talked to me in a friendly way about my ministry. He said: "I hear that you are preaching doctrinal sermons to the congregation at Carrs Lane; they will not stand it." I answered: "They will have to stand it."

Then he adds:

> There was too much of the insolent self-confidence of youth in both the temper and the form of my reply; but the conception of the ministry which it expressed was, I believe, a just one—as far as it went; and it is a conception which with more or less fidelity I have endeavoured to fulfil.

As I have already said, Dale devoted himself to his preaching and to a large extent confined himself to it, and I know, from

himself, that his hours of study were most jealously guarded from interruption by his loyal and brave wife. But as things are, it is not in the power of most men to give so much of their time to systematic study and sermon work—though in a sense they need it greatly more than he did. Being strong enough to resist them, Dale was free from a number of claims upon his time which ministers in general must submit to.

This leads me to speak of some possible *ways of escape* from that condition of slavery and of incompetence as preachers of the Verity which, to many of us, is so great a cause of grief, and to which, as it seems to me, we are condemned as long as the tradition—now so absurd—of two new sermons a Sunday is—nominally at any rate—submitted to. Please do not suppose for a moment that I am questioning the existence of great multitudes of interested, intent and prayerful hearers, or aiming to disparage preaching. Nothing so absurd! The man is no foe to industry who would like to abolish sweating; and to deplore the prevalence of jerry-building is not to disparage architecture. What I am quarrelling with is that the man who ought to be an architect is, under our present system, forced or tempted, or forced and tempted, to become a jerry-builder and, instead of sermons, to deal in what Robert South would have stigmatized as "impertinent and unpremeditated enlargements." But to return. In the letter to his Church already quoted Dale went on to say:

> I have therefore to suggest to the Church and congregation . . . the great desirableness of securing an assistant minister to supplement the work of the pastor and to do what he must leave undone. This proposal is not made with the idea of lightening my own labours, but to promote the efficiency of the religious work among us. I am quite clear that neither their views about the working of the Church nor mine can be carried out by a single minister. It is quite time that we returned to more primitive arrangements and that we learnt this one lesson at any rate from the machinery of the English establishment. If our Nonconformist Churches are to maintain their strength, it must be not merely by powerful vindications of the principles on which they are founded, but by the perfection and beauty of their working. I believe that the day is not distant when we shall be unable to find a single Independent Church in the country of a magnitude at all approaching to our own with only *one minister* at the head of it.

We are far as yet from having realized Dale's forecast. In the vast majority of our churches, and in such "penury of

pecune" as to-day afflicts the most of them, it is quite impossible to raise the stipend for two ministers, or for a Bishop and a Teaching Elder, as in many of the early Congregational Churches. But there are other ways of breaking the slavish bond of which I have been speaking, and though (to borrow a phrase from the *Religio Medici*) "complexionally averse to innovation," I will venture to suggest one or two. Seeing that, generally, "who would be free, themselves must strike the blow," I think the conditions justify a general ministerial strike. "Evil is wrought by want of thought as well as want of heart," and I am sure the present generation has never thought about the matter, but would see the justice of a general or of an official protest against the continuance of the present system, and would willingly, and, as I think, gladly, substitute a devotional or praise service, after the Moravian manner, for one of the preaching services at present in vogue, not that ministers may have more time to give to miscellaneous activities, but that they may have more adequate and reasonable time in which to prepare to speak to edification from the pulpit.

If, however, it be thought imperative that there should be two preaching services per Sunday, it is still by no means imperative that the labour of preparation for them should be imposed on every individual minister. Why should not a group of ministers in a city or a district "pool" their hermeneutical and homiletical abilities and efforts? Why should they not meet to make the sermon as the staff of *Punch* to excogitate the cartoon? Why should not each of the group be responsible for, say, one sermon a month and every sermon be preached simultaneously by every member of the group? In that way each of their congregations would get the benefit at each service of a well-prepared discourse. I have had some small experience in this matter of collaboration in the making of sermons and can speak of it nothing but good. One of the most popular ministers I have known told me that the great proportion of his sermons were pot-boilers, hastily vamped up, but that once in three months, when his people were growing desperate, he preached a discourse which threw them into transports of delight. This sermon he had had on the stocks during the whole of the three previous months, and had put into it every good and helpful thing he had come across in the time. I do not hold this brother up as an example, but I certainly do think that a little co-operation among ministers, by ensuring more time for the preparation of the individual

discourse, might do something, not to say much, to lighten their burden and at the same time, by introducing freshness and variety of thought, to add to the worth of their ministrations. Few men have preached oftener than Wesley did. It is worth recalling that he wrote, "I know that were I to preach one whole year in one place I should preach both myself and my congregation to sleep," and that that conviction inspired the Methodist three years' system.

