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# Transactions

of the

## Baptist Historical Society.



### Prefatory Note.

THE appearance of the first number of the "Transactions" of the Baptist Historical Society demands no word of explanation. Unlike most first numbers it is not in search of a public, and has no need to disclose its origin or its purpose. Its public—albeit a very limited public—is secured, and its purpose is well understood. It is awaited by the members of the Society, who recognise that a periodical, devoted to the objects for which they have come into association, is indispensable. The more obvious functions of the "Transactions" will be (1) to circulate and give permanence to papers read at the meetings of the Society; (2) to communicate papers accepted on behalf of the Society, but not read or discussed at its meetings; (3) to provide a means of communication between members—other and less formal than by papers—on matters of historical research.

The first two of these functions are admirably instanced in the present issue of the magazine. The paper read by Dr. Whitley at Bradford, at the autumnal meeting of our Society, on "Baptists and Bartholomew's Day," greatly interested the few members who could be present to hear it; but one and all welcomed the announcement that so elaborate and exhaustive a piece of work would soon be in their hands for leisurely and careful perusal, and would also be in the possession of other members, not present at Bradford, who would be not less impressed with the interest and value of the results of Dr. Whitley's investigations. He has effectually disposed of the notion that any considerable number of ministers holding Baptist views needed the impulse of the Act of Uniformity to bring about the severance of their connection with the State Establishment. It was a worthy and notable contribution wherewith to initiate our "Transactions."

Other papers, which could not be read at the meeting at Bradford, are presented now for the first time to the constituency

of the Society, and will be found worthy of study and preservation. Not less serviceable should our publication prove as a means, as already hinted, of less formal intercourse and interchange of knowledge and ideas between our members. If it should become in part a sort of denominational "Notes and Queries," in which those who are keenly interested in the same historical study may seek and give help, it will perform a useful part and supply an obvious need.

The formation of our Society has already brought a welcome surprise to some who thought that interest in the past of Baptist communities was at a lower ebb than it really is. It has been made plain that in various parts of the country, quite unknown to one another, many students of our history have been accumulating material, and working, though in ignorance of one another's efforts, toward a common end. These workers can now more readily come into contact, partly through the meetings of our Society, and yet more through the pages of this magazine. Association will afford stimulus as well as pleasure; information which has been a private possession, and as such has been in danger of being lost, will be cheerfully contributed to the common stock, and will be so ensured against oblivion; and in process of time these contributions, finding record in the volumes of "Transactions," will become a mine of wealth to the future historian of our denomination, who will have in them to his hand valuable material and the directions and hints of other seekers to facilitate his own research.

We may count with confidence on the coming of that historian, for a history of the Baptists more adequate than any yet attempted is due, and will become a matter of urgent demand. By manifold signs it is evident that our denomination is freeing itself from the bonds of an excessive individualism, and is rejoicing as never before in a sense of fellowship with brethren of like faith and practice the world over. Such widened outlook cannot be restricted to the present; it will inevitably turn to the past and seek to scan it also. Joy in brotherhood should not and cannot dissociate itself from the desire to learn what we may of our spiritual ancestry. There has been grievous neglect—to our discredit and loss. Reaping in joy we have been too heedless of those who sowed in tears. To the endeavour to repair that neglect and to meet the desire for a knowledge—at once wider and more exact—of the past of our denomination, may our Historical Society, through its "Transactions," be enabled to render effective aid.

GEO. P. GOULD.

## Early Welsh Baptist Doctrines,

Set forth in a Manuscript, ascribed to Vavasor Powell.

Edited by CHAMPLIN BURRAGE, Oxford.

**M**ANUSCRIPTS of, or even pertaining to, the first Welsh Baptists are apparently almost unknown. This fact is not surprising, for all early Welsh works seem to be scarce. I was much gratified, therefore, in the summer of 1901 unexpectedly to come across the following work attributed to Vavasor Powell, the pioneer Welsh Baptist missionary. This treatise was bound in a small octavo volume composed of a number of short documents which, for the most part, were of little importance. This particular paper, however, at once aroused my interest, and I made a transcript of it. Some pages were bound out of order, thus necessitating a slight reconstruction of the text in two or three places. At the end was signed in a trembling hand the name "Vavasour Powell," written in different ink and a different style from that of the text of the manuscript. The work, however, which is undated, is evidently by Powell, though, on account of the scarcity of extant manuscripts written by him, it now appears to be practically impossible to prove that the handwriting of the text, or even of the name, is his. It is almost certain, however, that Powell's brain produced the treatise.

Further, it should be said that this manuscript is certainly either an original or a contemporary copy, presumably the former, for the handwriting either of the text or of the signature is such that it could well have been written in the later years of Powell's life (he died in 1670), and furthermore the subject is just what he of all men might most naturally have selected for treatment. That he left such a writing behind him is also very probable, for beside the several books which he published in English during his lifetime, we know that after his death various papers of his were found and published in 1671 under the title, "The Life and Death | of | Mr. VAVASOR POWELL | . .," 8vo. To-day this volume like all his other works is rare. The manuscript here edited, however, does not appear to have been published in that collection, nor, so far as I am aware, in any

other of his works. On this account, this little writing was probably not among the papers found at his death, but may have been safely preserved by some one into whose hands it had come, and who, knowing the author's name, which for safety may have originally been left unsigned, inscribed Powell's name at the end. The publication of this manuscript will preserve a work which for many years had apparently been unnoticed, but which may now, I think, be safely added to the list of the writings of the earliest Welsh Baptist missionary and author. It will be noticed that the writer of this document suggests that before the time of its production he had abandoned his earlier Particular Baptist position for that of the General Baptists, and that the Welsh Baptist Churches, as a whole, agreed with him on this point.

The manuscript is in the British Museum: Harleian 6898, folios 219—232. The writer has a habit of forming many of the initial letters of his words as if they were capitals. Such words beginning with "c" and "s," are very conspicuous because they are so numerous. In most cases, therefore, no notice has been taken of this peculiarity in words beginning with "c" and "s," but the less frequent capitals of other letters have been retained.

Som principall pointes Held, and maintained by the Church of Christ in wales, falsly caled Anabaptists:

Although there is but one god, one faith, one Christ, one truth: yet wee see many diferences, amongst the professors of this truth: som say Christ is heare, som say he is there, som with peter inquiring what is truth, I conceiue it is the safest way (therefore) for a truth searching soule, to goe for direction to the god of truth, and with the Noble Bereans, search the Scriptures, dayly, trie all things, speake not euill of any thing before you haue made triall of it, for truth (often times) goes vnder the greatest scandales, and reproaches. I know on the other side, it is the duty of those whoe haue found truth Not to hide it vnder a Bushell, but to publish and declare it for the good, and edification of others, truth neuer fears the

triall, Ioh 3 20 21 he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deedes may be made manefest, that they are wrought in god. psal 139 22 23 search me o lord and know my hart, try mee and know my thoughts, and se if there be any wicked way in mee, &c :

I shall therfore, through the assistance of god, satisfie your desiars, and that you may know, we are not asham'd of the gospell of Christ, declare vnto you, som of those maine tenents we hould, and shall throug the help of god proue to be noe other then the reall truth, which was once deliuered vnto the Saints, both by scripture and Reason whatsoeuer the world imagins of vs.

1 pro: that as the first adam, did by his disobedience bring himselfe and all mankind in himselfe vnder condemnation, soe did the second Adam Iesus Christ, by the grace, good will, and fauour of god, in this nature, giue himselfe a Ransome to god for all menne I Timo 2 6 by tasting death Heb 2 9 for euery man, and soe is becom a propitiation for the sins of the world, I Ioh 2 2 and the Sauour of the world. Ioh 4 42

soe that noe man shall sufer for Adams sin, Christ hath taken away the guilt and condemnation of it, And none are guiltie of sin, vntill they com to act sin; by breaking the lawes of god, in their owne person, Rom 4 15 for where there is not law there is noe transgression, Ezek 18 20 the son shall not beare the iniquitie of the father, Christ hath redemed them from it.

if Christ redemed siners, Rebels, those that were lost, those that doe deny him, and trample vnder foote his blood, and those that perish, then he redemed all and euery man:

but he hath redemed those that were lost, mat 18 11 the son of man is com to seeke and to saue

that which was lost, he died for to redeme siners, and rebellious ons, now if any in the world were not lost or siners &c: then Christ hath not redemed them,

again he died for and Redemed those that deny him 2 pet 2 1 those that trample vnder foote his blood Heb 10 29 those that doe dispight vnto the Spirit of grace, he redemed those that haue neither faith nor vertue nor knowledg, temperance, godlynes nor loue, 2 pet 1 9 he redemed those that may perish, I Cor 8 11 and bring vpon themselues swift Distruction therefore it is plaine that Christ hath redemed all and euery man. Ioh 1 29 behould the lamb of god that taketh away the sin of the world, Ioh god soe loued the world, that he gaue his only begoten, son &c:

ob but this is meant the world of elect [*sic*]

An where doe you find the elect called world?

again, if this were meant elect only [*sic*], se what will follow, god soe loued the elect, that he gaue his only begotten son, that whosoever of them beleiuers, shall not perish, by this construction it appeares, there is two Kinds of elect, som that may perish, and some saued which is a distinction (I suppose) unknowne in divinitie.

2 secondly he hath by his death and blodshedding taken away the curse of the law from all those that were vnder it, gala 4:5. from the Iewes which had it in the letter, and from the gentiles which had it written in their harts, Rom 2 14 15 being made a curse for vs, he is the mediator of the new Testament, for the transgressions that were vnder the first Testament Heb 6 9 15 this we may se in that vision Peter Act 10 he saw a certaine vessell desend from heauen, as it had been a sheete knit at the four corners, wherin were all maner of four footed beasts, clean and vnclane, I take the cleane



beasts to be a figure of the Iewes, and the vncleane a figure of the gentiles, which was told peter were all cleansed, and this the sacrifices did hold forth in the time of the law, Liuit 16 30 this must needs bee soe

1 else we could not liue nor inioy the good things of this life for we lost them in Adam.

2 neither could god be at peace with them that are not redemed from the guilt of Adams transgression, but god is at peace with all 2 Cor 5 19 to wit that god was in Christ reconciling the world vnto himselfe, not imputing their trespasses vnto them, Col 1 20 and hauing made peace through the blod of his cross by him to reconcile all things vnto himselfe, whether they be things in heauen or things in earth, or things vnder the earth. Rom 3 25 he was a propitiation for the sins that are past

3 if this were not soe, then the ofence did abound the free guift [*sic*], Rom 5 20 there the Apostle tells vs, grace hath much more abounded, neither doe we euer find that god doth threaten or inflict condemnation vpon any soule in the second Couenant, for the Transgressions of the father, now hath god set men vpon their feete againe, now is god at peace with all men, but this is mans misery, that they doe not beleue it, but deny the Lord that bought them, & refuse to be at peace with him.

2 pro that Iesus Christ is not only a propitiation for the sins of the world by his death, but hath by his Resurrection, purchased, procuered and obtained euerlasting life, for al those with out respect of persons, that doe not wilfully reiect it, through vnbeleife, and disobedienc for god sent not his son into the world to condem the world, but that world [*sic*] through him might be saued, Ioh 3 17

soe that whoe soeuer now perisheth, distroyeth himselfe, Hosea 13 9 and loseth his owne soule, mat 16 16 by deniing the lord that bought them, 2 pet 2 1 and bring vpon themselues swift destruction, in not receiuing the loue of the truth that they myght be saued, 2 thess 2 10, but trample vnder foote the blod of the euerlasting Couenant wherwith they were sanctified, doe dis-pight to the spirit of grace Heb 10 25 Resist the holy ghost, Act 7 51 count themselues vnworthy of euerlasting life, and will not com to Christ that they might haue life. Ioh 5 40 but neglect soe great saluation, oh that men were wise, that they did but vnderstand, all the foundations of the earth are out of course man being in honor and vnderstandeth not is like the beasts that perisheth therefore whoesoeuer thou art, that aprehendest god is angry with thee, hath noe will to saue thee, neuer gaue Christ to dye for thee, thou art deceiued, it is thy sins that haue seperated betwene thy god and thee, and thy iniquities haue hid his face from thee, for he is a god of loue i Ioh 4 8 and his tender compassion's ouer all the workes of his hands Psal 145 9 and he wayts vpon thee, that thou mightst know him, and what he hath done and purchased for thee, god is reconciled to thee, bee thou reconciled to him, god loues thee, doe thou but loue him and thou wilt find it soe: god hath frely purchased saluation for thee if thou wilt but accept of it, and he wayts vpon thee that thou mayst haue it, o the hight, the breadth, the dept[h] and the lenth [*sic*], of the loue and goodnes of god this is the glad tidings the Angels brought to the sheapards, but a great Ioy to all people this is that good newes that Christ comanded should be preached in all the world, mat 28 19 to euery creature, mar 16 16

this was the doctrine of peter vnto that great multitude Act 3 26 god haueing raised vp his son Iesus sent him to bless you, in turning away euery one of you from your iniquities, this was the first sermon paule preached to those sinful Corinthians that Christ died for their sins according to the scriptures 2 Cor 15 3 willed Timothy to preach the like 1 Timo 4 9 10 the Reasons that moue vs to beleieue this are many I shall only name some.

