ADDRESSES BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL

ALEXANDER GORDON

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VETUS PROPTER NOVUM DEPROMETIS

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The portrait prefixed is a facsimile, full size, of the first issue of the original engraving by Christopher Sichem, from the British Museum copy (698. a. 45(2)) of *Grouwelen der voornaemster Hooft-Ketteren*, Leyden, 1607.

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PREFATORY NOTE

With three exceptions the following Addresses were delivered at the openings of Sessions of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, in Manchester, where the author was Principal from 1890 to 1911.

The fifth Address (Salters' Hall) was delivered at the Opening Meeting of the High Pavement Historical Society, in Nottingham; the seventh (Doddridge) at Manchester College, in Oxford, in connection with the Summer Meeting of University Extension students; the eighth (Lindsey) at the Unitarian Institute, in Liverpool.

In this volume the Addresses are arranged according to the chronology of their subjects; the actual date of delivery is added at the close of each.

Except the first and the fifth, the Addresses were printed, shortly after delivery, in the *Christian Life* newspaper; these two (also the third) were printed separately; all have been revised, with a view as far as possible to reduce overlapping and to mitigate the use of the personal pronoun.

Further, in the first Address it has been necessary to make an important correction in reference to the parentage of Servetus. Misled by the erroneous ascription to him of a letter from Louvain in 1538 signed Miguel Villaneuva (see the author's article on Servetus in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, also

vitiated by this error) the author furnished in the original Address a wrong account of the family of Servetus. The real parentage of Servetus was first disclosed in 1903 with documentary proofs by Dr. Benet Roure Barrios, in *Joventut*, a magazine in the Catalan language published at Barcelona; of this the present author had no knowledge prior to 1911, when he visited the locality for the second time

A. G.

Belfast, October, 1922.

THE PERSONALITY OF MICHAEL SERVETUS

MIGUEL SERVETO.—Born, 1511; Toulouse, 1528; Bologna, 1530; Lyons, 1530-36; Paris, 1536-38; Charlieu, 1540-41; Vienne, 1541-53; Died, 1553.

MICHAEL SERVETUS

IN a lively passage of his most popular work, Michael Servetus inveighs against the folly of alleging two causes when one suffices to account for the effect, and is especially insistent in his reproof of a laborious investigator who must needs furnish forth a triad of causal activities, as if even with two he could not rest satisfied. It seems, then, only too likely that, were he here, I might fall under the lash of my present study when I put forward three reasons for my choice of this topic.

Yet each of these reasons has had some weight with me. Through the generosity of our President our store of books has been enriched, this year, with copies of the earliest publications of Servetus, in their rare and costly first editions. It is natural to take this as a call for some endeavour to renew an interest in their author. Again; next year (1911), if our calculations are correct, will bring round the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Servetus; and the occasion is to be celebrated in that city in which he spent his happiest years, till influences from

without brought on him the premonition of the catastrophe of his fate. So it may be well to ask, What was there in him to make him deemed worthy, after all these years, that such celebration should be accorded to his memory? Further, and as a third reason: it is to be feared that many of us are apt to think far more of the fate of Servetus than of him on whom it fell. The fire that consumed his body kindles imagination much more readily than the flame that burned in his soul, the radiance that illumined his spirit. Nay, there are those who even value his story for the most part, as a damaging episode in the giant career of Calvin.

I am not anxious to treat my topic from that point of view; into the circumstances which cut short the days of Servetus, though elsewhere I have not shrunk from that enquiry, for the purposes of this sketch I shall not go. With the verdict of history on that matter I am well content. This only will I now say. His modern apologists are ill-advised when they essay, abandoning their defences, to make excuse for Calvin's share in the tragedy of Servetus. For the excuse is shabby. It was the error of the age, say they—a sorry shift. Even in matters of tolerance, as in many other matters, Calvin, greatest of the Reformers, could on occasion rise above the level reached by most of his contemporaries. In the affair of Servetus he fell below

his own mark, and while partisans approved or acquiesced, nobler spirits shuddered and condemned. Putting all this away from sight, I want to rouse your curiosity and enlist, if I may, your appreciation, while I make an effort to recover the vivid impression of a gifted, almost a unique, personality, full of life and force, strenuous in purpose, and with a heart as warm as his intellect was keen.