Another desirable thing is the breaking down of the stupid traditional prejudice against sermon repetition. There are people who believe that for a minister to preach what is called "an old sermon" is for him to commit a sort of felony, of dishonesty at any rate—that it is the minister's duty and part of his contract to produce new sermons upon all occasions. Colour is given to this by the surreptitious ways too often adopted by preachers to disguise the fact that they are angling for souls with a fly that has served them well before. You remember the passage in *Theophrastus Such* in which the imaginary writer, speaking of his father, says :

> He was a pithy talker and his sermons bore marks of his own composition. It is true they must have been already old when I began to listen to them and they were no more than a year's supply, so that they recurred as regularly as the Collects. But though this system has been much ridiculed I am prepared to defend it as equally sound with that of a liturgy ; and even if my researches had shown me that some of my father's yearly sermons had been copied out from the works of elder divines, this would only have been another proof of his good judgment. One may prefer *fresh eggs*, though laid by a fowl of the meanest understanding, but why *fresh sermons* ?

This, no doubt, was meant to be satirical, but it contains a modicum of truth.

It seems to me that we should do wisely to repeat our discourses, especially such as are specifically doctrinal, with much more frequency than has been usual—taking the opportunity (of course) of every such repetition to improve and as far as possible to perfect our presentation of the subject. I am ashamed to confess that I have only twice had the wit and the courage to preach the same sermon to the same people on the same day, and all the more ashamed because the experiment was, in each case, amply justified by the result. Anything is good that helps our hearers to realize that we are concerned that they should understand and follow us, and that

we hold it a matter of concernment to *them* that they should. For I think it is scarcely to be questioned that in most congregations the listening to the sermon is for many not in any sense an enjoyment, but a thing undergone, submitted to, a sort of *opus operatum*, and vaguely imagined meritorious. Grote, the historian, hit the nail on the head when he wrote :

> In many respects the root of the much foolish talking in the world is foolish or imperfect listening. It is passive listening which is responsible for all that empty declamation which the listeners think it a pleasure to let pass through their minds, now and then squaring accounts with themselves by talking of its folly.

With regard to the week-night service, I should like to mention and to advocate a practice recommended by a former Principal of the United College and Chairman of the Congregational Union. He advised his students to seize the opportunity presented by that service to give their people the advantage of the published discourses of known and notable preachers—men whom it was no disparagement of themselves to own as their betters—and to do this not by mere quotation, even on the most generous scale, but by " attaching " the entire discourse—framework and all—and giving it, not as their own, but as the work of the man who produced it. He maintained that the practice would be educational and helpful to the minister, and kind and distinctly advantageous to the people. One thing it would certainly help to do—to break down the traditional and mischievous idea that the preacher's business is to produce so much matter of his own per week—spun, like the spider's web, out of his own bowels—and to make it understood that his business is to feed his flock. And so long as all is done honestly and in the light, it surely matters little whether he grow the needed food in his own private fields and meadows, or procure it, at the price of prayerful toil, from richer and more skilful growers than himself.

I had some other things to say by way of helping in some small degree to push into its grave the tyrannous dispensation under which we have most of us laboured, but which is doomed, I hope, to a speedy disappearance ; but I will close when I have quoted some words of truth and soberness spoken by Dr. Stalker[1] in an Ordination Charge :

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[1] *The Preacher's Model*, pp. 276f.