1 Rea because the gospell is to bee preached to all men, to euery man, now how can it be glad tidings to euery creature, when the most of men haue [*sic*], nor neuer had any part at all in it, vnles god should comand his seruants to tell men an vntruth, nay how can the ministers teach this, they must tell all they preach vnto that Christ died for them, and soe exhort them to leaue sin, and to repent, but if they should haue some priuate thoughts, viz I must tell them all this, but alack I beleieue there is but few, or none, amongst this people, that haue any Right, to that which I am comanded to tell them, and soe whatsoever is not of faith is sin

ob but Ile tell them Christ died for siners

An either you must tell them Christ died for them els [*sic*] tel them they are not siners, for I afirme those that Christ did not dye for, and redeeme, haue not sin Ioh 9 41 cap 13 22 24

2 Rea secondly because god comandes all to beleieue the gospell, Act 17 30 mar 1 15 now, would god (think you) comand all to beleieue, when there was noe obiect to beleieue vpon, I sayd not to the house of Israell seek me in vaine, the god of truth would neuer comand his servants to preach, and men to beleieue a lye, because, men shall be condemned for not beleiuing, 2 Thess 1 8 he will com in

- flaming fire to render vengeance on them, that know not god, nor obey not the gospell of our lord Iesus Christ, Ioh 3 this (saith Christ) is the condemnation, cap 16 8 9 when he is com he will Iudg the world of sin, of what sin of Adams? noe, but sin because they beleiue not on mee, now whoe would haue such a thought, once to think that god will condemne men to hellfire for euer, for not beleiuing that which was nothing soe, is this to attribute Rightiounes to our maker? I trow not, for those that neuer had any portion in Christ neuer reiected any thing, and they doe not beleiue that god loued them or that Christ died for them, which if it bee soe that *christ* died for them they beleiue the truth, and soe are condemned for beleiuing the truth, oh the patience of god to sufer this!
- 4 because god would haue all men saued I timo 2 4 and is not willing that any should perish, 2 pet 3 9 nay lest men should doubt of it he binds it with an oath, Ezek 30 11 as I liue I would not the death of a siner but rather that he repent and liue, how then can this bee? if Christ did not die for all, it was the will of god most should be damnd, soe they are condemned In fulfilling the will of god (oh fearfull)
- 5 because mans damnation is of himself Hosea 13 9 o Israel thou hast distroyed thy self but in me is thy help, why will ye dye o house of Israel, oh that there were such a hart in them, that they would feare me, how often would I haue gathered thee together and ye would not, which I say were nothing but meere disemulation, if Christ did not die for them, and if god would not haue them saued.
- 6 because god is no Respector of persons, Deut 10 17 2 Chron 19 7 Iob 34 19 Act 10 34 Rom 2 11

- Gala 2 6 Eph 6 9 Col 3 25 I Pet 1 17 but what greater Respect of persons can be [*sic*], then for god to giue his son to dye for some, and neuer giue the most of men any obiect to beleiue vpon, yet condemne them for not beleiuing, seing they were all in the same condition.
- 7 because god is sayd to wayt vpon men Isa 30. 18. he waites on the rebellious Isa 65 2 all the day long haue I spread out my hand to a Rebelious, and stifnecked people, Rom 2 4 or dispisest thou the riches of his forbearance, his goodnes, and longsufering, not knowing that the goodnes, of god leadeth thee to Repentance, whoe? thou that aft[er?] thy hardnes and impenitent hart treasurest vp to thy selfe, wrath against the day of wrath, yet the goodnes and forbearance and long sufering of god wayts vpon thee, to lead thee to Repentance
- 1 he wayts vpon them by his spirit I pet 3 19 20 gen 6. 3. Reu 3 20
- 2 he waites vpon them by his word pro 1 22 23 24 euen vpon those that set at naught all his counsels, and would none of his reprofes, those at whose calamities he will laugh, ver 26 and vpon them that shall neuer tast of his super luk 14 24
- Que but was there any thing prouided for them?
- An Yes, ver 17 com for all things are ready, but their refusing and reiecting of it, was the cause, why they went without it.
- 3 he wayts vpon them by the ministers of his word, 2 Cor 5 20 as though god did besech you by vs, wee pray you in Christs stead, bee yee reconciled vnto god. See 2 Chron 36 15 16 and the lord god of their fathers, sent vnto them by his mesengers rising vp early and sending them, but they mocked the mesengers of god, and dispised his words, and misused his prophets, vntill the wrath of god arose against his people, till there

was noe remedy. Now how could, or can god, be sayd to waite vpon those that he hath noe will to saue, therefore I afirme that god gaue his sonne frely to dye, and purchase saluation for all, and would haue all to be saued, but the grand cause of mens damnation is of themselues, by reiecting and refusing him, through vnbeleife and disobedience and soe reiect their owne mercyes Iona[?] 2 8 Reu 22 19

and he that teaches any other doctrine, as to say or hold, that Christ hath not redemed and put all into a capastie of saluation, doth Not giue that large extent to the gospel, which he ought. this is that (in breife) which we hould, and these are some of the Reasons which moue vs to beleieue the truth of it. I should now answeere som obiections that are vsuallyly [*sic*], made against it,

2 but time and other earnest ocations hinders mee.  
pro concerning election we doe beleieue

[*sic*] was it that the purpose of god before time to chuse those that should beleieue in time. soe that when any soul does beleieue and put on Christ, then is he first elected a vessell of honer fit for the masters vse, but and this was the purpose of god before time, but that any are absolutely elected while they continue in vnbeleife, and disobedience, we deny.

Rom 16 5 there the apostle writs to som who were in Christ before him the holy gost confirms it likewise, Act 9 15 he is a chosen vessel vnto me, he doth not say he was, but he is speaking in the present time, I Ephe 4 according as he hath chosen vs in him before the foundation of the world, &c: that is to be vnderstood in gods purpose vpon their faith, and obedience for in cap 2 11 hee bids them remember that in times past, they were without god, without Christ, strangers from

the Couenant of promise &c: surely[?] he that is absolutely elected in Christ, is not without god, without Christ, without Couenant, &c: but then is a soule realie perticularly and absolutely elected, when he puts on Christ by beleiuing, this is the way that god hath chosen to vnite vs vnto him selfe, this is plaine

- 1 because a soule that is absolutly elected is made one with Christ, 17 Ioh 21 22 but an vnbelieuer is separate from Christ heb 3 12 therfor not absolutely elected vntill he beleieues
- 2 he that is absolutly elected is cloathed with the righteousnes of Christ, which couereth his nakednes, maks him beautifull in the sight of god, but an vnbelieuer hath not on the weding garment of Christs Righttiouesnes[?], but all his actuall sins lye open in the sight of god, se Reu 3 17 18 therefore not absolutly elected vntil he beleieues.
- 3 an elect person whoe is absolutly elected in Christ is deliuered out of the snares of Sathan, but vnbelieuers are in the snares of Sathan, 2 Timo 2 vlt [i.e. last verse], in the power of the Diuill Act 26. 18. therefore not really elected vntil they beleieue.
- 4 those that are absolutly elected all their prayers Song 2 and sacrefices are acceptable, and well pleasing 14—to god, but those that are in vnbeleife their prayers are abomination to god, pro. 15. 8. Rom 13 23 by all this (and much more which might be sayd) it apears, that then a soule is absolutly elected, when he professeth Christ, and is posessed with Christ, deceiue not your selues therefore o ye sons of men, to say ye are elected when you walk after the lusts of your owne harts, saying peace peace when there is noe peace, for it neuer was the promise of god that any shall inioy that comfort, and delight (while they continue in sin and disobedienc) as the saints, and elect ones doe, I

shall conclude this with the words of the apostle, 2 Timo 2 20 21 but in a greate house there are not only vessels of gold and of siluer, but alsoe of wod and of earth and some to honer and some to dishoner: if a man therfore purge him selfe from those, he shall bee a vessell meete for the masters vse. gen 4 7 Psal 4 3.

concerning Reprobation we doe beleieue

Prop that it was the purpose of god before time to reiect  
 [sic] such as would reiect him in time I Sam 2 30 them  
 that honer mee I will honer, and they that dispise  
 me, shall be lightly estemed, god neuer leaues  
 man vntill man first leaues him, he striues, and  
 wayts long with him, but if he doth still reiect  
 and refuse him, then he giues them vp to the  
 counsell of their owne harts, Psal 81 11 12 but  
 my people would not harken to my voyce, and  
 Israell would none of mee, soe I gaue them vp  
 to their owne harts lust, soe we may find, in the  
 apostles wordes Rom 1 25 26 for this cause god  
 gaue them vp to vile afections 28 and to a repro-  
 bate mind Thess. 2. 2[.] 11[.] [sic] for this cause  
 god shall send them strong delutions, that they  
 should beleieue a lye, for what cause? because they  
 receiued not the loue of the truth, that they might  
 be saued, but to say that god did decree the most  
 of men to Distruction without any Regard to their  
 sin, and impenitencie, or that god did leaue the  
 greatest part of mankind vnder the guilt and con-  
 demnation of Adams sin, neuer gaue a Christ to  
 die for them, yet comands them to beleieue in  
 Christ, threatens greater misery toward them if  
 they doe not beleieue, yet not his will that they  
 should euer beleieue &c: canot be yet this is a  
 doctrine very frequent in these dayes, amongst  
 the professors of Religion, but this doctrine we  
 doe absolutly dissent from, our Reasons are



- 1 because it limits the mercy of god, o the height breadth lenth and depth of the loue and mercy of god, its sayd to be rich mercy, greate kindnes Ione 4 2 abundant mercy I pet 1 3 the lord is good to all and his tender mercy is ouer all his workes, Psal 145 9 but this doctrine tuckes vp the mercy of god, pares his louingkindnes, limits the holy one of Israel, is it mercy to condemne millions of poore inocent soules for reiect-ing [*sic*] that which they Neuer could haue had? better for them they had neuer bene borne, better for them they had bene created the most vgliest creatures in the world, soe when they had died, there had bene an end of their miserie, but now (by that Doctrine) they must ineuitably perish and be damnd they canot resist it, they are forct on by the irresistible decree of a powerfull god, and, how much better were it for such, to vanish into nothing, then for euer to lye vnder wrath, now what mercy had these? if that doctrine be true? how much better were it for them neuer to haue inioyed the right of creatures? but now is god mercyfull to all, loues all, would haue all saued, and wayts vpon them for this end and this will one day appeare.
- 2 secondly as it limits the mercy of god soe it chalengeth him with iniustice, that he should be the minister of those sins wherof he is the cheif Agent for if he neuer gaue his son to dye for them, then it was his will they should be condemnd, soe he condemns them for doing that which they could not chuse, it was his will, it should be soe, if it be soe, then there is noe sin comited in the world, for all doe the will of god, and he that does the will of god, doth well, these two things that *doctrine* chargeth god with
- 1 with mens sins heare on earth  
2 with their condemnation in hell

- 3 Thirdly that Doctrin that teacheth, Christ hath not redemed all, nor god would not haue all sauéd: oposedh the sincirtie of god for if god should offer his son to all, heare is my sonne take him, I am willing thou shouldst haue him, and yet he neuer intend it, what greater disimulation can be?
- 2 in his pasionate wishes Deut 5 o that ther were such a hart in them to feare me, o that my people had harkened, and that Israll had walked in my ways, oh that thou hadst harkened vnto my comandements.
- 3 mornfull speches, bewayling the misery of [*sic*]  
 “ that doe reiect and refuse him, how  
 “ shall I giue thee vp o Ephraim, how  
 “ shall I deliuer thee o Israell? my re-  
 Hos 11  
 8 “ turn you turn you, why will ye dye  
 “ o house of Israell, think not that I  
 “ would haue you dye, for as I liue  
 “ I would not the death of him that  
 “ dieth, I would haue noe man perish,  
 “ but all to com to repentance, I besech  
 “ you therefore be reconciled, I haue cryd  
 “ and called vnto you, I haue long waited  
 “ vpon you, that you might repent,  
 “ and still am I knocking at the doore  
 “ of your harts, for enterance, what shall  
 “ I doe vnto you? how shall I intreate  
 “ you? will you not be made cleane  
 “ when shall it once bee, oh that that [*sic*] ther  
 “ were such a hart in you that you would  
 “ feare me but my people would not har  
 “ ken nor Israell would none of mee.  
 “ they are bent to backesliding, the oxe  
 “ knoweth his owner and the asse his masters  
 “ crib, but Israell doth not know  
 “ my people will not consider, they are

- “ wise to doe euill, but to doe good they  
 “ haue noe knowledg, how often would  
 “ I haue gathered thee together but ye  
 “ Would not, how long shall thy vaine  
 “ thoughts lodge within thee, thou hast  
 “ distroyed thy self but in me is thy help  
 can god speak thus to reprobats, who by his owne  
 decree shall neuer repent nor be saued, without  
 the greatest dissimulation as if a man should  
 gather sticks for the fire, and morne to see them  
 burne
- 4 that doctrine: viz: of absolute election and Repro-  
 bation before time, it doth not only make god a  
 liar but it maks him worse then the Diuill, for the  
 diuill can but tempt, and alure to sin: but by that  
 doc: god forceth men: (oh I tremble to think it)
- 5 to all sin and iniquitie and consequently to hell fire  
 that doctrine taks away all pitie & charitie towards  
 others, shall I pitie those that god neuer pitieth?  
 shall I exhort them noe, for ought I know they  
 are doing the will of god, if that doctrine be true  
 downe with all teaching it is but vaine
- 6 it opens a way to all sin and licensiousnes of liuing,  
 for If I be once possessed with this opinion if I  
 am elected let me doe what I will I cannot be  
 damned, but if (on the other side) I be not elected  
 I cannot possibly be saued, therefore what need I  
 to striue and labor after Rightiousnes? or to leaue  
 sin when it can neither hinder nor further my  
 saluation, let vs eate drink sport take our pleasure,  
 (si saluabor saluabor, si Damnabor damnabor) be  
 not deceiued god is not mocked whatsoeuer a man  
 sowes that shall he reape awake to rightiousnes  
 and sin not for some haue not knowledg of god,  
 let noe man say when he is tempted I am tempted  
 of god for god cannot be tempted with euill neither  
 tempteth he any man, but euery man is tempted

when he is drawne aside of his owne lusts and  
intised Iam 1 13 14

- 7 it makes the New Couenant to be a vaine thing,  
for by that doctrine god deales with all men  
according to his eternall decree without condition  
or couenant that is but left to deceiue pore souls  
to make them feede on vaine hopes: but I must  
hasten, thus haue I very breifly and confusedly  
(by reson of hast) layd downe the cheif tenents  
of that doctrine we hould, and some Reasons why  
we discent from that doctrine which is comonly  
preached and which wee haue formerly bene led  
in[.] consider of it and the lord giue you vnder-  
standing

As for Baptisme with water we doe beleiue it is  
an ordinance which ought to be practised by all  
those that doe beleiue and descerne for what end  
it was ordained

but to administer it vnto infants in their infancye  
(which know neither good nor euill Deut 1 39  
not soe much as the Right hand from the left  
Iona 4 11 and they that know not earthly things,  
how shall they Know heauenly Ioh 3 a sacrament  
being of noe force to that partie whoe doth not  
vndersta[n]d the thing signified therin,) we doe  
therefore) [*sic*] conceiue that toe administer it vnto  
infants as it hath bene vsed in the Church of  
England, is noe ordinance apointed by god, but  
a tradition of men.

1 first for the mater it self

2 Secondly for the maner

3 Thirdly for the end

1 for the thing we neuer find that it was either  
comanded by Christ or practised by his apostles,  
Iohn was sent to preach the doctrine of Repen-  
mat tance, and then to baptise whoe? such as con-  
3.6. fessed their sins which an Infant cannot se mat 28 19

goe disiple the nations, baptising them, who? such as are taught[?] such as are scholars of Christ, compare this with luk 14 26 there Christ saith that vnlese a man forsake his father and mother and all that he hath he canot be his disciple, but an infant canot forsake father and mother, therefore canot (in that estate) be Christs disciple, if not Christs disciple then not a fit subiect for baptisme, therefore saith peter Act 2 38 Repent and be baptized ver 41 then they that gladly receiued his word were baptised, but an infant in the cradle canot be taught, nor receiue the word therefore not a fit subject for baptisme and in Act 8 12 when they beleiued philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdome of god they were baptized both men and women but not infants, ver 37 if thou beleiuest with all thine hart thou mayst Act 10 47 can any forbid water that these may not be baptized which haue receiued the holy gost as well as wee, by all this it apeares that such as are not capable of teaching those that doe not beleue nor repent are not to be receiued into the visible congregation of Christ, but infants are not capable to be taught canot repent nor beleue therefore not fit subjects for baptisme

obiect but Infants are noe where prohibited therefore they may

An the scripture tells vs we may not presume aboue what is written, cursed is hee that shall adde or diminishe Reu last Christ saith he that is not with me is against mee mat 12 30 I say I [? first] who hath required these things at your hands: I sent you to teach and baptise but ye haue first baptised and then taught ye run and I sent you not whoe hath required these things at your hands

I might shew you the euill of the practise

I it maks those that suppose themselues of the Church

- of Christ think highly of them selues, when thers  
noe cause for it
- 2 it makes the church to consist of all sorts &c: but  
I shall proceede
- (2) secondly the baptisme which we had in our In-  
fancie wee conceiue to be contrary, in the maner  
the word baptizo signifies to dip not as Rantizo  
to sprinkle therefore it is sayd Iohn was baptizing  
into the Iorden Christ and Iohn came vp out of  
the water mat 3 philip and the Eunuch went into  
the water Act 8 see Iohn was in Aenon Neare  
Salim because ther was much water if a litle  
sprinkled on the forehead had bene sufficient.  
Rom 6 4 we are buried (saithe paule) with him by  
baptizme, and we know a man is neuer sayd to  
be buried when there is only a litle dust cast vpon  
his forehead soe it apeares plainly that he who is  
only sprinkled was neuer yet baptised Act 22 16  
and now why tarriest thou arise and be baptized  
luk 7 30 but the pharrasies and lawiers reiected  
the councell of god against themselues, being not  
baptized of him: so much brifly for the maner
- 3 the baptisme of infants was ordained to take away  
sins, as may be sen in the common prayer booke,  
but the blod of Christ clenseth vs from all sins:  
these are some of the groundes that haue moueed  
[sic] vs (through the goodnes of god,) to take  
vpon vs the dispised way of Christ and to make  
mount sion our habitation Reu 18 4 and I hard  
another voyce from heauen saing com out of her  
my people, that ye be not pertakers of her sins,  
and that ye receiue not of her plagues Heb 12 22  
but ye are com to mount sion and vnto the citie  
of the liuing god
- by the vnworthyest of the  
seruants of Christ

Vavasour Powell:

## Letter to William Carey, jun.

William Carey, D.D.

