

Northamptonshire
Nonconformity
250 Years Ago.

By
F. Ives Cater.

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The following pages have been written at the request of the Northamptonshire Congregational Association. This year Congregationalists in Northamptonshire will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the great ejection of 1662, and the centenary of the County Association. It was thought well that some short memorial souvenir should be issued to place within the reach of everyone the story of the men who suffered for and won the religious freedom we, as Congregationalists, now enjoy. The writer has dealt with practically one decade only, 1662-1672—surely the most momentous decade in the history of Nonconformity. The biographical notes are taken largely from Palmer's edition of Calamy, and an attempt has been made to correct Palmer in some particulars from the journals of the House of Commons and the diocesan records at Peterborough. It is probable that further corrections remain to be made.

References to Market Harborough and Bowden have been included for the reason that these churches have always been connected with the Northamptonshire Association.

F. IVES CATER.

*The Manse, Oundle,
April, 1912*

1. The Rise of Nonconformity.

English Nonconformists will always venerate the memory of those noble and faithful men, in number about 2,000, who on Sunday, August 24th, 1662—"Black Bartholomew Day"—went out from their pulpits and parsonages in obedience to the dictates of conscience. It would not be correct to say that the great ejection was the birth of English Nonconformity. For that we must look to a far earlier day. From the crisis of 1662, however, we can trace the rise of organized Dissent, outside the pale of the English Church, as a potent factor in English national life.

The principle of Nonconformity has been defined as the exaltation of life over organization, the insistence upon an essential freedom for the spirit to mould external forms, whether of church government, or public worship, according to the impulse of its own life. It found expression in England as early as John Wycliffe, who laid stress upon freedom of worship, the divinely-given self-governing power of the church, and appealed to the Scriptures as an authority superior to overweening ecclesiastics. Prior to 1662 nonconformity flowed through the course of national life in two parallel but unequal streams, one within the established church as Puritanism, the other without, as Separatism. In 1662 these two streams were forcibly united and compelled henceforth to flow without. From the time of Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity in 1559, there was a large and ever increasing number who could not accept as final that compromise between Reformation and Romanism. Some under the influence and leadership of such men as Robert Browne and Henry Barrow entirely separated themselves from the state church and formed separatist or "gathered" churches modelled, as they believed, upon the New Testament or primitive communities. Others, and by far the larger number, remained within the establishment, and as Puritans sought to purify the church of its Romanist residuum, to adopt a simpler and freer order of public worship, and even to introduce certain elements of presbyterian discipline and organization. They refused to wear the vestments, and to read parts of the liturgy required by the authorities; the

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sign of the cross in baptism, bidding prayers and many of the ceremonials they regarded as Popish and contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ.

During the reign of James I. Puritanism increased rapidly, largely owing to the fact that the Bible, through the Authorized Version, had become the Book of the people. Archbishop Laud, under Charles I., made rigorous attempts to impose an external uniformity, and many nonconforming clergy were presented to the ecclesiastical courts, and punished. His repressive measures, however, only strengthened the hold of Puritanism on the laity and parochial clergy, and deepened their antagonism to the high church tendencies of the episcopacy. This strong antagonism found expression directly the Long Parliament was called together in 1640. Laud's "innovations in religion" were denounced, the jurisdiction of his ecclesiastical courts destroyed, and himself impeached. Moving with rapid strides, Parliament abolished Episcopacy in 1643, and accepted the Solemn League and Covenant. In 1645 the public use of the Book of Common Prayer was forbidden, and "The Directory for the Publique Worship of God" put in its place. In 1646 the establishment of presbyteries throughout the kingdom was ordered. The now dominant Presbyterian party proved to be almost as intolerant of systems other than its own as Laud had been. Milton truly said, "New Presbyter is but old priest writ large." But Cromwell's rise to power involved the downfall of the Presbyterians. He maintained a real, though not quite unlimited, toleration of all Protestants. He left untouched the Presbyterian system that had been set up, but disarmed it of its persecuting power, and under him Independency grew in numbers and influence. Almost all forms of worship were now openly practised, provided that the Book of Common Prayer was not used. Cromwell himself, a sincere lover of religious liberty, would have tolerated even the Prayer Book "for Brethren," said he, "in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason." Political necessity compelled him to bow to the judgment of the majority and to forbid the large assemblies of Anglicans.

At the Restoration of Charles II. most parties hoped, and with good grounds, for toleration. Men were weary of the bitter strife, and the greater part of the nation looked for peace

by means of some measure of accommodation. Charles, in his Declaration at Breda, promised "a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for Differences of opinion in Matters of Religion." Yet the conditions of the times were against any real and comprehensive scheme of reconciliation. The Episcopalians returned embittered by their losses, their prejudices sharpened and sympathies narrowed. They could not imagine the possibility of salvation outside the church. The Presbyterians would almost forego their own liberty rather than see that same freedom extended to Independents and others. The Independents alone consistently stood for a broad toleration. The royalist reaction in 1660 was undoubtedly very great, and the tide soon ran so strongly against Presbyterianism, Independency, and Puritanism in general, that all arguments for toleration fell upon deaf ears, and the now victorious Episcopalian party determined to enforce conformity at all costs.

The Cavalier Parliament which assembled in 1661 was overwhelmingly Episcopalian, only fifty-six nonconformists finding seats. One of its earliest acts was to pass the "Corporation Act" which required, among other provisions, that all holders of office and members of corporations should take the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. As the strength of nonconformity lay largely in the corporate towns, this was a direct and heavy blow. The next step was to drive out from the church all elements of nonconformity. This was done by the "Act of Uniformity," passed May 19th, 1662. The use of the Book of Common Prayer was made compulsory, and on or before August 24th, 1662, every incumbent was required to declare his "unfeigned Assent and Consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed in and by the book entitled The Book of Common Prayer." Every minister failing to read the prayers or to make the declaration on August 24th was to lose his living.

The period between the passing of the Act and the 24th of August was a time of trial and anxiety to many a worthy man. One can picture the Puritan divines sitting in their studies reviewing their ministry, thinking with tears of their flocks whom they must now leave, looking with anxiety into the dark future, and at length kneeling down to seek divine guidance. Black Bartholomew's Day came and

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about 2,000 "learned, pious, orthodox divines" came out, preferring their principles to their parsonages, and providing a sublime illustration of the authority of conscience. Several of them had been offered bishoprics if they would conform and the list of ejected ministers includes such honoured names as Richard Baxter, Edmund Calamy, John Owen, John Howe, Thomas Goodwin, and others equally eminent for intellectual and spiritual gifts. Kennett, the Bishop of Peterborough in 1718, described them as "Men of great piety and virtue, sense and learning, whose characters and labours would have been a credit and service to the Church if they would have come within the pale of it."