> Our people should go away from the church feeling that they have received new and interesting information, that their intellects have been illuminated by fresh and great ideas and that to hear their minister regularly is a liberal education. Nothing will meet this demand except thorough study of Scripture by minds equipped with all the technical helps, as well as enriched by the constant reading of the best literature, both on our own and kindred subjects.
>
> But preparation of this sort for the pulpit is not easy. It requires time, self-conquest and hard work. . . . There are few moods more splendid than a preacher's when, after a hard week's work, during which his mind has been incessantly active on the truth of God and his spirit exalted by communion with the Divine Spirit, he appears before his congregation on Sabbath, knowing he has an honestly gotten message to lavish on them ; just as there can be no coward and craven more abject than a minister with any conscience who appears in the pulpit after an idle, dishonest week to cheat his congregation with a diet of fragments seasoned with counterfeit fervour.

But now—"suppose (I may be asked) this much-desired reform effected—suppose the preachers were released, through the general exercise of common sense, from the necessity of attempting to furnish two, not to mention three, discourses a week—left free, that is, to concentrate their powers of mind and heart on the production of a single sermon weekly, would it, in the long run, matter much ? Would preaching really be improved ?"

To which I can only answer that if it were not, I should despair, not of preaching, but of the preachers. We all—preachers and hearers alike—would do well to remember and to take to heart John Wyclif's sage reminder :

> Dicunt quidam morales quod Deus est *remunerator adverbiorum*, cum Deus non solum curat quid homo agat, sed qua intencione et quomodo illud agat.

HY. H. OAKLEY.

# Two John Sheffields.

[*Transactions* Vol. XI. 216—227. Mr. J. C. Whitebrook's article deals with John Sheffield (c. 1600–1680), minister of St. Swithin's, London Stone, and John Sheffield (1654–1726), minister in Southwark.]

IN addition to the works named in the article, in John Faldo's *Quakerism no Christianity or a Thorow Quaker no Christian. . . .* (c. 1674) there is an *Epistle* commending the work to readers, which is signed by John Sheffield and twenty other ministers. This would seem to be the earlier of the two men. The tract was answered by William Penn with *A Just Rebuke to One and Twenty Learned and Reverend Divines (so-called)* . . . London, 1674.

Two letters from the later John Sheffield's father William, which are used, occur in Thurloe's *State Papers*, Vol. III, London, 1742. William Sheffield's ascription of seditious intentions to the large meeting of Friends at Swannington in Leicestershire in January, 1654–5 should be compared with George Fox's account of that meeting in his *Journal*. Taken in conjunction with other contemporary Quaker declarations against all use of carnal weapons, this would indicate that William Sheffield was in error regarding the purpose of the gathered Friends.

The letters themselves have not been used quite accurately. The letter writer does not attribute the buying up of horses, nor even their use, to Friends. The second letter, like the first, is to Cromwell, not to Thurloe ; it is written twelve days after, not two years before the other ; and refers to the same meeting, not to an earlier " strange Quaker rising." There is no " Foxe a printer " in the letter. Foxe is clearly George Fox, the natural leader to arrange the meeting, but not a printer, and " Giles, a Calvinist of London " should be " Giles Calvert of London," the Quaker printer.

JOHN L. NICKALLS.

## CONGREGATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

## SUMMARIZED ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS.

## JANUARY TO DECEMBER 1931.

| *Receipts.* | £ | s. | d. | *Payments.* | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. 1. | | | | By Printing *Transactions* ... ... | 43 | 0 | 0 |
| To Balance forward 1930 ... ... | 34 | 2 | 4 | ,, Printing Cards & Leaflets ... ... | 3 | 4 | 9 |
| ,, Subscriptions 1931 | 36 | 5 | 6 | ,, Postages & Receipts | 2 | 10 | 0 |
| ,, Arrears ... ... | 2 | 15 | 0 | ,, Hire of Hall (Annual Meeting) ... | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| ,, Subscriptions in Advance ... ... | 1 | 19 | 5 | ,, Receipt Book ... | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| ,, Sale of *Transactions* | 3 | 15 | 0 | ,, Subs. to Friends' Historical Society 1931/1932 ... | | 10 | 0 |
| | | | | ,, Balance in Hand, 31/12/31 ... | 27 | 8 | 6 |
| | £78 | 17 | 3 | | £78 | 17 | 3 |

Audited and found correct,

C. LEE DAVIS,
*Hon. Auditor.*

6th April, 1932.

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