WILLIAM CAREY, junior, was the second son of Dr. Carey, by his first wife, Dorothy Placket. In 1807 she died at Serampore, soon after their eldest son, Felix, had left for Burmah, and William had settled with Fernandez, at Dinajpoor. Dr. Carey married again, Charlotte Emilia, Lady Rumohr, who is the "mother" referred to here. Several earlier letters are printed by George Smith in his life of Carey. Cutwa is about seventy miles above Serampore, up the Hoogli, near the battlefield of Plassey.

Judson and Rice were the first missionaries sent out by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. On the voyage they studied the New Testament as to baptism, and were consequently baptised by William Carey. The Honourable East Indian Company forbade their settlement in British India, and they ultimately went to Burmah.

This letter is in the possession of the Rev. S. W. Bowser, B.A., Principal of Midland Baptist College, Nottingham; he has verified the accuracy of this reproduction. The letter was a gift to Mr. Bowser from Miss Blanche Carey, only daughter of Jonathan Carey, Dr. Carey's youngest son.

My dear William,

I am much concerned to hear of your illness. I should hope a dose or two of Physic would relieve your Cough, I have found it very useful to myself in a similar complaint.

Your last letter gives me encouragement respecting the Work of God in your neighbourhood; I perceive you are discouraged, but my Dear William, commit all your ways to the Lord and go forward in his ways;

he will give you every necessary support in the way of his commands, and will finally enable you to triumph in his name.

You will find us all, not only ready to co-operate with you in all that tends to the promotion of our Redeemer's Interest, but rejoicing that we have opportunities of so doing, Let your whole soul be devoted to the work of the Lord, and you will not be in want of encouragement on every side.

Felix has taken his passage to Rangoon and expects to go by the fifteenth of Decr. His spirit and diligence give me great pleasure, I hope he will be able to finish his Burman Grammar before he goes. May he be blessed with a sight of such success as shall gladden his heart; I do not despair of seeing the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus set up in that country, notwithstanding all the commotions with which it is agitated.

Mr. Judson and Mr. Rice are stopped in their voyage to the Isle of France by G—t, who are resolved to send them to England by the ships now under dispatch, I am much grieved on this account, for I had many hopes that they would have been useful in some part of the East. However the Lord reigns be the people never so impatient and his counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. He shutteth and no man openeth, and openeth and no man shutteth. He can bring good out of this apparent evil and will make the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of it he will restrain.

This evening three persons have been received into the Church, and two last Lord's Day morning, I expect we shall receive fourteen next month. The Lord is graciously carrying on his cause, and will no doubt make it finally triumphant. We have, however, some members who occasion us much distress through



their unchristian conduct. I hope they may be brought to a sense of their sins and may repent of them.

We are nearly as usual, Your Mother hurt herself in lifting Dolly one day and has not recovered from it, She is however better. Give our love to Mary. Let me soon hear of you for I am very anxious to hear of your recovery.

How goes on your Coffee? How many trees have you in the plantation? Are you likely to have plenty of fruit. If they are properly shaded there is no doubt but they will succeed.

Your affect. Father,

W. CAREY.

25th Novr. 1812.

[Inscription on back of letter:

MR. W. CAREY,  
CUTWA.

with some Bengali words.]

## Baptists and Bartholomew's Day.

ON Bartholomew's Day 1662, the last Act of Uniformity took effect, and hundreds of clergy quitted their livings for conscience sake. The story has often been told, but seldom from the Baptist standpoint; nor has there ever been a critical examination of what part Baptists played in the matter of Uniformity and Nonconformity. Yet Baptists were not Nonconformists in the old sense of that word; and a Baptist with a thorough grasp of his principles never could be a Nonconformist. For a Nonconformist was a clergyman in the Established Church, who declined to conform to the conditions on which he was installed in his post, especially as to ritual. Thus he accepted the principle of the State controlling and regulating his work, yet repudiated it in practice. Baptists protested against the State interfering in matters where allegiance was due to Christ, and equally upheld the sanctity of a promise of obedience. Let us first look at the general conception of Uniformity, which produced Nonconformity; then examine to what extent Baptists were concerned in the troubles of 1659—1662.

Uniformity of ritual was never exacted by the Church of Rome, which even to the present day tolerates great variety, as was recently evinced at the Eucharistic Congress, when four different rites were employed to illustrate the diversity permitted. The book of Common Prayer records that until the days of Henry VIII. there were various types of service employed within the realm; the Use of Hereford, the Use of Bangor, the Use of Sarum, the Use of York. A new ideal was set up by the official Reformers under Edward, absolute uniformity of ritual. Any one with a knowledge of human nature would predict that the ideal would never be attained; and the first Act of Uniformity in 1552 never had a fair trial, for within a year Queen Mary undid all the ecclesiastical legislation of her father and brother. She adopted the principle, however, and ejected promptly eight bishops with some hundreds of clergy.

When Elizabeth became queen she at once sanctioned an Act of Uniformity, still printed in some prayer books. And two commissions were issued to see that the Act was enforced. It has been usual to say that the clergy who had acquiesced in all the shifts of legislation for the last thirty years, acquiesced in this too, only about two hundred dignitaries refusing. But a careful study has recently been made of the facts; putting together those who resigned, those who were ejected, those who fled, and those livings found vacant without natural cause, an actual list has been compiled of 1875 people who gave up their livings rather than submit to the new order of things. Nor does this list take into account any who held on for a few years till the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth and denounced the English ritual; it deals only with those who resigned because their consciences forbade them to stay. Granted that they belonged to the Romanist wing; at least they declined to pretend that they would submit, and they quitted their livings. This was the first wholesale ejection under the Acts of Uniformity, or the second since the changes in religion began.

Elizabeth never enforced the Act rigidly on the Puritan wing. If a Protestant would give a general agreement, he was allowed to disobey many of the plain directions for worship, and so the practice of forty years seemed to permit much laxity, although the High Commission is said to have deprived a third of the clergy in that time. The next trial of strength came with the new king, James I. All parties hoped that he would favour them, and it caused rather general astonishment when he made no important changes in the Prayer Book, but made them on his sole authority, and announced that when they were made, he would insist on absolute conformity to the type of worship thus prescribed. The result was that within a year there were three hundred clergy silenced for Nonconformity, and this time they were practically all of the Puritan wing. A few repented when they found the consequences, stifled their scruples and conformed, such as Richard Bernard; others stayed on in a mutinous state of mind and were always being brought before the court for Nonconformity; such were Dod and Hildersham. Many to their honour stayed outside the ranks of the official ministry, and if they felt still called of God to preach, ministered to conventicles, which sometimes organised into churches and ordained them pastors; of this type were John Robinson and Henry Jacob. This is the third wholesale ejection for Nonconformity.

Under Charles I. the administration of the Act fell into the hands of Laud. He never ejected men wholesale, but by a steady

minute inquisition which involved all sorts of punishment, including occasional deprivations, he succeeded in restoring discipline and bringing about tolerable uniformity on the lines substantially laid down by Elizabeth. When he fell the Puritans obtained control in Parliament and there was a period of uncertainty during which great debates were held as to the new lines of worship. It was regarded as axiomatic by nearly all people in power, that uniformity must be exacted. The struggle was as to the type which should be enjoined. While the armies were fighting, of course every man did what was right in his own eyes: *silebant leges inter arma*.

Where, however, the Puritans were in power, they instituted inspection of all the clergy, and applied two tests—Was the incumbent morally and spiritually fit? was he politically harmless? To the former point the Committee for Scandalous ministers attended, to the latter the Committee for Malignant ministers. A great many failed to satisfy the committees on one point or the other, and the result was an extensive ejection. Be it noted that the question this time was of conformity not to standards of ritual or dogma, but to standards of decency and non-intervention in politics. In this way the dismissals by the Long Parliament differ in character from those by Mary, Elizabeth, and James. Yet the fact remains that this change of rulers produced a fourth ejection. The numbers are a little uncertain. Dr. Walker, the Royalist Episcopalian, estimates that during the twenty years, 1640—1660, "the bishops and dignitaries, masters and fellows and scholars of colleges, clergy and school-masters" harassed in any way amounted to 8,000. This is the highest figure possible, and does not refer only to ejections; and the same writer admits that only 800 came forward under Charles II. for restoration. A careful scrutiny of the Journals of the Lords and Commons by Dr. Shaw, shows that in the eight years till January 1649, there were 1050 cases dealt with, including not only ejections, but filling places where the incumbent had died. Certainly the displacements by the Long Parliament were on the same large scale as by Mary, Elizabeth, and James. The Puritans began their constructive work by rendering it illegal to use the Book of Common Prayer, even in private, and they caused this prohibition to come into force on Bartholomew's Day 1645, a date some of them lived to rue.

For such constructive work, Parliament summoned an Assembly of Divines to advise on ecclesiastical questions. This was not elected, but packed by the Puritans, and though they indeed nominated some not of their extreme type, the members

with any episcopal leanings absented themselves, and only five were found who dissented from the general trend. The Assembly had expert wire-pullers in the Scotch commissioners, and by their dexterous management, reinforced by the military necessity of propitiating the Scotch, the plan evolved was largely on the lines popularized by Calvin and Knox, and generally known as Presbyterian. In the end this plan was adopted by the Long Parliament, and the new standard of Uniformity was erected.

If the old Act had scourged with whips, the new ordinance scourged with scorpions. Edward, Elizabeth, James and Charles had been content to fetter the minister by prescribing the forms of prayer and of ceremonial; Parliament went on to fetter the worshippers by prescribing a psalm book, though the Assembly freed the ministers to some extent in the conduct of worship, while attending rigidly to their doctrine and discipline. The sovereigns had left the enforcement to the few bishops supervised by the High Commission; Parliament set the ministers and elders to watch one another and hold frequent meetings for the maintenance of Uniformity, with Parliament itself as a supreme court. And in London and Lancashire, where the system was best observed, it worked with something of the thoroughness known in Scotland.

But there were forces against Uniformity. Since the fall of Laud, before the new standards were agreed upon and published, there had been great laxity. Conventicles had multiplied and had organised into Gathered Churches, which made no pretence whatever of paying any attention to the law of the land, for a Conventicle Act forbade their very existence. And the holders of livings in the Established Church had much excuse for Nonconformity, when half the realm was in the power of Charles, who held to the old type, and half was pervaded by the armies of the Parliament, who objected to it. The army that won the day was organised on a New Model, and it had been a cardinal principle that enlistment was not confined to those who took the Covenant to uphold a church settlement on Presbyterian lines. So in the day of peace, the paper settlement of the Scotch commissioners and the Parliament was not appreciated by the army, which alone had the physical power to enforce it. The second civil war was largely concerned with this very matter, and its issue decided that no Uniformity should be exacted.

The practical settlement was this. If a living fell vacant and the legal patron would acquiesce in the Commonwealth government, he might nominate whom he would. A Board of Tryers verified that the nominee was competent morally, intellectually,

and spiritually, and he was then installed. But no pledge was asked as to what type of service he would conduct, except that the forms in the Book of Common Prayer were still forbidden. Nor was any subscription asked to any doctrinal schedule. Variety of ritual and dogma was deliberately permitted. Under these circumstances all sorts of men were appointed to the parishes; a few of these were men who regarded the ideal to be Gathered Churches, where all the members were mutually pledged to holy living, in writing or orally or by baptism, yet they felt it possible also to minister in the Parish Church to all the inhabitants. Every now and again there was trouble when some one claimed to join in communion, who seemed morally unfit; and one judge humorously told a complainant who was refused, that he had an obvious remedy in withholding his tithes.

With the abdication of Richard Cromwell in 1659, there came anarchy, and many clergy were ejected by the local people. With the return of the Long Parliament in 1660, the Presbyterians regained authority, backed by the power of Monk's army; and an enforcement of the ordinances of 1646 led to the ejection of many more who would not accept the Presbyterian plan. After the return of Charles, these ordinances were treated as null and void, having never had royal sanction, and where the local people were episcopalian, they often turned out the Presbyterian. The royalist historian, Walker, tells that 800 lost their posts in this way. The old Act of Uniformity passed in 1559 was still on the statute book, but it was deemed wise to bring it up to date and to face frankly the situation created in the last twenty years. As a result a third Act of Uniformity was passed in 1662, and was appropriately made to take effect on Bartholomew's Day, exactly seventeen years after the prayer book had been proscribed. By that day at latest, the Presbyterians drank the cup they had brewed, and the livings of the Established Church were purged of all who would not promise to accept in every detail the prayer book, as newly revised. It has been customary to say that 2,000 clergy resigned on that day; but this is a dramatic compression of facts; the ejections began with 1659, and were going on constantly till August in 1662, if not indeed for a few months longer.

Under Mary, Elizabeth, James and the Long Parliament there had been four great ejections, and this makes the fifth; it did not affect more than had been touched under Elizabeth and the Parliament, but it has made a far deeper impression on the minds of modern Free Churchmen. Nor was it the last of its kind; for in 1689 Parliament once more intervened, this

time to exact from all holders of office in Church and State, an oath to acknowledge William and Mary as supreme. After some hesitation, seven bishops and about four hundred clergy refused to take the oaths, and were therefore ejected in 1690, this making the sixth and last wholesale purging of the offices in the Established Church. Since then, as the machinery of the High Commission has been abolished, the maintenance of discipline has devolved chiefly on the bishops. And despite a Public Worship Regulation Act, and an amendment of the Act of Uniformity, no striking occasion has presented itself for a thorough enforcement of the law. A recent enquiry has certainly shown that Uniformity is not generally practised, but it is hardly expected that any serious attempt will be made to insist upon a punctilious observance of the law.