The date chosen was particularly cruel; it was specially selected so as to rob the outgoing incumbents of a whole year's tithes which would presently fall due. They took leave of their congregations with dignity and resignation. Baxter at this time turns for comfort and consolation to the God whom he so faithfully served:—

"Must I be driven from my books?
From house and goods and dearest friends?
One of Thy sweet and gracious looks
For more than this will make amends!"

The affection with which some of the ministers were regarded is illustrated by the story of the poor man who said to Nathaniel Heywood, "Ah, Mr. Heywood, we would gladly have you preach still in the church." "Yes," said Heywood, "I would as gladly preach as you can desire it, if I could do it with a safe conscience in conforming"; to which the man made reply, "Oh! sir, many a man nowadays makes a great gash in his conscience; cannot you make a little nick in yours?"

Many of the ejected were plunged into poverty. Baxter tells us "Hundreds of able ministers, with their wives and children, had neither house nor bread." Many maintained a precarious existence by various kinds of labour.

Deprived of their public places of worship, nonconformists had resort to private conventicles, but they worshipped under great difficulties, for persecution followed ejection. Lieutenants of counties were instructed to suppress private meetings for worship and to arrest teachers. It was soon perceived to have little effect. "Sending them to gaol does little good; they glory in their sufferings," writes one lord

lieutenant. In 1664 the Conventicle Act was passed—a measure described by Pepys as “too devilish a severe act against conventicles, beyond all measure.” This Act forbade the meeting of more than four persons, over and above the members of the household, for purposes of divine worship. The houses of nonconformists were liable to be forcibly entered, and on the oath of a despicable informer, those found within might incur heavy fines and imprisonment. Next year came the “Five Mile Act” with its cruel provision that no nonconformist minister should come within five miles of any city or borough, or of any parish where he had formerly preached, under penalty of £40 for each offence. Ministers and their families, already reduced to destitution, were now driven out from the towns, and compelled to seek refuge in the villages. All this disgraceful persecution failed of its object. A few bent before the storm; most were strengthened in their convictions. Ministers continued to preach, and congregations assembled to hear them. In the country they met for their illegal worship in the large kitchens and barns of solitary farmhouses, or in the neighbourhood of woods into which they fled when surprised by soldiers or informers; in the towns they met in private houses by night, and sometimes the prayers and sermons lasted till dawn. John Jollie preached from a stair which led into a sitting-room by a door, the top half of which moved on hinges, so that it could be shut at a moment’s notice. In Leominster worshippers met provided with bread and cheese, so that, if necessary, their meeting for devotion might be converted into a convivial gathering. Numerous old church records are a blank between 1662 and 1672—the date of the Indulgence; but there were many churches not broken up, and when the pressure of persecuting laws was relaxed they emerged to the light of day.

2.

Northamptonshire Nonconformity

From the time of Elizabeth Northamptonshire has been one of the strongholds of nonconformity, and the details of its ecclesiastical history would furnish a full illustration of the course of events sketched in the preceding section. A few instances must suffice. In this county down to 1662 the twin streams of nonconformity, within and without the state church, may be traced. The founder of the Separatist movement, Robert Browne, was born almost within the county borders, at Tolethorpe, Rutlandshire. He and his followers, without doubt, gathered small and for the most part obscure circles of adherents towards the end of the sixteenth century. There is evidence that at Thorpe Waterville near Oundle he ministered to a gathered company "of the more forward" in religion during the second and third decades of the seventeenth century. The extent of his work may be judged from a contemporary official report, in which we read that the "county of Northampton swarmed with sectaries."

Several separatist churches were founded in the first half of the seventeenth century, and we have indications of the birth of one of them in some proceedings taken against certain would-be separatists of Rothwell. On November 3rd, 1634, a declaration was drawn up by the authorities for the signature of William Dodson senior. One of the items he was called upon to promise was that he would "not suffer in his house any conventicle." Apparently he would not promise, for a little later on we find that John James, of Barton Cortis, yeoman, William Dodson, William Foxe, John Ponder, and Thomas Wills, all of Rothwell, were charged with having been present at one another's houses where exercises of religion had been used, that one of them had taken upon him to conceive and utter openly among them a prayer, and the same by other persons present in order, and the one thought most able concluded." Of these men John James withdrew afterwards under pressure of persecution, and William Dodson died, but the other three

maintained their separation and became the first office bearers in the Congregational Church of Rothwell, founded in 1656.

Of nonconformity within the borders of the State Church we have frequent indications. It was at Northampton in 1571 that the famous Puritan "Prophesyings" had their origin, whence they rapidly spread as far as London, York and Norwich. This movement, which at Northampton centred in All Saints' Church, laid stress upon a remarkable series of devotional exercises, a simplified public worship, with frequent and regular preachings, and a stern religious discipline. The irreligious must have had an unfortunate time, for the authority of the mayor was linked to that of the divine. During sermon or catechism time none were allowed to "sitt in the streetes or walk up or downe abroade or otherwye occupie themselves vaynely, uppon such penaltie as shalbe appointed." The "youth at thende of eveninge prayer every sondaie and holy daye before all the elder people are examyned in a porçon of Calvyn's Catechisme which by the reader is expounded unto them and holdeth an hower." "Every comunyon daie eche parisshe hath 2 comunyons thone for servauntes and officers to beginne at V of the clocke in the mornynge wth a sermonde of an hower, and to ende at VIII. The other for m^{rs} and dames, etc., to begynne at IX. the same daie wth a sermonde and to ende at XII. at the uttermoste." The communion table was to stand in the nave. Excessive ringing of bells was forbidden, together with "ringinge and playeinge of organes in the Quier," also bidding prayers and other remnants of Romish practice. Once a week an inquisition of morals was held whereby "yll lyeff is corrected, Godds gloary sett fourthe and the people brought in good obedience."

Needless to say this religious enthusiasm soon alarmed the authorities, "prophesyings" were suppressed by order of Privy Council and "William Jennings the parson of Allhallowes" was condemned as "a very unquiet and indiscreet person in his behaviour among the inhabitants."

A decade later Puritanism was rampant in Northamptonshire, for in 1587 a system of Presbyterian "classes" or boards of ministers and elders was set up—a Classis "beeinge an assemblie of sondrie ministers wth in a certayne compasse in a shyer." The county was divided into three "classes"—

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those of Northampton, Daventry, and Kettering. Among the ministers attending these meetings were Stone of Warkton, Larke of Wellingborough, Fletcher of Abingdon, Prowdele of Weedon, Paget of Oundle, and others. The last mentioned was deprived of his living for his nonconformity and imprisoned by Archbishop Grindal. The Northampton "classis" met at the Bull Inn, and Edmund Snape, curate of St. Peter's, usually presided. Its attitude may be judged from the fact that it severely rebuked the rector of Courteenhall for using the sign of the cross in baptism. Snape seems to have carried his nonconformity to considerable lengths, and to have reached a certain amount of Congregationalism, with which his parishioners also sympathized, for we read, "The sayde Snape renounced or would not stande in his ministerie by the callinge of the Bishoppe and was agane (as afore) allowed or called by the Classis; but woulde not thereupon administer the Lordes Supper. But afterwards the parishe of St. Peters afore sayde or some of them knoweing that by reason of such determination he might not accompte himself a full minister, untill some particulare congregation had chosen him; They did thereupon choose him for their minister; And by that callinge and as afore, doth he stande in his ministerie at this present, and not by the callinge of the Bishoppe." Needless to say Snape was at length committed to gaol by the Star Chamber.