Recognising now that the events of 1662 are not unique, that Mary had dealt thus with Protestants, Elizabeth with Catholics, James with Puritans, the Long Parliament with Episcopalians, and that William afterwards dealt thus with High Churchmen, we may confine ourselves to 1659—1662, when the Presbyterians were the chief sufferers, and ask how Baptists were involved.

Crosby in his third volume brought together all Baptists who suffered from 1640 till 1689, and his first chapter therefore simply supplies a list whence a few names are relevant here; he did not even limit himself to those who accepted official posts. Ivimey drew up a tentative list, and though he is notoriously inaccurate, it has lately been quoted as imperfect and under the mark, but treated as accurate so far as it goes. The fact is that he has considerably overstated the case, and even after adding some names he had not obtained, careful study will greatly reduce the number of Baptists who were ejected between 1659 and 1662. An examination of every case alleged may now be made.

First we may clear the ground by dismissing several who are unknown in Baptist circles, some of whom were demonstrably not Baptists at all. Robert BROWN, ejected from Whitelady Aston, was pastor at Westmancoat nine years later, but negotiations for Broadmead and Plymouth reveal him still a Pædo-baptist.<sup>1</sup> Gabriel CAMELFORD, ejected from Staveley in Westmoreland, was the first minister to a church at "Broughton, flurness fells and Cartmel," based on the principle of welcoming all true believers. In its covenant, baptism is defined as performed with water, in obvious opposition to the Friends at Swarthmoor near by, but there is no reference to immersion or to infants. The

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<sup>1</sup> History of George Street Church, Plymouth, page 74.

church afterwards shifted its centre to Tottlebank, where John Sedgfield impressed upon it a Baptist stamp; but Camelford was no Baptist. Dr. Ichabod CHAUNCEY, of Bristol, who had never held any post but that of military chaplain, has been supposed a Baptist; but he belonged to the Independent congregation of Mr. Thompson.<sup>2</sup> William DELL, M.A., Army Chaplain, incumbent of Yeldon, and master of Caius College, Cambridge, is a little difficult to classify, but it is significant that the Society of Friends often reprinted and circulated his "Doctrine of Baptism reduced from its ancient and modern corruptions," while it is not denied that his own infants were baptised.<sup>3</sup> Thomas ELLIS, was deprived of the rectory of Lopham, in Norfolk, by six justices, and in 1663 his successor was instituted. The register says that Ellis was ejected for Anabaptist dogmas; whether because he declined to baptise infants, by virtue of the Act of Parliament; or by the incapacity and deprivation of Thomas Ellis, last incumbent and lately rector; or by virtue of an Act of Parliament for Uniformity, &c., lately published and authorized; or for some other reason, &c.<sup>4</sup> But while the registrar was sure as to the fact of deprivation, he was evidently hazy as to the exact reason; and supposing the first was correct, refusal to baptise infants is not peculiar to Baptists, nor even to Friends, but was a frequent Puritan scruple if the parents were not religious. The term "Anabaptist" is here used apparently as a mere term of opprobrium. Ellis is quite unknown in Baptist annals. Watkin JONES, ejected from Newport, in Monmouthshire, has been supposed a Baptist, but Pædo-baptists claim him, and Baptists do not know him. So also with Mr. QUARREL, the Congregational pastor at Shrewsbury and Oswestry. John SAINT NICHOLAS, ejected from Lutterworth, has been imagined a Baptist, apparently because he wrote a History of Baptism: but this argues forcibly for the baptism of infants.

A second group may be set aside, because although they were Baptists, they never held any post in the Establishment. Such were Peter CHAMBERLAIN, M.D., pastor of a London church; Abraham CHEAR, of Plymouth; Thomas EWINS, of Bristol, who indeed lectured in the Parish Church but declined to accept any pay for that service; Henry HAGGAR, of Stafford; Joshua HEAD, of Bourton on the Water; Joseph MAISTERS, of Cheshunt; John PENDARVES, B.A., of Abingdon; William RUSSELL, M.D., of High Hall; Edward STENNETT, of Walling-

<sup>2</sup> Broadmead Records, 213, 245.

<sup>3</sup> Ivimey, II., 58-60.

<sup>4</sup> Blomfield's Essay towards the Topographical History of Norfolk, I., 157.



ford; and Henry WILLIAMS, of Newtown. Most of these do not even figure in the pages of Calamy, and have not often been seriously claimed as parish clergy.

A third group may be exonerated on the ground that while they were indeed ejected, they had not then adopted Baptist sentiments. Thus Francis BAMPFIELD, M.A., as late as 1672 occupied such a singular position that he sued out a thoroughly exceptional licence. Richard CLARIDGE, M.A., who had been rector of Popleton, was baptised at Bromsgrove in 1691, and soon joined the Friends.<sup>5</sup> Thomas HARDCASTLE, vicar of Bramham, was baptised in 1664 and joined the Church in Swan Alley, lately under Henry Jessey.<sup>6</sup> Thomas JENNINGS, ejected from Brimsfield, was not baptised till 1667.<sup>7</sup> William JONES, ejected in Carmarthenshire, was then an Independent, and was not baptised till 1665.<sup>8</sup> Thomas PAXFORD, curate of Clopton, became Baptist after ejection.<sup>9</sup> Lawrence WISE, once of Chatham Dock, is acknowledged by Calamy to have changed after 1662.<sup>10</sup>

A fourth group changed their opinions earlier, and as soon as they became Baptist quitted the Establishment. Of these was Edward BARBER, who embraced Baptist principles long before the civil wars, according to Crosby; a statement which it would be interesting to verify and expand: he became a leader of the General Baptists, who had been in London since 1614. Christopher BLACKWOOD, M.A., who resigned Staplehurst, and followed the army, became pastor at Dublin as early as 1653.<sup>1</sup> William BRITTEN in 1654 published "The Moderate Baptist," in the preface of which he mentions how he had resigned since 1649. Francis CORNWELL, M.A., did indeed hold the living of Marden a short time after his baptism, but when he had avowed his sentiments in a visitation sermon in 1649, which converted Blackwood, he voluntarily resigned.<sup>2</sup> Benjamin COX laid down his cure of souls in Devon before 1644.<sup>3</sup> Henry DENNE left Pyrton soon after 1641, and was baptised at Bell Alley in 1643; and though he certainly was appointed afterwards to the living of Elsley for a short time,<sup>4</sup> yet he soon devoted himself to evangelism as a General Baptist Messenger in the eastern counties. Samuel FISHER, M.A., laid down the vicarage of Lydd before 1649 to join the Baptist Church at Ashford.<sup>5</sup> George FOWNES,

5 Ivimey, I., 596.

6 Broadmead Records, 108.

7 Broadmead Records, 91.

8 Thomas' History, 20.

9 Calamy, I., 533.

10 Calamy, II., 59.

1 Crosby, I., 350.

2 Crosby, III., 7.

3 Crosby, I., 353.

4 Crosby, I., 297.

5 Crosby, I., 359.

M.A., vicar of High Wycombe, "quitted the Parish Church voluntarily, before the Restoration."<sup>6</sup> Edward HARRISON was at Petty France, as early as 1644, having left (Kensworth) near St. Albans.<sup>7</sup> William KAYE, of Stokesley, was baptised in 1653<sup>8</sup>, and left the Establishment.<sup>9</sup> John KEITH had the same experience, though date and place are unknown.<sup>9</sup> George KENDALL, M.A., was appointed vicar of Hemel Hempstead in March 1643, after a brief period of lecturing there; but his successor was appointed in May 1644, so that if he became a Baptist, which is a doubtful point, he promptly put himself right.<sup>10</sup> Hanserd KNOWLES, again, quitted the Establishment as early as 1638 and emigrated to New England for three years; he had adopted Baptist principles by 1643, and thenceforth declined to use parish churches, so that he showed no inconsistency.<sup>1</sup> Of Mr. R. LONDON, our only addition to Crosby's reference is contained in a circular letter of 1653, which he signed for the church in the City of Hereford, where Calamy tells us that four Presbyterian ministers did much to oppose the sectaries.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Henry MAURICE in 1675 mentioned himself as pastor-elect to the church at Llanigon in Brecon and Merthyr in Glamorgan, a church consisting mostly of Independents; he had conformed in 1662, being then barely of age, but voluntarily laid down his living when converted; Crosby and Thomas claim him as a Baptist.<sup>3</sup> James SICKELMORE was rector of Singleton, near Chichester, but became Baptist; Crosby dates this act 1640, Taylor at 1648; both agree in saying that he retained his benefice for some time longer: but in 1647 the Long Parliament further endowed this parish, which was not likely if the incumbent was then a Baptist; and in 1662 it was a Mr. John Simmonds who was ejected: on the whole he seems to fall into this group.<sup>4</sup> Colonel John WIGAN who held one or two chapelries at Birch, Gorton and Heapey, resigned when he went into the army and adopted Baptist principles, though it is clear that he used his influence at court to obtain large grants of public money for his ecclesiastical work.<sup>5</sup>

Now we come to three groups about whom our information is defective, so that we cannot be quite sure as to the verdict. The fifth consists of those who may or may not have been Baptists. Crosby mentions James or John BROWN of Oriel

6 Calamy, I., 244.

7 Edwards: Gangræna, III., 81.

8 Fenstanton Records, 292.

9 Crosby, IV., 251.

10 Shaw: History of the English Church, pp. 304, 309, 319, 448.

1 Life by Culross, pp. 27, 41.

2 Fenstanton Records, 345.

3 Broadmead Records, 511, 512.

4 Shaw: History, 493.

5 Shaw: History, II., 121, 128, 509, 589.

College, Oxford, as an author, and implies that he was a Baptist; but he has left no trace in our story. Thomas HORROCKES, M.A., of Maldon, is claimed by Evans on the strength of an extract from "Informations of Meetings in Hertfordshire," under date 1664.<sup>6</sup> Yet though we read there of the Anabaptists of Hertford meeting in the house of Farmer Herles, called Brickingtonbury, there seems some likelihood of mistake, for these people do not appear as Anabaptists in the enquiry of 1669 or in the licences of 1672. Nor is Horrockes otherwise known in Baptist circles. Anthony PALMER, M.A., ejected from Bourton on the Water, ministered to a congregation at Pinners' Hall, London, which included both Baptists and Pædo-baptists. Although Calamy knew him as inclining to Baptist principles, it does not appear that he ever avowed them, and certainly he never associated with Baptist ministers or churches. John SMITH, ejected from Wanlip before 1662, preached near Charnley Forest, but apparently not in connexion with Baptists. Zephaniah SMITH from Wickham Market, afterwards had a few links with Broadmead at Bristol,<sup>7</sup> but these are slender grounds for claiming him as a Baptist, since the church was open membership.

As to one man, John ABBOT, we do not know the dates. Calamy tells, without any hint of the time, or circumstances, that he was ejected from Fishborne, in Sussex. In 1655 this living had been augmented by £20, but the details hardly permit any inference as to the minister or the type of his theology.<sup>8</sup> Crosby says briefly that he left the Established Church and joined the Baptists. In 1670 Vavasor Powell wrote to Bristol that he was a member of the church lately under Henry Jessey, which was now exclusively Baptist.<sup>9</sup> It is therefore uncertain whether he was Baptist when he occupied a position in the Establishment.

A seventh group is of those Baptists whose names coincide to some extent with those of ejected clergy, but whose identity with them is not settled. Calamy says that Mr. BAKER, ejected from Folkestone, who died at Dover, had his understanding impaired. But this is hardly sufficient reason, even for Calamy, for assuming that he was the Baptist Elder at Chatham, known to Crosby. William BELCHER was ejected from Ulcomb, in Kent; there were two or three Baptist ministers of this name, of whom the earliest was at Ingham, in Norfolk, by 1672; there is no obvious connection. Two clergymen named HARDING were

<sup>6</sup> Davids: Essex, 425.

<sup>7</sup> Broadmead Records, 85, 244.

<sup>8</sup> Shaw: History, II., 505.

<sup>9</sup> Broadmead Records, 108.

ejected in Wiltshire, and Crosby thought it probable that one or other was "our" Harding, about whom he vouchsafed no details. Ivimey garbled this, and added that our Harding held a disputation in Ireland during 1652. The only Hardings known in Baptist circles then were James of Biddenden, licensed in 1672, Jonas of Amersham, baptised 1682, and Richard, a baker of Wycomb magna, delated to the bishop in 1669. A Mr. STEED was ejected in old age from the vicarage of Lamberhurst, in Kent; he cannot be the Robert Stead of Dartmouth, who in 1655 wrote "Sighs for Sion," and lived on till 1692 at least, as pastor of Broken Wharf. Nor is it probable that he was the Richard Steed who in 1692 represented Farringdon at the same Assembly. Yet Crosby suggests he was one or the other. As for William WOODWARD, Baptist pastor of Harlow, in Essex, "after his ejection," no proof of identity has been offered with either William Woodward, of Warminster,<sup>10</sup> or with Mr. Woodward, of Southwold, in Suffolk, or with the rector of Popleton.

As regards these three groups, we go only on probabilities, and sometimes can hardly see the balance incline. We come however now to four more groups where certainty is attainable.

The eighth set of men consists of chaplains, in the army or navy or colleges, where there was no need to raise any question about infant baptism. Such was John CANNE, who in the course of a most versatile career acted as chaplain to Robert Lilburne's Regiment, in which the Baptist element was strong.<sup>1</sup> Such was John GOSNOLD, M.A., master at the Charterhouse, who on ejection retired to the General Baptist Church hard by on Paul's Alley, in the Barbican. Such was Paul HOBSON, who started life as a tailor, and after a most romantic career at London, Bristol, Newport Pagnel, Yarmouth, Hull and Newcastle, found rest for the sole of his foot as Fellow of Eton; being ejected, he was mixed up in a plot against the new order of things, and ended a disgraceful Baptist history by turning King's evidence and causing two members of Devonshire Square to be disciplined for wanton conduct with him. Such was Isaac LAMB, chaplain on the "Constant Warwick," which brought back Charles II., he became pastor at Virginia Street General Baptist Church. Such was his father, Thomas LAMB, the soap boiler, who though pastor of the chief General Baptist Church, in Bell Alley, seems to have acted awhile as chaplain, and so contributed to the hatred which showed itself in 1672 when to this church, almost alone, a licence was refused.

A ninth group consists of men who, while Baptists, held

<sup>10</sup> Shaw: History, II., 547.

<sup>1</sup> Clarke Papers.

Welsh livings under Cromwell's tolerant scheme, which permitted any reputable minister to be installed. Anthony HARRY, member of the church at Abergavenny, was appointed by the commissioners for Wales to preach in the parish of Llanfihangel, in place of John Griffith, whom they ejected for scandalous life. Morgan JONES of Ilston Church, was appointed at Laleston, in Glamorgan, succeeding Theodore Price. For a knowledge of these men we are indebted to Dr. Walker, the royalist historian; as Calamy does not mention their ejection, we infer that they died or retired before the reaction began. We shall see that in Wales many Baptists were appointed. The reason is that Baptists were the most urgent in pressing the needs of the Principality, and when a commission of twelve was created to supply these needs, three of the most active were Captains Vavasor Powell and Jenkyn Jones, with John Miles. Whatever faults have ever been charged on the Welsh, forgetfulness of their friends does not figure on the list, and so several Baptists were put into livings.

The tenth, and most important group, is of those Baptists who really held office in the Established Church, and were ejected either by the Presbyterians in 1659, or by the local gentry, or by the previous royalist incumbent, or under the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Here we meet a Mr. ABBOT of Abergavenny, who had assisted Tombes in the debate there against Cragg. Here too is Richard ADAMS, M.A., vicar of Humberstone, who started a church at Mountsorrel after his ejection, then went to the General Baptist Church of Dockhead, and thence to the Particular Baptist Church at Devonshire Square. Evan BOWEN of Llanafan fawr, continued in the same place as a Baptist minister. David DAVIES of Kelligar, was a member of the Llantrisant Church. Daniel DIKE, M.A., of Great Hadham, one of Cromwell's Tryers, on his ejection went to Devonshire Square. John DONNE, M.A., of Pertenhall, settled over a church at Keysoe. John EDWARDS of Llangors, was at the same time a member of Abergavenny. Thomas EVANS, of Llanafan, stayed on as pastor of the Baptist Church. Benjamin FLOWER retired from Cardiff to Castlecomb, and after two ejections kept a school and ultimately settled over the Devizes Church. Paul FREWEN went from the living of Kempley to the pastorate at Warwick. John GIBBS quitted the vicarage of Newport Pagnell by the general desire of the town, before the Act, and took charge of a church at Stony Stratford. Henry JESSEY, M.A., who had been rector in Southwark and lecturer in the city, confined himself to his duties as pastor in Swan Alley. Captain Jenkyn JONES left the vicarage of Cadoxton and betook

himself to an itinerant ministry. A second Morgan JONES held the living of Llanmadoc, though like his namesake, a member of Ilston. Thomas JOSEPH retired from Llangeinwr, and in 1672 took out a licence for Bridgend. Jeremy MARSDEN, whose career was as curious as Paul Hobson's, laid down the chapelry of Ardsley and took to a life so dubious that he assumed an alias, Ralphson, under which name he was thrown into Newgate. George MARTYN from Weedon Beck, went to the Baptists in Stony Stratford. John MILES, rector of Ilston, was simultaneously pastor of a Baptist Church there, which he took to New England after his ejection. Mr. MILMAN, from Trelech, went to Tintern. Captain Vavasor POWELL was not only the great Baptist evangelist, but also one of the Approvers for Wales, and so earned deadly hatred. Walter PROSSER, rector of Tredynoc, belonged to the Hay Church. Thomas PROUD, rector of Cheriton, was of the Ilston Church. John SKINNER, of Weston Penyard, on the Welsh marches, had a Baptist Church there simultaneously. Howell THOMAS, of Glyncorwg, was a member at Llantrisant. William THOMAS, who apparently held a living in Carmarthenshire, was of the great church at Ilston. And in Cornwall Thomas TREGOSS, M.A., of Milor and Mabe, gathered a church at Trelevah, after working at Budock.

There remain two remarkable cases of Baptists who conformed. Samuel OATES, who had done fine work in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Bell Alley, as a Messenger of the General Baptists, made such an impression on the Duke of York that he was offered the living of Hastings. He succumbed to the temptation, but afterwards repented himself, surrendered the living and returned to end his days at Bell Alley. His son, Titus Oates, repaid the duke for the temptation. John TOMBES, B.D., of Leominster, one of Cromwell's Tryers, far the most learned Baptist of the age, who had never fallen into line with the Baptist churches and ministers, gave up his living and ended his days as a lay communicant of the Church of England, having married a rich widow at Salisbury.

Here we have examined every case where it has been supposed that a man was a Baptist and connected with the Establishment. After deducting some cases where the facts were misapprehended, it is certainly true that twenty-eight members or officers of Baptist Churches held parochial livings under Oliver's Establishment, and five more accepted public money as chaplains; and it may prove that eleven more should join their ranks. This is the extent to which the denomination is concerned in the movement whose crisis was on Bartholomew's Day. Welsh and

English alike must divide the honour of having had representatives in the Established Church, and even of having provided five governors of it; Particular Baptists and Generals alike must share the blame of having forgotten their fundamental principle, that allegiance in religious matters is due to the Lord alone, and to Him direct.

W. T. WHITLEY, Preston.

\* \* \* The discussion that followed the reading of the paper at Bradford reduced the margin of doubt in a few cases. Private correspondence and further enquiry have elucidated other points. The corrections have been incorporated in the paper as printed. A tabular summary of results follows.

**Ministers charged with holding posts in the Established Church while being Baptists,  
grouped in eleven classes.**

63

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never Baptist.</li> <li>2. Never in the Establishment.</li> <li>3. Became Baptist after 1662.</li> <li>4. Resigned from the Establishment on becoming Baptist.</li> <li>5. Doubtful if Baptist.</li> <li>6. Date of resigning living uncertain.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Not identified.</li> <li>8. Chaplain.</li> <li>9. Died as Baptist in the Establishment.</li> <li>10. Ejected as Baptist from the Establishment.</li> <li>11. Conformed though Baptist.</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

CLASS	MINISTER.	STATE APPOINTMENT.	BAPTIST CHURCH.	PALMER'S CALAMY.	CROSBY.	THOMAS.
6	Abbot, John ... ..	Fishborne, Sussex ... ..	Jessey's ... ..	2.462	4.253	
10	Abbot, ... ..	Abergavenny ... ..		2.629		20
10	Adams, Richard, M.A. ... ..	Humberstone ... ..	Mount Sorrel ... ..	2.116	3.37	
7	Baker, ... ..	Folkestone ... ..	Chatham ... ..	2.60	3.35	
3	Bampfield, Francis, M.A. ... ..	Sherborne ... ..	Pinner's Hall ... ..	1.468	1.363	
4	Barber, Edward ... ..		Spital ... ..		3.3	
7	Belcher, William ... ..	Ulcomb, Kent ... ..	Ingham, Norfolk ... ..	2.70		
4	Blackwood, Christopher, M.A. ... ..	Staplehurst ... ..	Spilshill ... ..		1,350	
10	Bowen, Eyan ... ..	Llanafan fawr ... ..	Llanafan fawr ... ..			8
4	Britten, William ... ..					
5	Brown, James ... ..	Oriel College, Oxford ... ..			4.251	
1	Brown, Robert ... ..	Whitelady Aston ... ..	(Westmancoat) ... ..	2.548	3.9	
1	Camelford, Gabriel ... ..	Staveley ... ..	(Broughton) ... ..	2.496		
8	Canne, John ... ..	Army chaplain ... ..	Bristol, London ... ..		3.38	
2	Chamberlain, Peter, M.D. ... ..		London ... ..			
1	Chauncey, Ichabod, M.D. ... ..	Army chaplain ... ..	(Bristol Indept.) ... ..	2.352		
2	Chear, Abraham ... ..		Plymouth ... ..		3.11	



CLASS	MINISTER.	STATE APPOINTMENT.	BAPTIST CHURCH.	PALMER'S CALAMY.	CROSBY.	THOMAS.
3	Claridge, Richard, M.A. ...	Popleton ... ..	Cripplegate ... ..		2, lviii.	
4	Cornwell, Francis, M.A. ...	Marden ... ..	Marden ... ..		1.344 ; 3-7	
4	Cox, Benjamin ... ..	Devon ... ..	Bedford ... ..		1.353	
10	Davies, David ... ..	Kelligar ... ..	Llantrisant ... ..	2.628		6-11
1	Dell, William, M.A. ... ..	Yeldon ... ..		1.201 & 225	1.323	
4	Denne, Henry ... ..	Pyrton ... ..	Bell Alley ... ..		1.297	
10	Dike, Daniel, M.A. ... ..	Great Hadham ... ..	Devonshire Square ... ..	2.42	1.355	
10	Donne, John, M.A. ... ..	Pertenhall ... ..	Keysoe ... ..	1.223		
10	Edwards, John ... ..	Llangors ... ..	Abergavenny ... ..			17
1	Ellis, Thomas ... ..	Lopham ... ..		2.194		
10	Evans, Thomas ... ..	Llanafan ... ..	Llanafan ... ..			8
2	Ewins, Thomas ... ..		Bristol ... ..	2.351		
4	Fisher, Samuel, M.A. ... ..	Lydd ... ..	Ashford ... ..		1.359	
10	Flower, Benjamin ... ..	Castlecomb ... ..	Devizes ... ..	2.624 & 500		
4	Fownes, George, M.A. ... ..	High Wycombe... ..	Broadmead ... ..	1.243		
10	Frewen, Paul ... ..	Kempley ... ..	Warwick ... ..	1.540	3.11	
	Froude (misprint for Proud)					
10	Gibbs, John ... ..	Newport Pagnell ... ..	Stony Stratford ... ..	1.242		
8	Gosnold, John, M.A. ... ..	Charterhouse ... ..	Barbican ... ..	1.150	3.61	
2	Haggar, Henry ... ..		Stafford ... ..		3.38	
3	Hardcastle, Thomas ... ..	Bramham ... ..	Jessey's ... ..	2.557		
7	Harding, ... ..	Wilts ... ..	Ireland ... ..	2.499 & 507	3.10	
4	Harrison, Edward... ..	Kensworth ... ..	Petty France ... ..		[Goadby,	340]
9	Harry, Anthony ... ..	Llanfihangel .. ..	Abergavenny ... ..			18
2	Head, Joshua ... ..		Bourton ... ..	1.551		
8	Hobson, Paul ... ..	Eton ... ..	Newcastle ... ..	1.236		
5	Horrockes, Thomas, M.A. ... ..	Maldon ... ..	Hertford ... ..	1.510	[Davids'	Essex, 425]
3	Jennings, Thomas ... ..	Brimmsfield ... ..	Bristol ... ..	1.531	[Broadmead,	91]
10	Jessey, Henry, M.A. ... ..	St. George's ... ..	Swan Alley... ..	1.108	1.307	
10	Jones, Captain Jenkyn ... ..	Cadoxton ... ..		2.624		19

CLASS	MINISTER.	STATE APPOINTMENT.	BAPTIST CHURCH.	PALMER'S CALAMY.	CROSBY.	THOMAS.
10	Jones, Morgan ... ..	Llanmadoc ... ..	Ilston ... ..	2.626		18
9	Jones, Morgan ... ..	Laleston ... ..	Ilston ... ..			18
1	Jones, Watkin ... ..	Newport ... ..		2.629		17
3	Jones, William ... ..	Llangellbithen ... ..	Rushacre ... ..	2.621		20
10	Joseph, Thomas ... ..	Llangeinwr ... ..	Bridgend ... ..	2.624		19
4	Kaye, William ... ..	Stokesley ... ..			4.251	
4	Keith, John... ..				4.251	
4	Kendall, George, M.A. ... ..	Hemel Hempstead ... ..				
4	Knowles, Hansard ... ..	Humberstone ... ..	Broken Wharf ... ..		1.334	
8	Lamb, Isaac ... ..	"Constant Warwick" ... ..	Virginia Street ... ..		3.101	
8	Lamb, Thomas ... ..	Army chaplain ... ..	Bell Alley ... ..		3.54	
4	London, R. ... ..		Hereford ... ..		4.251	
2	Maisters, Joseph ... ..		Cheshunt ... ..	1.192	4.342	
10	Marsden, Jeremy ... ..	Ardley ... ..				
10	Martyn, George ... ..	Weedon Beck ... ..	Stony Stratford ... ..	2.234		
10	Miles, John... ..	Ilston ... ..	Ilston ... ..	2.624	3.31	
10	Milman, ... ..	Trelech ... ..	Tintern ... ..	2.629		17
4	Maurice, Henry ... ..	Stretton ... ..	Llanigon ... ..	2.331	4.251	
11	Oates, Samuel ... ..	Hastings ... ..	Bell Alley ... ..		3.61	
5	Palmer, Anthony, M.A. ... ..	Bourton ... ..	Pinner's Hall ... ..	1.532		
3	Paxford, Thomas ... ..	Clopton ... ..	Bourton ... ..	1.533	3.36	
2	Pendarves, John, B.A. ... ..		Abingdon ... ..			
10	Powell, Captain Vavasor ... ..	"Approver" ... ..	Newtown ... ..		1.373	20
10	Prosser, Walter ... ..	Tredynock ... ..	Hay ... ..	2.629		15
10	Proud, Thomas ... ..	Cheriton ... ..	Ilston ... ..	2.624	3.31	19
1, 2	Quarrel, ... ..		Oswestry ... ..			
	Ralphson, pseud. for Marsden ... ..					
2	Russell, William, M.D. ... ..		High Hall ... ..			
4	Sickelmore, James... ..	Singleton... ..	Chichester ... ..	2.474	4.245	
10	Skinner, John ... ..	Weston ... ..	Weston ... ..	2.38	3.32	

CLASS	MINISTER.	STATE APPOINTMENT.	BAPTIST CHURCH.	PALMER'S CALAMY.	CROSBY.	THOMAS.
5	Smith, John .. ...	Wanlip ... ..		2.130	3.35	
5	Smith, Zephaniah ... ..	Wickham ... ..		2.444	[Broadmead,	85, 244]
7	Steed, Richard ... ..	Lamberhurst, Kent ... ..	Farringdon ... ..	2.62	3.10	
2	Stennett, Edward ... ..		Wallingford ... ..			
1	St. Nicholas, John .. ...	Lutterworth ... ..		2.119	3.33	
10	Thomas, Howell ... ..	Glyncorrwg ... ..	Llantrisant ... ..	2.624		15, 19
10	Thomas, William ... ..	(?) Carmarthen ... ..	Ilston ... ..			9, 14, 19
11	Tombes, John, B.D. ... ..	Leominster ... ..		2.34	1.278	
10	Tregoss, Thomas, M.A. ... ..	Milor and Mabe ... ..	Trelevah ... ..	1.286		
4	Wigan, Colonel John ... ..	Birch ... ..	Manchester ... ..			
2	Williams, Henry ... ..		Newtown ... ..	2.618	3.10	
3	Wise, Laurence ... ..	Chatham Dock ... ..	Goodman's Yard ... ..	2.59	3.32	
7	Woodward, William ... ..	Southwold ... ..	Harlow ... ..	2.437	3.34	

## William Vidler, Baptist and Universalist.

**W**ILLIAM VIDLER was born at Battle, Sussex on May 4th, 1758. He was the tenth and youngest child of John and Elizabeth Vidler of that historic town. The father and several of the elder brothers worked as stonemasons and bricklayers in the district. Being good workmen the home was better than most of those belonging to people in like circumstances, and the family took in the society of the place a better position than other cottagers. Mr. and Mrs. Vidler were communicants at St. Mary's, and its minister, the Very Rev. Thomas Nairne, B.A., Dean of Battle, frequently found his way to their house. His visits often marked the arrival of books from his library to satisfy the reading hunger of William, the "little bookworm."