Further evidence of nonconformity is forthcoming in the grievance brought before the House of Commons in 1604 by the members for the county—Sir Edward Montagu and Sir Valentine Knightley. They complained of "the suspension of grave, learned and sober-minded ministers for not observing certain ceremonies long since by many disused." Again in the next year these two knights petitioned against the suspension of certain nonconforming ministers in Northamptonshire—possibly the fifty-seven in the county who in 1604 refused to renew their subscription to the requirements of the Church as demanded by Archbishop Bancroft.

Archbishop Laud's commissioner appointed to report non-observance of the rubric and to summon refractory nonconforming clergy, visited Northamptonshire in 1635. He discovered a widespread defiance of the rubric. At Brigstock "a clergyman named Price scarcely ever read the Litany or the commandments." "At Oundle, Mr. Cobbes

was found to be instructing his scholars out of a wrong catechism, and expounding the ten commandments unto them out of the writings of a silenced minister. He also refused to bow at the name of Jesus. Order was therefore taken for his suspension in case of his persistent refusal." In Northampton "Noe man boweth at the pronouncing of the name of Jesus, and it is the greatest matter they sticke upon." These are good instances of the pettiness of the Laudian régime and the sturdy opposition it met. Nowhere probably was there a stronger element of Puritan nonconformity within the church than in Northamptonshire at this period.

When the Long Parliament met in 1640 and the tide turned in favour of the Puritans, the changes, drastic as they were, failed to satisfy the men of Northamptonshire. On January 21st, 1642, a meeting was held at the "Swan," Northampton, and a petition was drawn up and sent to Parliament from "the knights and gentlemen and freeholders of the county," in which they praised the work already done, and stated they had been encouraged to expect "a perfect reformation in religion," but their expectations had been disappointed through the action of malignants, and particularly "the voting of Popish Lords and Bishops in the House of Peers." The desire of the petitioners was soon to be satisfied, for the reforming zeal of Parliament quickly swept away every vestige of Episcopacy, and by 1646 set up Presbyterianism as the legal form of state religion. The Solemn League and Covenant was formally taken by the town and garrison of Northampton on March 19th, 1643, but the Presbyterian system, as an organization, apparently took little root in Northamptonshire. The elaborate scheme of parish presbyteries and classical assemblies ordered by Parliament was not carried out in some parts of the country, and Northamptonshire appears to have been one of those districts. At least there is no evidence of its establishment. This is the more surprising since the "classis" was so popular here in the reign of Elizabeth. There were, as the list of evicted ministers shows, a large number of Presbyterian divines, but the frequent presence of the army, so strongly Independent in sympathy, fostered Independency, and probably checked the organization of Presbyterianism. In an "Attestation" published in London in 1648, and "attested

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by Presbyterian ministers of Christ in the county of Northampton," it is acknowledged that "this kingdom is not yet formed into provinces throughout as London is." Sixty-eight ministers in Northamptonshire signed it, and this probably represents the strength of the thoroughgoing Presbyterians.

Northamptonshire was the first county to have set up a local committee for dealing with sequestrations and scandalous ministers. This committee sat at Northampton, and was at work as early as May, 1641. It was the local representative of the central "Committee for Scandalous Ministers" sitting in London, whose confirmation was required before the local decisions became valid. At first these committees dealt only with the condition of the clergy and investigated cases of pluralities, non-preaching parsons, and scandalous lives. In "a certificate from Northamptonshire," dated 1641, it is computed that the livings in the county number 326, of which 16 or 20 were pluralists and about 150 scandalous. Later a chief part of the work concerned sequestrations and ministerial appointments. Thus on June 11th, 1644, the Puritan Charles Newton, M.A., was appointed to the rectory of Burton Latimer, which had been sequestrated from Dr. Sibthorpe "for that he hath wholly deserted the cure of the said church and betaken himself to the forces raised against the Parliament." Richard Trewman, M.A., was likewise appointed to Church Brampton inasmuch as the rector—Mr. Canon—had absented himself from the cure for "neere a twelvemonth."

In some instances the committee invited the judgment of parishioners, as when they asked Mrs. Campion of Holcot "to come over to us on Thursday next to treat with us about the setting of an honest and painfull minister to supply the cure at Holcote." In the instance of Guilsborough the townsmen were to be invited to accompany the person consulted.

The Journals of the House of Commons contain entries between May 12th, 1643, and December 2nd, 1648, of the nomination of 43 Puritan ministers to Northamptonshire livings, and of these six were afterwards among the ejected. We cannot say how many in all were sequestrated in the county; of the forty-five who were ejected, 1660-2, seven, and possibly eight, then occupied sequestrations.

In the notices of the evicted men about to be given, many are referred to as "lecturers" or as taking part in a "lecture." This characteristic feature of Puritanism first appeared in the reign of Charles I., and was greatly developed by the Long Parliament. Wealthy Puritans, first of London, and then of other parts of the kingdom, raised voluntary subscriptions to defray the expenses of "lecturers" or preachers, who, having scruples about ceremonies, were generally not in priest's orders, but in deacon's or some other orders. They lectured or, as we should say, preached, in market towns on market days, and on Sunday afternoons for some idle or incompetent priest. Parliament gave its sanction to the practice in 1641, and, without dispossessing the lawful incumbent, the lecturer was ordered by the House to have the use of the parish church and pulpit for the purpose of preaching a lecture. The object was simply to remedy "the great scarcity of preaching ministers throughout the whole kingdom." A step further was taken in September, 1641, when it ordered as follows:— "It shall be lawful for the parishioners of any parish. . . . to set up a lecture and to maintain an orthodox minister at their own charge, to preach every Lord's Day where there is no preaching, and to preach one day in every week where there is no weekly lecture." The fashion set was widely adopted. In Northamptonshire we find "lectures" set up at Kettering, Daventry, Oundle, and Thrapston.

3. The Men of 1662.

We pass now to some account of "the glorious band of 1662." A careful comparison of the various lists given leads to the conclusion that fifty-nine ministers were ejected from their livings in Northamptonshire. Of these fourteen afterwards conformed under the persuasions of their patrons and friends, or the pressure of persecution. One of these was Nicholas Kenrick, evicted from Earls Barton. It was said he never went up the pulpit stairs with comfort after his conforming. He wrote against ceremonies, and to the last was but half a conformist: for this he was cited to one of the ecclesiastical courts, but was screened by Archdeacon Palmer under pretence of bodily infirmities. Of another—Samuel Howlet, of Horton—we read, "Both in 1662 and for some time after he refused conformity, but was at length prevailed on by George Montague, Esq., and his lady to use a little of the Common Prayer."

Of the calibre of the faithful forty-five the notices must speak. They were almost all men with university education, the larger number were preachers of more than the average ability even in an age delighting in sermons; some were eminent enough to be held in national repute. Several of them seem to have had a little property which helped to ease their condition when they lost their livings. Influential patrons, among the county gentry, sheltered a few from the worst severities of the persecution, and perhaps we may conclude that as Northamptonshire had been and still was so strongly Puritan, the lot of the deprived in this county was not quite so severe as that of the average ejected minister. Though that were so, it should not lessen the honour we would give to them. They went out, not knowing their prospective fate, they risked, and many surrendered, their all for the sake of conscience and as a witness to the faith that was in them. We, their descendants and inheritors, should venerate their memory, and jealously guard the religious freedom they won for us at so much cost.

Aldwinckle (All Saints).—NATHANIEL WHITING, M.A., CANTAB. After his ejection he settled at Cranford, where he gathered a Congregational Church in his own house. To

this he ministered for a number of years, as also to a congregation which met in Lady Pickering's house at Titchmarsh. In 1672 he was licensed to serve both at Cranford and Titchmarsh. He was a saintly man, a persuasive preacher and true pastor of his flock. He had a considerable estate, and, dying childless, he endowed the free school at Aldwinckle, from the mastership of which he had also been ejected when he was turned out of his rectory. He appears to have suffered frequent persecution for his persistent nonconformity, but when he was presented in the ecclesiastical courts "God raised him up friends and made many of his enemies to be at peace with him, or at least stilled their rage against him." After he had been in some trouble, the Earl of Peterborough sent him two letters assuring him that if he would conform, he had such a value for him, that he would give him the choice of three livings which were at his disposal. But he could not satisfy his conscience to accept the offer. He used to say, "The door is too narrow for me to enter in."

Aynho.—ROBERT WILD, M.A., D.D., CANTAB. A famous Presbyterian divine, who was also a noted wit and a poet of great popularity. He was born at St. Ives, Hunts, in 1609. In 1646 he was appointed to Aynho by order of Parliament in place of a Dr. Longman. He and another divine preached as candidates. Asked whether he or his competitor were successful, Wild answered, "We have divided it; I have got the AY and he the NO." The gay and the grave were blended in him. One describes him as "a fat jolly man and a boon Presbyterian," another as "excellently qualified unto his ministerial work, none more melted and melting in prayer, nor more serious and fervent in preaching Christ and his gospel." After his ejection he settled in Oundle, and there he ministered to a Presbyterian congregation until his death in 1679. He was a voluminous writer, and his poems, usually issued as broad sheets and on some current topic, had great vogue. Dryden, referring to the popularity of one of his poems among the citizens of London, says, "I have seen them reading it in the midst of 'change time; nay, so vehemently were they at it that they lost their bargains by the candles' ends."

When Dr. Calamy was imprisoned in Newgate for nonconformity, Dr. Wild addressed him from Oundle in a satirical poem, of which we give some extracts:—

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This page I send you Sir, your Newgate Fate
Not to condole, but to congratulate.
I envy not our mitred men their Places,
Their rich Preferments, nor their richer Faces.

But my heart truly grudges (I confess)
That you thus loaded are with happiness ;
For so it is : And you more blessed are
In Peter's Chain, than if you sat in's Chair.

Hundreds of us turn out of house and home,
To a safe habitation you are come.
What though it be a gaol ? Shame and disgrace
Rise only from the crime, not from the place.

Newgate or hell, were heaven, if Christ were there—
He made the stable so, and sepulchre.
Indeed the place did for your presence call
Prisons do want perfuming most of all.

Let us hear the offences :—

First. It is prov'd that you being dead in Law
(As if you car'd not for that death a straw)
Did walk and haunt your Church as if you'd scare
Away the Reader and his Common Prayer.
Nay 'twill be proved you did not only walk
But like a Puritan your ghost did talk.
Dead and yet preach ! those Presbyterian slaves

Will not give over preaching in their graves.
Item, you play'd the Thief, and if't be so
Good reason (Sir) to Newgate you should go :
But your great theft, you act it in your Church
(I do not mean you did your sermon lurch
That's crime Canonical) but you did pray
And preach, so that you stole men's hearts away.

Thirdly, 'tis proved, when you pray most devout
For all good men, you leave the Bishops out :
This makes Seer Sheldon by his powerful spel
Conjure and lay you safe in Newgate-hell.

Barby.—RICHARD THORPE. An heavenly-minded man, who excelled in prayer, and kept the youths of the village in great awe. "He was so much taken up with spiritual things, that he knew not his own cattle, except the horse he usually rode." After his ejection he preached in his own house on Thursdays without molestation.

Billing, Great.—DANIEL CAWDREY, M.A., CANTAB. "A considerable man of eminent learning, and a noted member of the Assembly of Divines." He was instituted

rector of Billing on December 6th, 1625, and therefore laboured nearly forty years before his ejection. He removed afterwards to Wellingborough, and there died in October, 1664, after much suffering.

Bowden, Great.—THOMAS LANGDEN, inducted 1656. After ejection he settled in Market Harborough, where he is reported as ministering with others to a congregation in October, 1664, and was licensed in 1672.

Broughton.—JOHN BAZELEY, JUNIOR. "A man of great note in these parts." He was instituted to this living by the Parliamentary commissioners in place of Joseph Bentham, who was sequestered, on July 13th, 1643, but restored September 29th, 1660. Bazeley was a man of substance, and after his ejection he bought a house and estate at Kettering, where he became one of the twelve lecturers, and continued preaching after blindness had overtaken him.

Burton Latimer.—JOHN BAYNARD. This living was held by the famous Dr. Sibthorpe, who was sequestered on June 11th, 1644, and regained possession at the Restoration. Baynard apparently settled in Isham, where he was licensed in 1672.

Castle Ashby.—PETER AUSTIN. He constantly gave to Mr. Press, the sequestered parson, £30 per annum, and made him welcome to his house whenever he came. "He was so charitable that he would have but five teeth in his rake at harvest time, that there might be more left for the gleaners, he sold his grain to the poor below the market price, and employed a great many poor people in planting the common hedges with plums, cherries and other fruit trees for the supply of the poor and of travellers. He used to instruct children in the Assembly's Catechism on the Lord's Day evening, taking six at a time, and when he had done, he gave them a shilling amongst them." Died at Ashby shortly after his ejection.

Castor.—HENRY ROOSE. "Said to be one of the best preachers in England."

Church Brampton.—MR. VINTRESS. "A person of great worth, and above the common level for ministerial

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abilities." A sequestered living, the former rector regained possession at the Restoration, when Mr. Vintress removed to Godmanchester, and there died.