Because of chronic ill-health the boy lived most of his life upon the couch. From the first his Bible was as interesting a book to him as any of the many he read, and he was looked upon as "religious." His quiet studiousness did not help him to make many friendships, and to a number of people in the town he was an object of scorn as one unfit for work, and therefore an incumbrance. Some of his own brothers shared this feeling, and maybe, helped it to live and grow. To his stalwart father he was a great disappointment. Save for this weakling his was a family of strength. And physical ability was the only thing that counted with this workman, whose muscle won him more respect than even his skill gained. The majority of the inhabitants saw so little of William that they quite forgot his existence until circumstances thrust him before their eyes.

At the age of fifteen William decided to attempt his father's trade. The endeavour was ill-advised, for within a little time the unusual exertion reduced him to such weakness that he was glad to be left in undisturbed possession of his window-seat again. There for several more years he lived out his life, daily steeping himself in whatever literature came to his hand.

In the year 1776 Battle was "visited with the word of God by the means of Mr. George Gilbert, an independent Calvinist, from Heathfield; who appears to have been a man of real zeal for God, and had the happiness to be much owned by God in his public labours."

"The occasion of Mr. Gilbert's coming was thus. There was a poor man, one William Sweetingham, that came from Brighton to Battle to make bricks; this person loved the Gospel, but he could go nowhere to hear it nearer than Heathfield, which is ten miles from Battle; he therefore gave Mr. Gilbert an invitation to come to his house to preach: he accepted the invitation, and in January, 1776, he came and preached to about forty people in the evening; the word seemed to be well received."

For more than seventy years there had been a Presbyterian Church in the town. It had been founded by the Lewes minister in the last decade of the 17th century, and had a succession of four resident ministers. The last one (David Jenkins) had come to a flourishing cause in 1747-8. He was "evangelical and able," but as the time passed he found it increasingly difficult to cope with the Arian (or Unitarian) blight that devastated the fair harvest of his own and his predecessors' devotion and faith. By the time Mr. Gilbert visited the place, Mr. Jenkins had died after a twenty-five year ministry, and the edifice in which he had conducted services had been closed for some few years. The January visit of the Mountfield minister was followed by others in the succeeding months. In March, the landlord of Sweetingham's house forbade the preaching, on penalty of having to seek another residence. The little band thereupon accomplished what they had in mind by asking Mr. Gilbert to come for "conversations." But as "several people seemed in earnest about their salvation; the appearance of which set the whole town in confusion," they had to conduct their meetings in the open air.

Sweetingham's daughter was numbered amongst the few who called William Vidler friend, and she had persuaded him to come to the services. The eighteen-year old student and the twenty-four year old maiden took their stand together under "the oak, at the entrance to the town" (now known as 'The Watch Oak'). This was in the month of May, and for more than six months they remained faithful to those difficult and often dangerous meetings. For the result of their boldness was "noise, insults and blasphemy." But "twelve persons acknowledged their need of a new life." At the end of the year another house was provided.

It was at the meetings held in this house that William Vidler interpreted certain desires that were gradually strengthening into a call from God to take active part in His service. Mr. Gilbert presided at their monthly communion on the Lord's Day, and generally preached "every Thursday beside." During 1777 "several ministers who were in connection with the pious and Honourable Lady Huntingdon visited them." When "they had no minister to preach to them," some "sound discourse was read by one or the other" of those present.

"This was useful," says Mr. Vidler, in describing his entrance into his ministerial career, "in bringing forward a gift among the people." And he proceeds, "A youth, whose name was William Vidler, who was often their reader when they were destitute of preaching, about nineteen years of age, at the desire of the people in general was induced, in April 1777, to speak among them by way of exhortation. Being encouraged to continue this practice by the good acceptance it met with, he went on in it, though in much weakness and fear, until October (of that year), when, through persecution, he left Battle for the Isle of Wight."

That exile in the garden-island helped him to understand his relationship with Miss Sweetingham, with whom he began a correspondence. And the change of air and scene did for him physically what all the Battle doctoring and nursing had failed to accomplish, so that when he returned ("somewhat reluctantly" as he says), in July 1778, he was qualified to advertise mens sana in corpore sano. He now went regularly to work as a stonemason, finding opportunity about the district, and made such rapid strides in his profession that he soon had more tasks than he could do single-handed, and was able to put many a chance in the way of his relatives. His studies were only pursued by the greatest determination, but he found out that his meal times could be profitably spent with his books, and he therefore hired a man to take these volumes to and from the place of his employment.

His preaching work caused increasing persecution to centre about him, the hardest to bear being that from his own home. Even his mother leagued herself with them, and it was from her lips he heard that if he did not give up preaching he must give up his home. It was many years before he was free from the petty spite of his enemies, but he persevered in what he conceived to be God's plan for his life. The folk who formed the flock of "Methodists" (as they were nicknamed) encouraged him to stand fast, and "his amiable and affectionate behaviour," gradually "softened prejudice and conciliated esteem." "He was richly rewarded for his consistent and exemplary conduct by the conversion of his mother to his opinions and feelings."

About this time he became friendly with Thomas Purdy, who was for close on fifty years the Baptist minister at Rye. The result of the fellowship was that he was baptised in January 1780, with two others, by Mr. Purdy, and joined the Church in that town. From the calf-bound minute book recording in such neat writing the doings of over 150 years of Church meetings the following extracts are taken:

"At a general fast held in our Meeting Place, Feb: 4th, 1780, the Church having stopped. It was agreed by the Church to call out into the ministry our Brother William Vidler by holding a day of Fasting and Prayer the Wendsnesday senight after."

"Feb: 18th, 1780. Being a day set apart for Fasting and Prayer for the calling out into the ministry Brother William Vidler who was accordingly by the whole consent of the Church set apart for the Ministry of the Word and had the right hand of fellowship given him by Brother Thomas Purdy, Pastor of the Church."

"At the same time seven persons Viz—Joseph Fuller, Thomas Hazelden, William Askley, Abraham Bodle, Elizabeth Hazelden, Mary Weller, Ann Selms, gave in their experiences to the Church with declaration of their faith in Christ and conviction of baptism, and were baptised the same evening. Mr. Daniel Wood gave in his experience the same time but being poorly in body put off his being baptised. These persons came from Battle and were among the first baptised to form and plant a Baptist Church at Battle."

"Thursday, 19th Feb: 1780. Samuel Gestsel came before the Church and gave in a very satisfactory account of the work of grace on his soul, and of his faith in Christ, and was baptised the Lord's Day following. He also was one that proposed to form a Church at Battle."

The cause at Battle had steadily progressed until Mr. Gilbert regularly presided over more than fifty communicants. This gentleman was, however, only willing to help them as long as they remained "Independent" in faith and practice. The growing number of adult baptisms caused him great uneasiness, and in the early part of 1780 he felt it his duty to withdraw from the pastorate or oversight that had gradually been granted him.

The people turned to William Vidler for help, and on March 28th, 1780, Thomas Purdy of Rye, and William Copping of Sandhurst, came to Battle and presided at the formation of a Particular Baptist Church, with William Vidler as its pastor, and a membership of fifteen. Mr. Vidler was then twenty-two years of age.

He celebrated his new position by wedding Charity Sweetenham, and by so doing began a home life that was marked by an increasing beauty of fellowship to the end. There were times in their partnership when only the grace of God was sufficient to keep their faces toward the dawn, sad times of debt and distress and death, but for twenty-eight years the lives that God had joined were a continual refreshment to family and friends and flock alike.

The Church bestowed the sum of £17 yearly upon him as salary, and making this his book fund he worked at his trade for the daily bread. His expenses increased very rapidly. By 1787 he had a family of five, and William Sweetingham dying he took his wife's mother into his home, where she resided for more than twenty years. The following extract from his diary is eloquent of this period:

"When I was indebted to my butcher and baker Fifteen pounds,

thou Lord that knewest what I had need of, didst send me just Fifteen pounds to pay it with, though I told no mortal of my case. Now I am sure that thy hand was in this, for it was just the sum I needed, and came just in the time that I needed it, and the person who was chief instrument in doing it knew very little about me."

His fame was by no means confined to his birthplace, and many journeys he took for the supplying of better known pulpits than his own, and the preaching of special sermons. Several "calls" came to him from larger Churches, and this possibility of losing him may have brought to his people's remembrance the necessity of augmenting his stipend. By annual increase it was raised to £50.

The town persecution had by no means stayed, and one of the newer methods of annoyance was the accusation made that he was oppressing his people and making a gain of godliness. Considering that he preached six times each week and walked thirty miles so to do—plus his journeys to and from his work—the charge must have been very difficult to sustain. But many were found to continue this canard, and when it was worn threadbare others were invented to take its place. He was accused of lending money at an extortionate rate of interest, and in answer says: "I have never yet been able to keep myself quite level with the world, which at times has been a great trouble to me, as I earnestly wish to owe no man anything but love." Again it was rumoured that "he charged everyone he baptised half-a-guinea or a guinea," and defended himself thus: "Of all those whom I have ever baptised, I never did receive the value of one penny . . . though I have several times refused presents which have been offered me on these occasions."

The opposition to him and his work culminated in a solemn league that was formed by the tradesmen and others of the town "laying themselves under the obligation not to buy or sell anything of or to those who formed Vidler's band of religionists." The very absurdity of this was its executioner, and a certain person in high position in Battle dying just then, the boycott gradually ceased. Little petty spitefulnesses had, however, to be encountered now and then. A typical incident is as follows: A shoemaker in the High Street divided his days between hatred of Mr. Vidler and admiration of a notice conspicuous in his window. The latter declared that his shoes and his only would "infallibly fit." On the day of the Annual Fair he observed the young minister coming down the crowded street, and stopping him with a low bow, with solemn voice said, "Good morning to you, Parson Brickdust. I hope your Reverence is well this morning, Most Reverend Sir." Mr. Vidler perceiving how highly the people relished the joke, uncovered his head with great gravity, returned a still lower obeisance than he had received, and with great stateliness of manner replied,



"Good morning to you, Mr. H—, Infallible Boot and Shoe maker; I hope I have the pleasure of seeing your Excellency well this morning, Most Infallible Sir." This unexpected retort, in which the fool was answered according to his folly, disconcerted the scoffer, raised the laugh against him, and fixed on him the name of "Mr. Infallible," to the day of his death.

The influence of Mr. Vidler's character and talent won its way at last. His enemies became afraid of encountering his keen raillery. And with the joining of most of his relations to the Church he served, came a time of peace to him and his.

Somewhen before 1790 he gave up his manual labour and opened a shop for the sale of books and stationery and drugs. Although he kept this establishment until he finally left Battle, it did not do much towards keeping him. He was not cut out for a salesman. His books seemed better to read than to sell. The few customers complained of his inattention, but what could be expected of a shopman who had to prepare several sermons and addresses between the ringing of the shop bell, and who read himself into other worlds from whence it was a long journey back to the sale of a packet of wafers. Owing to his growing popularity in the denomination he served, he was frequently away from home, and during these absences closed his shop, needless to say this did not tend to enhance his trade profits.<sup>1</sup>

One of the masters in whose yards he had worked as a stonemason was Mr. Samuel Luff, of Northiam. This gentleman asked him to hold services in the village, and for many years Mr. Vidler visited the place every other week, walking the nine miles in all weathers, the meetings being held on fine evenings under the oak called Elizabeth's and when wet, in a building in Mr. Luff's yard. Hence arose a branch Church in this village.

On October 11, 1780, his father died. A courageous, hard-working, skilled citizen; a good father; a man of worthy character; but without any signs of having been converted along the lines of the Calvinistic scheme. For years there had been constant attendance at the Established Church, but no qualifications that would make the dissenters of that town rejoice because the brand was plucked from the burning. William Vidler was asked to preach the funeral sermon. He did, and in it he said that "good men are finally saved even though they might not clearly apprehend what the reputed orthodox termed 'saving faith.'" From this time the doubts that were in his mind as to the infallibility of the Calvinistic system of doctrine grew ever stronger. The following is from his diary some four years later:

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<sup>1</sup> After his removal to London he continued to sell and publish books in the Strand and in Holborn. Mr. John Fenton and Mr. N. Scarlett were partners at different times.

"I have lately had some serious thoughts on two important points in divinity—the Godhead of Christ, and the eternity of hell torments. At present I do not doubt the truth of these doctrines, as commonly received amongst the orthodox; but I do intend to consider them both more minutely; and as I desire to have nothing but truth, I entreat God to direct me and keep me from error."

By 1790 the Church over which he ministered had grown to the total of 150 baptised believers. For eight years they had worshipped in the Old Meeting House that they had bought from the representatives of the Presbyterian authorities. Now they rose and built. The new chapel was opened on April 11th, 1790, and soon thronged with hearers. Although the pastor was hammering out his doubts into useful helps for future days, the people neither heard the ring of the anvil nor the roar of the furnace. What they were sure of was that their minister was the most successful in that part of the country, and even of that part of England. A contemporary pen-portrait tells us that "there was everything about him to attract the attention and admiration of his audience. His figure in the pulpit was commanding, his voice was melodious and of fine compass, and his attitude inclining to be graceful. His ministry excited considerable attention; the Church and congregation rapidly increased; and abroad as well as at home his preaching secured him a large share of public approbation and esteem."

The new meeting house cost £700, a large sum for even a successful Church to raise. Local subscriptions came to £160 and there stayed. The members were not rich folk. And the neighbourhood was being rapidly denuded of its moneyed classes. The ironworks that had spelt fortune to the owners and comfort to the workers had been closed down. Even that great hammer down in the Beech Mill Valley—whose clang had been heard for twenty miles—was silent, and the only forge at work was "My Lord Ashburnham's," some miles away. The prosperity of Battle was over. For now it would have but the shadow of trade and employment, although it would for many generations refuse to believe that it was but a shadow. The town of Hastings, leaping yearly into greater size and notableness, was steadily taking the trade from the shops of Battle. Therefore Mr. Vidler had to seek the rest of the money away from the district, and in May, 1791, he commenced his travels so to do.

Unfortunately for the Church the tour did not result in a large increase to the money. But fortunately for the pastor it resulted in the making of many friends, and in his becoming known amongst the Churches of the Midlands and the East of England. He met Mr. Ryland at Northampton (afterwards Dr. Ryland, of Bristol), the venerable Mr. Hall, of Arnsby (father of Robert Hall, of Leicester), and Mr. Andrew Fuller, of Kettering. The last-named pledged himself to a literary corres-

pondence with Mr. Vidler, and the letters have since become famous by reason of their being the manifestos of two opposing champions in one of the theological controversies that divided the then Christian world. From the first these letters were written mainly upon the subject of the consequences of Socinianism.

This journey did a great deal in strengthening the doubts in Mr. Vidler's mind as to Calvinism. His diary afterwards shows great restlessness and indecision. On August 22, Lord's Day, he writes:

"It is long since I wrote anything of the state of my soul. I have lately been much stirred up again by reading Mr. Winchester on the final restoration of all things, which doctrine (upon a consideration of several years, and much fear and prayer for direction) I am constrained to say I believe. I preached this morning from the parable of the pounds, Luke 19, and found myself much confined in speaking as I have always found myself when treating on such passages. I suspect I have something wrong in my sentiments which I ought to get rid of. O Lord, I desire to have no sentiment but what I receive from Thy word."