Cotterstock.—WILLIAM MALKINSON, M.A., CANTAB. One of the lecturers at Oundle, residing at Cotterstock till his death.

Cottesbrook.—THOMAS BURROUGHS, B.D. A learned pious, humble man, who after his ejection was received into the house of the patron of the living—Sir John Langham.

Cranford (St. John).—HENRY SEARL. Licensed as a Congregational preacher at Titchmarsh in 1672; died there the same year.

Creton.—RICHARD HOOKE. Instituted to this rectory as late as October 17th, 1661. When he was ejected, he preached in his own house for a while, and then removed to Northampton, where he had some estate. There also he preached in his own house, and availed himself of the Indulgence of 1672 to be licensed as a Presbyterian minister. He is generally regarded as one of the founders of Castle Hill (Doddridge) Church. Died in 1679, and was buried in St. Peter's, Northampton.

Crick.—STEPHEN FOWLER, M.A., FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLL., OXFORD. Son of another ejected minister and brother to Dr. Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester. "This rectory, tho' very valuable, was no temptation to him to conform against his conscience. He was a very popular preacher and indefatigable in his labours." In 1672 he was residing at Kilsby, and there was licensed as a Presbyterian minister and his house as a meeting place. He afterwards ministered at Newbury, where "he died thro' an excess of hard studies and over frequent preaching in that and other places."

Daventry.—TIMOTHY DOD. Son of the famous John Dod of Fawsley, whom he imitated in piety and gravity. He was publicly ordained in Daventry soon after 1640, and became the afternoon lecturer. "He was so well loved that the town contributed to him £40 per ann. and thus made his income almost equal to the vicarage. When the burgesses and chief men of the town brought him what they collected for him, he used to charge and entreat them to receive

nothing from the poor, lest the gospel might be made burdensome to them." He seems not to have preached after his ejection, owing to physical ailments. He retired to Everdon at the time of the plague in 1665 and there died. It was his regular custom to pray seven times a day, viz., twice with his whole family, twice privately with his wife, and three times alone. His gravestone is in Everdon church.

Desborough.—THOMAS BROWNING. He was introduced to the people of Desborough by Mr. John Beverley, first pastor of the Congregational Church of Rothwell, and they gave him a unanimous invitation to become their pastor in 1657. Soon after this Mr. Beverley died, and the Congregationalists of Rothwell regularly attended the ministry of Mr. Browning in the parish church of Desborough. On his ejection he was invited to succeed Mr. Beverley, which he did; a number of his Desborough parishioners also joined the Congregational Church at Rothwell with him. Those were days of sore trial, but through persecution and much suffering he laboured faithfully on, building up a numerous and devoted membership. For a time he was confined in Northampton gaol for preaching the gospel, and "yet would not desist." From gaol he wrote several pastoral letters to his stricken flock, giving them wise and pious counsel, and encouraging them to endure the afflictions that had fallen upon them in a joyful spirit. The following entry in the records of the Rothwell Church refers to his death: "Mr. Thos. Browning, pastor of this Church, was gathered to his Father's house in peace, in an evil, persecuting day, May 9th, 1685, having served his Lord in this house with much pains and many tears, with much presence and success, about 23 years."

Glaphorn.—WILLIAM OLIVER. Calamy says that after his ejection he lived at Fotheringhay, dying in 1686, aged 72. But in 1672 he was residing at Nassington, for he was licensed there as a Presbyterian minister and his house as a meeting place. "He was chaplain to the pious and excellent Lady Norcliff."

Grendon.—SAMUEL BAYES.

Haslebeach.—WILLIAM BUTLER. Retired to Ashby St. Legers, where he was licensed in 1672 as a Presbyterian minister.

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Houghton, Little.—THOMAS MARTYN. Appointed by Parliament on June 10th, 1646.

Irchester.—STRICKLAND NEGUS. One of the Thursday lecturers at Oundle, "a truly pious man and a very useful preacher." Afterwards settled at Wellingborough, where he was licensed as a Congregational minister in 1672.

Kelmarsh.—SAMUEL AINSWORTH. Laney, Bishop of Peterborough, "looked through his fingers," and suffered Ainsworth to preach near him at Brampton (Hunts) for some years after his ejection.

Kettering.—JOHN MAIDWELL, M.A. A native of Geddington, and educated at Cambridge, where he shared a chamber with Bishop Gunning. Became rector of Kettering about 1650. After his ejection he often preached in his own and other houses in Kettering, where he lived till 1692, except for some periods of persecution, when he was banished by the "Five Mile Act." From his retirement he wrote several pastoral letters still in existence. It is said he was once cast in prison. On the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672 he was licensed as a Congregational minister, and his house as a meeting place. He was much persecuted by a large landed proprietor in Kettering, a bitter enemy of non-conformists. He frequently escaped with difficulty, sometimes in disguise. Towards the end of his life he opened a meeting house to hold 300 to 400 persons, and had a considerable congregation to the last.

Kilsby.—MR. WORTH. After his ejection he preached at Daventry for a short time, and then at Chipping Norton.

Loddington.—HENRY WILLES, M.A. Probably also ejected from Faxton Chapelry. An able scholar, a considerable mathematician, of great skill in the law, and an eminent preacher. After his ejection he settled at Cransley, where he had an estate. There he was licensed in 1672 as a Presbyterian minister and his house as a meeting place. He also preached privately to the people at Wellingborough, where his memory was long treasured.

Market Harborough.—THOMAS LOWREY. A native of Scotland. Inducted February 24th, 1649.

Marston Trussel.—WALTER HORNBY. His father held this living for many years, and bought the advowson for

his son. In Cromwell's time they were both lecturers in Harborough. The father died just before the Act of Uniformity was passed, and the son was earnestly pressed by his mother to conform, but he refused. He answered, "If I want bread you can help me; but if I go against my oath and have a guilty conscience, you cannot." He settled at Shawel near Lutterworth, where he supported a meeting. He would join with Mr. Matthew Clarke, of Market Harborough, Mr. Shuttlewood and other dissenting ministers in keeping private fasts.

Mears Ashby. RICHARD COLSTON. A sequestered living. Mr. Holmes, coming in at the Restoration, offered to continue him as his curate, but he declined. He retired to Wollaston, his native place, and died shortly afterwards.

Northampton (St. Giles).—JEREMIAH LEWIS. Son of a former vicar of All Saints, Northampton. Became vicar of St. Giles about 1648. "He was greatly followed and universally respected, except by some Quakers who would sometimes affront him, but he used to pass by without regarding them." He has sometimes been claimed as one of the founders of Castle Hill (Doddridge) Chapel, but on insufficient grounds. Calamy states, "He was a very reserved man, and it does not appear that he ever preached afterwards. Indeed he seldom went abroad, and not long after died at Northampton." He was buried in St. Giles' churchyard on December 29th, 1662.