Elhanan Winchester was an American, who through John Murray had adopted the tenet of Universal Restoration, revived in 1750 by James Rely, a fellow-worker of the great Whitfield. Winchester had come to England to spread this doctrine, and in 1787 had drawn together a large and influential congregation at Parliament Court, Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate. Vidler now not only read his works, but was converted to his view. He invited Winchester to preach at Battle on the last Sunday in 1792, when the Church held its annual meeting. In a speech that lasted over three hours the pastor declared and explained his doctrine. Then the matter was put to the vote. Should they keep their minister and so advertise their acceptance of the Universalist's creed? Or should they stand to the old belief and its consequence? For Mr. Vidler and Universalism there voted 153 out of the 168 members present. The "old guard" of fifteen withdrew, and in a room lent for the purpose, formed themselves into a Church of the Particular Baptist faith and practice.

Letters of expostulation and reproach, and even of abuse, poured in from all parts of England. His apostasy was the theme of general discourse. The town of Battle became very well known to those who thought in theological phrases. Of but one of his numerous mentors need anything be said here. Mr. Andrew Fuller was genuinely sorry at the change of Mr. Vidler's doctrinal standpoint, and a letter written in February, 1793, to express that sorrow was preserved and printed by both parties. Mr. Fuller intended it at first to be private, as well as "affectionate and faithful," but no reply being received, he inserted it in the Evangelical Magazine some two years afterwards. Although

most people knew to whom it was written, Mr. Vidler's name was omitted, and it was signed "Gaius." J. W. Morris, in his Memoirs of Mr. Andrew Fuller, sums up this letter in three questions, and they are sufficiently interesting to record here:

1. Whether Mr. V.'s change of sentiment did not arise from an idea that endless punishment was in itself unjust.

2. Whether the genius of the sentiment in question be not opposite to that of every other sentiment in the Bible.

3. Whether Mr. V.'s ministrations, on this principle, will not savour of His who taught our first parents, "ye shall not surely die."

The Church in Battle was affiliated with the Particular Baptist Association of Kent and Sussex, and Mr. Vidler had held high office amongst the associated Churches. Several times he was chosen preacher to the Annual Assembly, and in 1791 the Moderatorship, the highest honour at their disposal, was conferred upon him. In 1793 he had again been chosen the Association preacher. The meetings were held at Chatham. To prevent him fulfilling the task they had invited him to, the ministers and delegates met on the preceding day to the one advertised and expelled him from the connection. His old friend, Middleton, of Lewes, was chosen to preach a sermon the next day that should be a pronouncement, official and final, of the excommunication. The Battle minister arrived at the proper day and speedily learned how matters stood. He stayed, however, and accompanied the others to listen to the address. When he recognised the theme he rose up and continued standing during its delivery. In the course of it, after insisting on the pernicious nature and tendency of the heresy, the preacher seemed apprehensive lest some of his hearers might conclude that those who maintained such doctrine must be bad men, so cautioned them against this, and said: "So far from it, heretics are sometimes the holiest and best of men; but they are the more dangerous on that account." On his saying this Mr. Vidler bowed, as he did at whatever was personal in the sermon. After its delivery they all went to dinner together at the tavern. The brethren discussed the discourse in the approved way, and after the meal the feeling gained ground that the preacher was himself tinged with Vidler's heresy because of some things that he had said. Mr. Middleton thereupon appealed to his living text, who rose and cleared his friend of the charge.

Thus cut off from his former friends, he naturally tightened the bonds with his new. Several times he preached for Winchester, and on February 9th, 1794, he was chosen his assistant. Before the year was out Winchester wished to return to America, and on his advice, by the suffrage of the people, William Vidler became his successor, and entered on a ministry that lasted more than twenty years.

The congregation at Parliament Court wanted Mr. Vidler so much

that they accepted the somewhat peculiar conditions that he imposed upon them. He was to spend several holidays of two or three Sundays at a time with his Battle friends, and his new people were to pay off the debt that still stood on the Meeting House he had erected in Battle. Up to November, 1796, these conditions held, but in that month he severed his connection with the country town by moving his residence to Bethnal Green.

He had now become the recognised head of the Universalists. He "so infinitely outdid all the doings of his predecessor, as to cause the name of Winchester soon to be forgotten." Crowds flocked to his chapel, and all London talked of his sermons.

In January, 1797, he began to edit and publish a periodical entitled, "The Universalist's Miscellany; or, The Philanthropist's Museum." It was "Intended Chiefly as an Antidote against the Anti-Christian Doctrine of Endless Misery." In the sixth volume the title was changed to, "The Universal Theological Magazine (for the year 1802). Intended for the Free Discussion of all Religious Subjects, to which Persons of every Denomination are invited. Being a continuation of the Universalist's Miscellany." In 1804 the title was again changed, and read, "The Universal Theological Magazine and Impartial Review: New Series," and the year after it passed into the hands of Mr. Robert Aspland, who had been a contributor to its pages for some time. In all, Mr. Vidler published thirteen volumes in the nine years.

Perhaps the only value of this publication is in the fact that it became an index of the editor's mind. The numbers mark the progress towards his final position. In the first and second numbers Mr. Vidler issued his reply to the letter of Andrew Fuller written four years before, and published two years before.

The controversy is not of importance to-day. For the curious there is a very full account of it written by a strong Calvinist, in Mr. Morris's "Memoirs of Andrew Fuller." It was mostly about the meaning of certain words, such as "ever: everlasting: eternal:" which in Mr. Vidler's creed stood for "age: age-lasting: ages." It reached great length, the answers taking up most of the Miscellany, and in 1802 Mr. Fuller published his share of it in a 108 page book of 8vo. size, entitled "Letters to Mr. Vidler, on the doctrine of Universal Salvation." If it had been left at that, the dispute would at all events have been dignified, but just afterwards a Mr. Jerram, an evangelical clergyman, a friend of Mr. Fuller's, who had been a "strict observer of everything that passed, and had watched the direction of every blow," and had been "provoked at the groundless pretensions of Mr. V.," and had been "hurt by his ignorant, irreverent freedoms with the holy scriptures; resolved to expose him to the religious world." He therefore published, "Letters to a Universalist; containing a Review of the Controversy between Mr.

Vidler and Mr. Fuller, on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation." In this Mr. Vidler is exhorted to "hide his face in confusion," and his letters are referred to as "trash." Yet, says the author, "I have no enmity whatever against the man; it is simply against the writer that all my animadversions are aimed." It is, perhaps, just as well that the "aim" was sufficiently bad not to "hit."

About the year 1799 Mr. Vidler took up the study of the personality of Satan, and "after the examination of the passages one by one," came to the conclusion "that the popular view was erroneous." In March, 1815, his committee asked him to publish a volume of lectures, and include "the three lectures on the existence of the Devil," but his last illness prevented this being done.

During the final months of this century he collaborated with Mr. Scarlett,<sup>2</sup> and others in a translation of the New Testament, with notes. The "Notes" were evangelical, but accommodated to the Universal hypothesis. The basis of the translation was some M.S. notes by James Creighton, an Anglican clergyman. Once a week Creighton, Scarlett, John Cue (a Sandemanian), and Vidler, met at Mr. Scarlett's house to revise the progressing work. When published its title page read: "A Translation of the New Testament from the Original Greek, 1798."

A tour in the Fen country and Lincolnshire during 1801 revealed another stage in his development. At Wisbeach was a General Baptist Church, dating from 1654, which had been touched by the Socinianism on the 18th century. One section had come again into evangelical circles through the New Connection; but the other, under Richard Wright, was now distinctly Unitarian. Wright (1764—1836) became a great friend of Vidler, and the contact led the latter to adopt the Unitarian position. This was the year 1801. Many of the old General Baptist Churches in these parts were wavering, and even the influence of Dan Taylor had not sufficed to regain them to the old lines. The appearance of Vidler now gave them a strong impetus in the other direction. Round about Cambridge, and then North—through fen and marsh—he preached. Buildings overflowed with the crowds that desired to hear him. The journey became a triumph for the man as an orator and advocate. In many parts of Lincolnshire he planted his Unitarian banner, and left companies of followers, who instituted Churches of that faith and practice. Not only did the old General Baptists afford a fine field for his efforts (he was by 1802 in full connection with them) but the Particular Baptists also yielded him fruit. For instance at Soham, where Andrew Fuller had been pastor 1775—1782, the death of Francis Bland, in 1802, and the coming of John Gisborne marks the turning point,

<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel Scarlett, 1753-1802, became Universalist under Winchester and was baptized by Vidler. When he published the "British Theatre," Vidler marked his objection by closing the friendship.

and by 1811 the Unitarian section had joined the ancient assembly. And his old church at Battle and Brighthelmstone, with its branch at Northiam, despite its Calvinistic origin, followed him into the General Assembly in 1804.

Upon his return he formally declared to his people his Socinian belief. The result was that the largest portion of the congregation left. The change from a full auditorium to an almost empty one meant many things hard to bear. Especially was this so in a monetary sense. For this not only stood for personal sacrifice, but for family distress. When he went to Parliament Court he was offered £140 per annum. Of this he had a part only, for the congregation promised more than they could give. After he came to live in London and put in all his time as their minister, things improved so much that the whole of the amount was regularly paid, and each year presents were made to him of surplus balances. At the time of his avowal of altered belief he was receiving the sum of £250 yearly. Because of that avowal it dropped to £30, and there remained for a few years. The Church revenue was from the sale of seat tickets, the taking of quarterly collections, and donations. The £30 marked its zero, and in the years that followed, right along to the time when he was too ill to preach, it steadily mounted towards a respectable figure. In 1808 it was £133 10s. 6d., and at the conclusion of his pastoral days the building was again regularly filled, and the income restored to its former amount.

In 1804, Mr. Vidler started "The Unitarian Evangelical Society," and lectured on its behalf each Thursday, at the chapel in Leather Lane, Holborn. Two years after he was appointed the Travelling Advocate for the Unitarian Fund, of which he was one of the founders and a trustee.

Very frequently did he have to leave London for tours in the Provinces, and it was whilst on one of these that the news came to him at Wisbeach that his wife was seriously ill. They were then living at "the little village called West Ham." Mrs. Vidler had never quite recovered from the shock caused by her eldest son's death on January 26th, 1796. He was but fourteen. And he manifested signs of being even more brilliant than his father. An epidemic of fever had raged through Battle, and her boy had been one of those who passed in its fury. Another grief hastened the home-going of Mrs. Vidler, for two years before her death the second daughter of the family was taken at the age of eighteen. Therefore the home-partner of Mr. Vidler's sorrows and joys, tribulations and triumphs, was quite ready to answer the call of the Father's voice. She died December 22, 1808, at the age of 56.

The last years of Mr. Vidler's life were very busy ones with preaching and publishing. He edited an edition of Paul Siegvolk's "Everlasting Gospel." He published a sermon on "The Designs of the Death of Christ," that he had preached in 1795; and also sermons on, "God's

Love to His creatures Asserted and Vindicated;" and "A Testimony of Respect to the Memory of Elhanan Winchester." He took pains to present Mr. Winchester's views to the reading public, and issued editions of "Winchester's Dialogues: with Notes," and the same writer's "Trial of Witnesses." A little while before the end he completed and published his "Life of Elhanan Winchester and Review of His Writings." During the flood of "The Temple of Reason;" "The Religion of Reason;" "The Goddess of Reason;" and "The Age of Reason," Mr. Vidler has made some notes that he intended to publish as a reply, but they were put away and not used until he wrote a preface for the edition of "Revelation Defended," that he issued. The most notable of his letters, included, beside those to Andrew Fuller, a "Letter to Mr. S. Bradburn and All Methodist Ministers in England."

The journey that he so hastily made to be with his wife during her last earthly hours was responsible for hastening his own death. During it the postchaise was overturned down a steep bank, and though Mr. Vidler received no breaking of limb, the bruising and shock were sufficient to weaken him considerably, for he was a more than usually heavy man.<sup>3</sup> He lived about eight years after that accident, but never quite threw off its effects. His last years were very happy and prosperous. A crowded meeting-house, an increasingly loving people, an established fame; such was his portion. In 1815 he was kept from active service by illness, and only preached twice. Next year he removed to the home of his son-in-law, William Smith, where he fell asleep on August 23rd, 1816, at the age of fifty-eight years and three months. Five days later he was buried in the grave-yard of the Unitarian congregation, at Old Gravel Pit, Hackney, the funeral being "attended by a multitude the most respectable and solemn that can well be conceived."

The congregation to which he had ministered called William Johnson Fox to the pastorate, and in 1824 moved to South Place, Finsbury. It lost its Baptist tinge, dropped its connection with the General Assembly of General Baptists, and by degrees evolved into an Ethical Society without any distinct Christian bias.

It is not easy in a sentence or so to state what was the secret of his power. His was a manifold personality. The extreme weakness of the early years accounted for the irascible temperament that he found so hard to subdue. At the age of thirty, a note in his diary states:

"Surprised into fit of violent and unreasonable anger in midst of my people at a Church meeting. I have good reason to be ashamed. O Lord, give me meekness and patience."

Although the first part of the prayer could not be said to have been

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<sup>3</sup> His excessive corpulence was the source of many odd adventures, and of many stories about them. It is still locally told that he always claimed two chairs at public meetings, and booked two seats for his coach journeys.



altogether successful, the patience was given. Especially was this demonstrated in the beautiful home life that centred about his wife and himself.

He was all his life interested in public and philanthropic affairs, and advocated by voice and pen, reforms that were far in advance of his day. The following extract from his Review, for 1801, upon "the neglected subject of cruelty to animals," was written nearly fifty years before the first of the three Acts of Parliament to stay this abuse. It is given at length because it is a fair specimen of his style as a journalist:

"There are several species of barbarity in this Christian country which reflect dishonour on our national character. Throwing at cocks, we believe, is pretty generally disused since our moral mentor, Addison, so compassionately pleaded their cause in one of the papers of the Spectator; but cock-fighting and bull-baiting yet continue, and we fear that the practice of pruning the cockchafer, among children, is yet frequent. Parents and tutors of youth ought to discourage everything of this kind; from cruelty to animals the transition is very natural to cruelty to our own species."

He was also amongst the first to include the pleasures of the chase under the head of "cruelties."

As a preacher he was an Apollos among his brethren. The fact of his being chosen three consecutive years as the orator of the Association to which he first belonged stands for something. For that Association was Baptist! "A high rank must be allotted to him," says one of his biographers, "amongst popular divines, for there have been few preachers who have been able to make upon the minds of an auditory, so deep an impression, not of feeling merely, but of knowledge and truth."

He gained extensive knowledge as a student. The loss of a classical foundation could never be recovered, and although early in life he taught himself Latin and Greek, yet he never could become the sure and accurate scholar he desired to be. On the other hand the opponent who called him "half-taught . . . just learned to distinguish alpha from beta," sacrificed his own standing by stating what was not true. Mr. Vidler's clearness of conception, retentiveness of memory, quickness of perception, patience in enquiry, and coolness in judgment, gave him great advantages, which he used with, perhaps, greater ability than any other man who has occupied a like position.

In spirit he was one who never knew what fear meant, and by his courage he made the causes he championed prosper exceedingly. As a Baptist he was beloved and honoured. As a Universalist he became the greatest leader England has known. As a Unitarian he was one of the foremost champions and noblest advocates.

And he continued to the close of his life a decided Baptist.