Norton.—ROBERT ALLEN. One of the lecturers at Daventry. A very popular preacher, so that his church was crowded from Buckby, Weedon, Badby and other places. After his ejection he lived at Adston, and there he was licensed in 1672 as a Presbyterian.

Oakley, Great.—THOMAS DANDY, M.A., OXON. "A very warm affectionate preacher, both a Boanerges and a Barnabas." After his ejection he lived at Colonel Brook's "Mansion House" at Oakley, which was licensed in 1672 as a Presbyterian meeting place, and Dandy as the Minister. He had great influence over the children of the family and the servants.

Oundle.—RICHARD RESBURY. Educated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, B.A. 1629, M.A. 1633. On

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August 18th, 1642, he was appointed lecturer at Oundle by the Long Parliament. A staunch Independent, he did not wait for Bartholomew Day, but resigned his vicarage six weeks before. He evidently was in straightened means after his ejection, for we read that he practised physic with good success, and was consulted by persons of all ranks. He preached in his own hired house at Oundle, and in 1672 was licensed as a Congregational minister, and his house as a Congregational meeting place. Some time afterwards he was afflicted with the palsy, and Dr. Wild, the Presbyterian divine, then living at Oundle, wrote to all parts and raised enough money to send him to take the waters at Bath. He died, however, soon after his return. Calamy says, "He was a man of bright parts and very facetious. He had the general reputation of a solid divine, and made a considerable figure in this county." Among the several works he wrote was one opposing Arminianism, which greatly increased his reputation.

Paulerspury.—MR. VINCENT CRUPPER. A sequestered living, to which Ezeckiel Johnson was appointed by Parliament on May 12th, 1643, and Crupper on April 4th, 1646; the latter was ejected on November 27th, 1660. "A mean preacher, but an honest good man and very charitable." He used to pray for King Charles before his restoration, little reckoning, perhaps, what restoration would cost him.

Ringstead.—MR. RAYMOND. "An able preacher and bold as a lion." He died at Ringstead shortly after his ejection.

Sudborough.—JOHN ROWLET. Appointed by Parliament on July 18th, 1648. He was also one of the lecturers at Thrapston. After his ejection he retired to Nether Dean in Bedfordshire, and there continued to preach on Sunday evenings. Calamy says, "In the time of King Charles's Indulgence there was a meeting every Lord's Day at Wellingborough, upheld by Mr. Alsop and this Mr. Rowlet, who continued preaching there till death disabled him." In the 1672 licenses, however, we find him licensed as a Presbyterian minister to preach at Warmington in the "mansion house" of Mrs. Anne Elmes—a powerful and constant friend of several Puritan divines.

Tansor.—EDWARD CAWTHORNE. Nominated by Parliament on November 17th, 1646. He was one of the

lecturers at Oundle, where he had a good estate; thither he removed after his ejection, and there he died in 1665 or 1666. He was a man of great meekness and a very able preacher.

Thorp Malsor.—JOHN COURTMAN, B.D., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and one of the University preachers. After his ejection he preached in the house of Mr. Maunsell, the patron of the living. In 1672 he was licensed as a Congregational minister there and Mr. Maunsell's house as a Congregational meeting place. Died 1691, and was buried in the chancel of the parish church.

Thrapston.—THOMAS TARRY. He had a very large congregation, was much beloved by his parishioners, and greatly respected by all the neighbouring ministers. He was very charitable to the poor while in his living, but after his ejection was reduced so low that his wife made band strings for a livelihood. Afterwards for a time he became master of the Chicley free school at Higham Ferrers.

Twywell.—JOHN SEATON. "Very fervent in the pulpit, but very mild out of it." After his ejection he taught a school at Islip, and thence removed to Thrapston, where he was similarly employed until his death. He preached occasionally at Sir Gilbert Pickering's house, Titchmarsh, and for Mr. Whiting at Cranford, and at a few other places. He received a "general" licence in 1672 while at Islip.

Warkworth.—FRANCIS FULLER, M.A., CANTAB. Episcopally ordained by his uncle Dr. Fuller, Bishop of Ardfert, Ireland. He was a voluminous writer.

Weedon.—GEORGE MARTYN. "He lost an arm for the King, in Sir George Booth's rising; and yet such was the ingratitude of those in power that in 1667 he was imprisoned in Warwick gaol some months for preaching. After his ejection he exercised his ministry among a handful of honest people at Stony Stratford, who long had a great respect for his memory."

Wellingborough.—THOMAS ANDREWS, M.A., CANTAB. After his settlement here he had frequent disturbance from some soldiers who were quartered in the town, two of whom attempted to stab him in bed, but they were frustrated. Quakers also would disturb him in church while preaching.

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After his ejection he retired to Mears Ashby, and lived upon his savings. He used to preach at Mr. Preston's in the night and at Lady Tyrrel's. In 1672 he was licensed at Mears Ashby as a Presbyterian, and his house as a meeting place.

Whittlebury.—JOHN FIDO, M.A., of Trinity Coll., Cambridge. He was presented to this living by the Parliament. "At the Restoration Dr. Skinner laid claim to it, when Mr. Fido stood a trial with him at the assizes at Northampton and cast him. The judge declared that Mr. Fido had a legal title to the living of which no one could dispossess him, and told the Doctor that when preachers were well provided for, and still coveted more, it showed they minded the fleece more than the flock." However, Mr. Fido was ejected on Bartholomew Day, went to London, and died there in 1667. "He was strictly Congregational in his judgment."

Wilby.—VINCENT ALSOP, M.A., of St. John's Coll., Cambridge. One of the most eminent of the ejected ministers. Not satisfied with his episcopal ordination, he was re-ordained by Presbyters. "After his ejection he lived for some time at Wellingborough, where he exercised his ministry as the times would permit. He was bound over to the sessions for preaching in Oakham, and lay six months in Northampton jail for praying with a sick person; but he continued unmoved." In 1672 he was living at Geddington, where he was licensed as a Congregational minister to preach in his own house. Afterwards he was called to Westminster, where he exercised an influential ministry, exposed to many dangers, yet he escaped imprisonment in London. An able controversialist and the writer of many useful works. He died at Westminster in 1703.

Wollaston.—EDMUND MATTHEWS. A man of good learning, sound judgment and serious piety, but not of a ready elocution. After his ejection he lived privately at Wellingborough and practised physic for a livelihood, being reduced to great straits.

Woodford.—WILLIAM FLOYD. Appointed by Parliament March 28th, 1647-8, and went out of his own resignation before February 2nd, 1661. He afterwards practised physic, and used often to visit and assist his old neighbour Mr. Whiting, the Congregational minister at Cranford. Was licensed in 1672 as a Congregational minister for Woodford.

4.

Ministers and Meeting Places in 1672.