F. W. BUTT-THOMPSON, Battle.

## Porton Baptist Church, 1655-85.

**A**S I write, I have before me the time-stained records lasting from 1655 to 1685 of the Baptist Church at Porton, in the county of Wilts. The parchment cover of the little volume, eight inches by six inches, has long since become brown by the hand of time, while the once white pages of hand-made paper have become worn and yellow and stained, by the careless handling and exposure of after generations. Many of the earlier pages are now only partly legible, but fortunately I have a copy, made over half a century ago by a Baptist worthy who was anxious even in those unheeding days that such a record should not be lost.

“On ye third day of ye fourth month 1655 ye Brethren and Sisters residing about Wallop, Sarum, Amesbury, Stoverd, Chalke, Porton and ye parts adjasent mett together as a church of Jesus Christ and then with one accord declared theire resolucions for ye future through Christ weh strengtheneth them so to walke as becometh Saints according to ye Gospell of or Lord Jesus Christ in all obedience of His commands and in love toward each other as brethren and sisters ptakers of ye same grace through Jesus Christ ye Lord.”

“The same day were baptized by or brother Edward Bundy nine disciples whose names follow with ye rest of ye names of or Brethren and Sisters as before mentioned according to their places of residence; first ye names of ye brethren and sisters at Salisbury are—”

Such is the opening of the earliest preserved record of a church which in 1905 attained to its 250th anniversary. There is an entry on the parchment cover, written in another hand-writing, as follows: “And for their more orderly proceeding and profit they appointed John Rede, Henry Pen and Edward Bundy, orderly and by course to administer ye ordinances as often as called for. And for ye provision of ye church and taking care of ye poor Saints they have appointed Robert Blake and Thomas Webb to oversee and take care in their places, as their duty in all things that necessarily belong to ye care of Deacons.”

The list of members numbers 111, drawn from twenty villages and hamlets of South Wilts and West Hants, within a radius of twelve

miles of the central meeting place at Porton. Some at all events of these groups of brethren and sisters had previously been attached to the Church at North Bradley, now Southwick; but Porton seems to have been chosen as head-quarters for this district, partly as being the most central spot for the villages concerned, and partly because it was the home of John Rede, of Birdlymes Farm, who was a Justice of the Peace for the County of Wilts, and as such, could afford a large amount of protection to the infant church. It was to such protection, afforded by the Trenchard family (who then held Cutteridge, a mansion second only to Longleat), that the North Bradley Church owed its existence; and we can quite understand how important a factor such a consideration would be in determining the choice of a meeting-place for the newly established society.

It is difficult to account for the existence of these little groups of baptised believers existing in the scattered villages of this part of Salisbury Plain. They recall to our minds J. R. Green's description of how, when Lollardry had ceased to exist as a movement, "We see groups meeting here and there to read in a great book of heresy all one night certain chapters of the Evangelists in English." The largest group of members, twenty-five in number, came from the hamlet of Stoverd (Stoford), now a mere handful of cottages with a population of less than a hundred. Perhaps they were weavers influenced by the teachings of their fellow craftsmen in the villages further westward, but I can find no definite explanation of the apparent predominance of Baptist principles in this hamlet.

The most remote village of the group, Broadchalke, contributed eleven members, and we can almost cherish the idea that they represent somehow or other the after-results of the labours of "Honest Hugh Latimer," who more than a century before had been rector of that parish. Perhaps, too, the little group of ten from Idmiston and Porton tell of the influence of the "Judicious Hooker," once rector of the adjoining parish of Boscombe. Probably the prevalence of weaving in this wool-growing district may have been a factor in the matter, as farther westward where cloth weaving is still carried on, Baptists are and were far more numerous than in East Wilts.<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to picture the coming together by various bridle-paths over "The long backs of the bushless downs," of these sturdy Baptists on that June morning 250 years ago. "Birdlymes" still stands, facing eastward, in its pleasant grounds sloping away down to the Bourne stream.

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<sup>1</sup> As far back as 1590 there had been an evangelical movement in these parts, which led to many emigrating to Holland; and possibly these villages witness to a persistence of that movement, clarified by the writings of John Smith till definite Baptist principles were adopted. We know for a fact that this was the course of events in Sarum and Tiverton.—[Editor.]

Its flint-built stables and sheds would shelter many a yeoman's horse that day. Down by the river-side was a large hall (the remains perhaps of a previous Manor house), and here the meetings were held. It was only a few steps to what is still the village sheep-wash and which probably then served as the Baptistery. A plot of ground further along the willow-bordered stream was afterwards hallowed as the burial ground of the infant church, and there the remains of many of those saints and their descendants still rest in peace. There is a tradition that in his will John Rede ordered that any travelling Baptist preacher should have the right to hold services in "The Hall," but I have not been able to verify the story. The hall itself was pulled down some fifty years ago being then in a ruinous condition.

In the Parish Register of Porton-cum-Idmiston there are several entries of marriages celebrated by John Rede, under the well-known "Barebone's" Act of 1653, which provided that marriages should in future be celebrated by the Justices of the Peace for the counties. The entries are in a very similar hand-writing to those in the earlier years of the Porton Church-book, and like them are clear and legible. The burial ground is still used as the last resting place of members of the Baptist Church in the village. Perhaps the most interesting tomb in it is that of John Rede's widow and daughter which bears the following inscriptions:

"Here lyeth the body of Sarah the wife of John Rede, Gent: late of Birdlymes Farm in the Tything of Porton. She departed this life at the Devizes ye 24th of February 1708 aged 49 years."

"Here lyes also ye body of Sarah Carteret Rede, daughter of ye said John and Sarah Rede. She departed this life at the Devizes the 12th day of December 1700 aged 6 years 11 months and 4 days."

Evidently John Rede married late in life and I have not yet been able to discover where and when he died. But I am glad that he is commemorated in the Baptist Union Historic Roll as well as in the more glorious record of the succession of Christian life and service which has been the outcome of the foundation of that little Baptist Church at Porton.<sup>2</sup>

The record runs on without a break until May 19th, 1660. During those five years, between twenty and thirty members were added by

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<sup>2</sup> In 1659, Lieutenant-Colonel Rede is heard of in the Clarke Papers, and in 1666 he was delated to the royal government as dangerous. See State Papers, vol. 187, page 173. If this be the same man, his importance explains the hostile attitude of the government to John Rede, of Birdlymes, in 1669 and 1672. On the other hand, if our John Rede was important enough to be a justice in 1655, it is barely credible that in 1693 he had a daughter born to him. There was a John Rede who in 1723 attended the Western Association; probably the tombs are of his wife and daughter. They show that he removed from Birdlymes to Devizes, and we may guess that he was son of the great John.—[Editor.]

baptism, the services being held at the various villages from which the converts were drawn. The monthly Church meetings were held at Amesbury, Stoverd, Chalke and Porton in rotation, the intervening "first days" being arranged for at each monthly gathering.

Then from 1660 to 1672 there is no entry, and when the record is again taken up a change seems to have come over the spirit of the Church. The blight of the Restoration has evidently affected the life of the community. There is more of discipline and excommunication than of progress and additions. But throughout the book there is not a word as to any persecution. No doubt there was plenty. Bishop Seth Ward was busy during part of the time hunting out heretics, and Crosby records that Walter Pen, one of the elders, was often in prison. But of all this nothing is recorded here.<sup>3</sup>

There are journeyings into Gloucestershire, Dorset, Hants, to help weaker churches in the ministry of the word. Money gifts also are sent to some of them "at their desire." In 1679, "did attend by desire and advice of the messengers at Bristol:

Bro. Andrew Gifford,	}	Ordained ministers by imposition
Bro. Thos. Millard,		of hands.
When by imposition of the hands of the aforesaid ministers		
Bro. Walter Pen,	}	ministers were ordained."
Bro. Thomas Long,		
Bro. Jo. Rede,		

But the greater part of the entries concern the internal discipline of the Church. Members are exhorted, warned, admonished and finally excommunicated for a variety of offences, both of commission and omission. Excessive punishment of an apprentice, disobedience to a husband, misappropriation of trust funds, "consultation with a person using unlawful arts," neglect of the Church's worship and ordinances, a "return to the World's ways and Worship"—such are the charges, besides those of a grosser nature brought against various members.

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<sup>3</sup> Bishop Ward, in 1669, discovered in this neighbourhood that Baptists met at Dinton, in the house of Thomas Dinton; that about twelve were at Fovant; that ten at Broad Chalke were ministered to by Henry Pen, a husbandman; that at Bramshaw, in the house of John Dible, William Stokes of Fordingbridge used to preach; that to Amesbury, in the house of Thomas Webb or of Long, John Read came over from Porton to hold a conventicle; and that there were many dissenters at South Newton, though he does not name them Baptists. His brother Bishop of Winchester, reported forty Baptists at Over Wallop, and others at Fordingbridge. When in 1672, Charles invited applications to be made for licenses to preach, Henry Pen took one out for Broad Chalke, Thomas Long for Little Amesbury, James Wise for Salisbury, John Alchurch for South Newton, which includes the hamlet of Stoford; and John Kent for Over Wallop. John Rede applied for a license to preach at Porton, which was granted, but was met with a very unusual repulse when he asked that his house at Idmiston might be licensed. In the end, however, this request too was granted. All these licenses were cancelled in 1673.—[Editor.]

The erring ones are patiently watched over and some return as penitents to the fold; some, alas, go out and return no more. There are dissensions too in the Church. Walter Pen, one of the elders, accusing John Rede of evil conduct with regard to property which he had inherited, and Pen being accused of uncharitableness in his conduct towards Rede in the matter. The Church after various meetings finds that both their elders have been guilty of unchristian courses and calls them both to repentance. Finally "the Church received full satisfaction in the matter relating to Bro. Rede and Bro. Pen, and they with each other to their mutual comfort."

The last entry in the book is dated The 17th of the 11th month 1685. It records the baptism of four converts at Wallop, and there is no apparent reason for the abrupt termination of the Church's history. In the end of the book there is a list of members remaining in 1685. It totals up to ninety and it is interesting to find in the list the names of thirteen of those who had helped to form the original Church-roll thirty years before.

I have come across a later item in the Church's history, rescued from the first Salisbury Church-book, which has long since disappeared. It is the record of a meeting held at Sarum on the 9th day of the 10th month, 1690, when those in and about Sarum were dismissed to form a separate Church, it being "freely and unanimously consented to" that this would be "the most effectual method in order to promote the public interest of Christ in converting souls and building up each other in the Faith and order of the Gospel." The remainder were to "sit down in the country at what place they think most for their conveniency having Bro. Rede for their Pastor formerly in the same capacity with Bro. Pen."

Among the names attached to this decision of the Church there are only two of the original 111. Jo. Rede and Jo. Andrew. They are worthy of commemoration now, two and a half centuries afterwards.<sup>4</sup>

What a world of history is wrapped up in the faithful thirty-five years witness of those two men! From Cromwell to William III., with the black days of the two Stuarts of ignoble memory between. One likes to trace out the records of these worthies, to follow down the streams of influence still flowing in some of those remote villages, and to find out their old homes; for some of these yeoman families have persisted

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<sup>4</sup> We fortunately know the ministers and messengers who attended the London Assemblies of 1689 and 1692. Before this division of the church, the messengers from Porton were Walter Pen and John Andrews; John Rede was perhaps too old to go up to town. In 1692, neither the church at Porton nor the church at Sarum was represented. There were, however, Association meetings held at Southampton, Broughton and Ringwood before the century ran out, whose minutes were recorded in the Whitchurch book, and are now lodged at Regent's Park College. At these meetings figures one Charles Rede of Christchurch, who may possibly belong to the same family.—[Editor.]

down to the present day. With a chastened feeling too one notes in how many of those villages our own particular witness has died out. Salisbury, Porton, Bodenham and Wallop, alone remain of the original names. Broughton came in afterwards, and Bowerchalke can fairly be taken as representing Broadchalke. In these places the light still shines. Neither can we fail to believe in the unknown results which have followed the meeting of 250 years ago. But we may well feel rebuked as we think of the power which the message had then, so that men and women were brave to confess Christ by baptism in village after village. Pondering over all that it meant to them, we may well pray that we may have grace to "follow in their train."

ARTHUR TUCKER, Horsebridge.

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## Editorial

### **What are you doing for the Society?**

Every member can help the Society in many ways. Some can borrow old Church books or other ancient documents of interest, and obtain leave for the editorial committee to copy and publish. Others can prepare monographs of a Church or of some out-standing hero. Others can find where rare printed books are on the shelves of some village patriarch, and induce him to give, lend, sell, or bequeath them. Others can collect the circular letters of their Associations, and present to the Society. Queries are invited, and may tax the knowledge of all. Recruits may be interested and enlisted. Public libraries may be induced to subscribe. Members are invited to report by letter how they propose to help forward the common work.

### **Ancient Churches.**

Several Churches return themselves in the Handbook as of date earlier than 1650. There are probably some cases where a Church which originated by separation from the Establishment, like Jacob's in 1616, or by an evangelistic movement, like Mitchell and Crosley about 1680, presently had its attention drawn to baptism, and took further steps by discarding infant baptism, adopting believers' baptism, insisting on immersion. And so there may be one date when a Church originated, another date when it became Baptist. It would be well if these Churches claiming antiquity would look closely at this difference. No evidence has yet

been published that believers' baptism was adopted by any Englishmen before 1609, or that sprinkling was recognised as inadequate till 1642. If such evidence be hidden in any West-country or Kentish Church-book, its publication would be welcomed widely.

### **Baptists in 1457?**

A statement has often been reproduced that Robinson of Cambridge found from a MS. register of the diocese of Ely, certain heretics, who were probably Baptists. By the courtesy of Mr. E. J. Worman a print of the original document, published officially in the Ely Diocesan Remembrancer for March 1907, has been forwarded. It seems that Robert Sparke, of Swaffham, John Crud or Crowd, of Cambridge, and John Baile, of Chesterton, were charged on 30th May, 1457, with teaching thirteen Lollard doctrines. Four run thus: (3) That a boy born of baptized parents does not need baptism, nor ought to be baptized, for the baptism of the parents suffices for him. (8) That confession made to a faithful person of their sect is of more avail to the salvation of the soul of the confessor than confession made to a priest. (12) That the pope is antichrist, priests are his disciples, and all ordained persons are devils incarnate. (13) That every man is called the church of God, &c. These people were clearly Lollards, and had by no means found their way on to the Baptist position.

### **1665, 1669, 1672, 1676.**

When Clarendon passed the persecuting Acts known after him, the bishops set to work to ascertain what conventicles met, and who were the leading dissenters. Parts of the returns they accumulated for 1665 and 1669 are bound up at the Lambeth Library; and part of the returns for 1676 is in the Salt Library at Stafford. Both these have been studied so far as Baptists are concerned, and it seemed likely that we should publish them. Also the whole of the licenses issued in 1672 to preachers and to those desirous of keeping conventicles have been studied, and the Baptist section is ready for the press. But it now seems that all the 1665, 1669 and 1672 documents are about to be published by Professor G. Lyon Turner, in two handsome volumes, at 50/-. We heartily commend his enterprise, and advise all intending purchasers to communicate with him at Wheatham Hill, Hawkey, East Liss, to hear of a special price to subscribers before publication. The records link up the known period before 1661 with the known period after 1688.



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