The attempt to destroy nonconformity by the vindictive Acts of the Clarendon Code failed: the foregoing biographical notes sufficiently show that. Persecution succeeded, though, in driving it largely below the surface for the time. Men continued to meet for that worship their spiritual life craved and consciences sanctioned, ministers continued to preach the Word, more precious now than ever, but it was done by stealth and in secrecy. This state of affairs was suddenly changed by the unexpected Declaration of Indulgence issued by Charles II. in 1672. That Indulgence, though formally withdrawn the next year, and the licences recalled in 1675, allowed nonconformity to emerge and enjoy a place in the sun. The list of licences issued under the Indulgence gives us an invaluable indication of the extent and strength of nonconformity ten years after the passing of the Act of Uniformity.

Seemingly the work of a few days, the Declaration was in reality the work of almost as many years. In a sense Charles had been moving towards this end ever since his restoration. Himself utterly devoid of any religious convictions, easy going and self-indulgent, he quite failed to appreciate the strength of feeling of the religious parties. Conscious of his former obligations to Roman Catholics, he had all through the decade, with more or less persistence, endeavoured to secure a measure of toleration for them, and with them, of course, for Protestant Nonconformists. His promise of liberty to tender consciences made at Breda had been solemnly repeated on several occasions. He sought to persuade Parliament to his proposal of toleration, but the bigoted Clarendon and the strongly episcopalian House of Commons defeated him. He dare not oppose them, for they controlled supplies, and Charles was invariably in need of cash. So matters drifted on, Charles caring little provided he had his fill of pleasure. In 1671, however, by means of the disgraceful Treaty of

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Dover, Charles had money sufficient to enable him to dispense, for some time at least, with parliamentary aid. Now was the opportunity to gain his end. By virtue of his supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, he unconstitutionally ignored Parliament, and issued his Declaration of Indulgence on March 15th, 1672. By it he ordered "That the execution of all and all manner of penal laws, in matters ecclesiastical, against whatsoever sort of Nonconformist or Recusant, be immediately suspended . . ." and promised "From time time to allow a sufficient number of places, as shall be desired, in all parts of this our kingdom, for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, to meet and assemble in order to their public worship and devotion."

The Declaration was received with great joy. Dr. Wilde, popular rhymster that he was, in an outburst of gratitude, scribbled laudatory verses from Oundle :

So Great, so Universal, and so Free !
This was too much (great Charles) except for Thee,
For any King to grant, or Subjects hope :
Like Thee to do thus, would undo the Pope.
Yea, though his Vassals should their wealth combine
To buy Indulgence half so large as Thine.
* * * *

Pardon, dread Sir, nay pardon this coarse paper,
Your License 'twas made this poor Poet caper.

There were three kinds of licences granted. There was the licence allowing the use of a particular building as a meeting place. To ministers licences of two kinds were issued : one to "Teachers of a certain Congregation," the other to "Teachers in general," *i.e.*, itinerant preachers. The holders of either kind of licence could preach in any licensed building.

About 3,500 licences were issued, 1508 being for ministers, the rest for meeting places.

In Northamptonshire (including Market Harborough and Bowden) 44 ministers were licensed (21 Presbyterian, 19 Congregational, and 4 Baptist), and 74 meeting places (38 Presbyterian, 34 Congregational, and 2 Baptist).

By far the larger part of the Northamptonshire licences were applied for and received by Nathaniel Ponder on behalf of the various persons and places concerned. Probably he was connected with the Rothwell Congregational Church, for John Ponder was one of the first elders there,

and Susannah Ponder's house in Rothwell was licensed. John Browning, the second minister of that church, and the one licensed in 1672, married Susannah Ponder as his second wife. The licences for Northampton, Wellingborough, Kettering and all the middle part of the county, were obtained through Nathaniel Ponder. Those of Daventry were applied for by Robert Steele. Some for the north of the county came through Thomas Taylor.

We now proceed to give a complete list of all ministers and places licensed in Northamptonshire. The letters "C" and "P" placed after the names indicate "Congregational" and "Presbyterian" respectively. Of the forty-five men ejected from Northamptonshire pulpits in 1662, twenty-two remained in the county, and were licensed in 1672. It is worthy of notice, however, that with the exception of Maidwell of Kettering, Resbury of Oundle, and Courtman of Thorpe Malsor (a family chaplain), all of them had removed from the town or village where they originally ministered—an indication, forcible enough, of the effect of the Five Mile Act. (Floyd of Woodford removed to Ipswich, and then returned).

1. GREAT ADDINGTON.—House of Samuel Whitby—P.
2. ADSTONE.—ROBERT ALLEN (ejected from Norton)—P.
House of Edward Hardy, Esq.—P.
3. ASHBY ST. LEGERS.—WILLIAM BUTLER (ejected from Hazlebeach)—P.
House of William Butler—P.
4. GREAT BOWDEN.—NICHOLAS KESTIN (ejected from Gumley, Leicestershire)—P.
House of Nicholas Kestin—P.
House of John Heath—C.
5. LITTLE BOWDEN.—House of James Taylor—
6. BRAFIELD-ON-THE-GREEN—CHRISTOPHER STANLEY—C.
House of Christopher Stanley—C.
7. BRIGSTOCK.—House of Edward Brookes—C.
8. CRANFORD.—NATHANIEL WHITING (ejected from Aldwinckle)—C.
House of Nathaniel Whiting—C.

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- 9.—CRANSLEY.—HENRY WILLES (ejected from Loddington)
—P.
House of Henry Willes—P
10. DAVENTRY.—JAMES CAVE (ejected from Cross-
thwaite)—P.
DANIEL WILLIAMS, D.D. (silenced in 1662, and here
received a "general" licence)—P.
House of James Cave—P.
House of Widow Manley—P.
House of John Hawtyn—P.
House of Allen Linzey—P.
11. DENTON.—GEORGE BIDBANCKE, M.A. (ejected from
Scotto, Norfolk)—C.
12. DOGSTHORPE.—House of Walter Slye—P.
13. DUNCOT.—RALPH PUNNE, at the house of John
Overton—C.
(See Green's Norton.)
14. EYE.—JOHN SARJANT—Baptist.
EDWARD PAYTON—Anabaptist.
House of William Holt—Anabaptist.
House of Baxter Syles—P.
15. GEDDINGTON.—VINCENT ALSOP (ejected from Wilby)
—C.
House of Vincent Alsop—C.
Application was also made for a licence for "the
schoole house," but this was not granted.
16. GREEN'S NORTON.—House of Ralph Punne (see
Duncot)—C.
House of Rebecca Mulsoe—C.
17. HIGHAM FERRERS.—TWYFORD WORTHINGTON, at
his own house—P.
18. ISLIP. JOHN SEATON (ejected from Twywell)—P.
A "general" licence.
19. ISHAM.—JOHN BAYNARD (ejected from Burton
Latimer)—C.
House of Robert Gray—C.
20. KETTERING.—JOHN MAIDWELL (ejected from Ketter-
ing)—C.
THOMAS PERKINS (ejected from Burley, Rutland)
—P.

House of John Maidwell—P.

House of Widow Cooper—C.

Maidwell was first licensed to preach in Widow Cooper's house, and afterwards applied for a licence for his own house. In the actual licence it is incorrectly endorsed "Presbyterian."

21. KILSBY.—STEPHEN FOWLER (ejected from Crick)—P.

House of Stephen Fowler—P.

22. KINGS CLIFFE.—House of Thomas Broome—C.

23. MARKET HARBOROUGH.—MATTHEW CLARKE (ejected from Narborough)—P.

"It is desired by Matthew Clarke of the Presbyterian Persuasion, living at Market Harborough in Leicestershire, that he may be Licensed to preach in any Licensed Place."

House of William Hartshorne—C.

House of Robert Basse—P.

House of Thomas More—P.

[In the Episcopal Returns for 1669 we have an earlier glimpse of nonconformity in Market Harborough. It is reported that there are about 100 Presbyterians "of the middle sort" (*i.e.*, station in life) and the "Heads or Teachers" are returned as "Mr. Matthew Clarke Chaplaine formerly to Colonell Hacker, Thomas Langdale, Mr. Browning an ejected minister, and Mr. Shuttlewood."

The return for Great Bowden reads: "About 200 Presbyterians" "of the better sort," Teachers "Matthew Clarke and Mr. Shuttlewood, one Mr. Southall an ejected minister, Mr. Kestyn ejected out of the vicaridge of Gumley, Mr. Langdale formerly Curate of Bowden Magna, Mr. Willson ejected out of the vicaridge of Foxtou."

This valuable information deepens our regret that the returns for Northamptonshire have not been found.]

24. MEARS ASHBY. THOMAS ANDREWS (ejected from Wellingborough)—P.

House of Thomas Andrews—P.

House of William Garrett—P.

25. NASSINGTON.—WILLIAM OLIVER (ejected from Glapthorne)—P.

House of William Oliver—P.

House of John Oliver—P.

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26. NEWTON.—House of John Mansell—C.
House of Robert Maunsell—P.
27. NORTHAMPTON.—RICHARD HOOKE (ejected from
Creaton)—P.
JOHN HARDING (? ejected from Melksham, Wilts)
—P.
House of Richard Hooke—P.
House of John Harding—P.
House of John Clark—P.
House of Valentine Chadock—P.
House of Robert Mastey—C.
House of Samuel Wolford—C.
28. GREAT OAKLEY.—“MR. FRANCIS DANDY In y^e
mansion house of Mrs. Margaret Brooke . . .”—P.
- 29.—OUNDLE.—RICHARD RESBURY (ejected from Oundle)
—C.
ROBERT WILD (ejected from Aynho)—P.
House of Richard Resbury—C.
House of Robert Wild—P.
House of Thomas Fownes—P.
House of Mary Briton—P.
30. PETERBOROUGH—CHRISTOPHER BELL—Anabaptist.
House of Isaac Spence—Anabaptist.
House of William Shipps—P.
House of Barnaby Knowles—P.
House of John Bladwick—P.
31. POLEBROOK.—“MATTHEW ORLEBAR to be a Pr.
Teacher in his house in Polebrook.”
32. RINGSTEAD.—JOHN WILLES—C.
House of John Morton—C.
33. ROTHWELL.—THOMAS BROWNING (ejected from Des-
borough)—C.
House of Thomas Browning—C.
House of Susannah Ponder—C.
Application was also made for “Mr. Thomas Browning
in a place called y^e Nuñery in Rothwell”—result not
stated.
34. RUSHDEN (? Rushden or Rushton).—House of Mr.
Woleston—C.
35. SIBBERTOFT.—THOMAS CARNE—Baptist.
House of Samuel Sturgess—P.

36. SULGRAVE.—House of Thomas Haycock—P.
37. THORPE MALSOR.—JOHN COURTMAN (ejected from Thorpe Malsor)—C.
House of John Mansell—C.
38. TITCHMARSH.—HENRY SEARLE (ejected from Cranford)—C.
Nathaniel Whiting (ejected from Aldwinckle)—C.
In “y^e mansion house of y^e Lady Pickering”—C.
George Fowler in “y^e house and barn of James Cole”—C.
Whiting was licensed for Titchmarsh in addition to Cranford because Henry Searle died about April, 1672.
39. TOWCESTER.—House of Charles Gore—C.
40. TWYWELL.—ROBERT EKINS (ejected from Trinity College, Cambridge)—C.
House of Mrs. Elizabeth Mulsoe—C.
42. WAPPENHAM.—ROBERT ROGERS, at his own house—P.
42. WARMINGTON.—JOHN ROWLETT (ejected from Sudborough)—P.
“Ye mansion house of Mrs. Anne Elmes”—P.
43. WEEDON.—JOHN WORTH—P.
House of John Billing—P.
44. WELFORD.—House of Henry Steele—P.
45. WELLINGBOROUGH.—MR. STRICKLAND NEGUS (ejected from Irchester)—C.
House of Richard Barnes—C.
“A Large Roome Adjoining to and belonging to y^e house of Richard Atkins”—C.
Application was also made for “Mr. Vincent Alsop in a certaine room over y^e schoole in Wellingborough”—but this was not granted; Mr. Alsop received one for Geddington, and could use it in Wellingborough.
46. WILBARSTON.—House of Thomas Aldwinckle—C.
47. WOLLASTON.—THOMAS BRETT in “John Morice his barn”—C.
THOMAS EDMONDS in John Brook’s house—C.
48. WOODFORD.—WILLIAM FLOYD (ejected from Woodford)—C.
House of William Wells—C.
49. YARDLEY HASTINGS.—House of John Neal—C.

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The Indulgence was cancelled, under pressure of Parliament, in 1673, and the licences were recalled in 1675, but the results for nonconformity were permanent. Sir John Reresby, writing at the time, describes it as "the greatest blow that ever was given, since the King's restoration to the Church of England; all sectaries by this means repairing publicly to their meetings and conventicles, insomuch that all the laws and care of their execution against these separatists afterwards could never bring them back to due conformity." The two or three years' breathing space it secured enabled nonconformists to organize themselves, and to recover the position lost during the period of rigid repression. More persecution was to follow before legal toleration was granted them, but henceforth they were too strong for repressive measures to be successful in putting them down. In the episcopal return for 1675 it is asserted that "many left the Church upon the Indulgence, who before did frequent it." That is to say, many who from fear of persecution, had adopted occasional conformity now took courage to worship with their brethren. A large number of nonconformist churches existing to-day date their formation and continuous life from the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672.

In Northamptonshire the following churches can claim a consecutive existence from 1662 to the present day, viz., Rothwell (1655), Kettering, Market Harborough, Northampton (Doddridge), Oundle, Weedon, Wellingborough; and possibly Daventry and Kilsby. Ashley, Geddington, and Yardley Hastings date from 1672.