It is not easy to accomplish a task for which the ordinary means of information fail us. Contemporary notices are valuable, but extremely rare; and in a life of surprises many points remain dark and mysterious. While there is much of romance in this life, there are no love-passages. When I sit down to biographize a man, I always want to know what kind of woman was his wife. Servetus did once contemplate matrimony, only to stifle the thought for an imperative reason. Of his correspondence, if we except the few missives of miserable appeal penned in the Geneva dungeon, no vestige survives. Of his person as it appeared to his contemporaries we have but a single glimpse, and this at second hand. Certain spectators not named, who had seen him at his trial and witnessed his execution, described him long after to Faustus Socinus as quite an old man. His years were only forty-two; the impression made by his appearance tells how effectually ten weeks' incarceration under the

foulest conditions had wasted his health and strength.

A small Dutch copperplate of 1607, the only possible portrait of him, presents us with no ignoble visage; but it occurs in a series of effigies of heretics, some of which have no claim to authenticity, and we are without means of assuring ourselves that a genuine likeness was in the hands of Christopher Sichem, the engraver—not a very scrupulous person, for he manufactured an effigy of Arius by the simple expedient of scraping out the mitre from the portrait of a Swabian bishop, thus leaving a bald patch on the imaginary head of the Alexandrian arch-heretic.

From this Dutch engraving, however, numerous copies, more or less close, have been derived; and the sculptor's art has transferred the features, more or less varied, to several statues. Of these, by far the most impressive is the earliest, erected in 1876 at Madrid by the pious care of a leading anthropologist, the late Dr. Pedro Gonzales de Velasco. Inferior to this, judging from a photograph, is the statue at Annemasse in Haute Savoie, which was refused erection at Champel. The statue in the Place Beaumont at Paris is a figure of horror, representing its subject near the last stage of his destitution and agony. The Paris statue, in the Place Maubert, of Etienne Dolet, martyr of the Renaissance—immortalized in the late Chancellor Christie's learned and light-

some pages—is a figure inspired by a right taste and a true reverence, qualities in which some of the tributes to Servetus seem to be lacking. This is true even of the memorial figure erected at Vienne in 1911, though certainly this is more pleasing than the Paris atrocity. These harrowing spectacles of the victim give little satisfaction either to the eye or the mind; on the Spaniard's monumental tribute to the Spaniard one may dwell with admiration, for at any rate it embodies a worthy conception of the man.

The birthplace of Servetus was probably at Tudéla, in Navarre, now a gloomy and not too clean city, reminding one of Galway by its melancholy ancient mansions, testifying in sculptured shields of arms to a long-past splendour, replaced to-day by squalor and decadence. This, apparently at Paris and certainly at Vienne, he avowed as his birthplace, and there seems no good reason to challenge the statement, though it is true that in a solitary passage of his Geneva testimony—if the minutes of the trial, which often blunder about names, are here correct—he described himself not simply as *de Villeneufve* but as *de Villeneufve natifz*. We may account for the birth at Tudéla, if we suppose this to have been his mother's old home, and the birth to have taken place while she was there on a visit. Richard Baxter's birth under his grandfather's roof came about in this way.

The father of Servetus was Antonio Serveto *alias* Revés, a notary at Villanueva de Sigena, whose signatures to legal documents in the archives of the convent of Sigena extend from 19 November 1511 to 3 April 1553—the years, curiously enough, being those of the birth and death of his most famous son. The mother of Servetus was Catalina Conesa; both parents were of good family (*vivants noblement*). There was another son, Juán Serveto de Revés, a beneficed priest, rector of Poliñino.

As to the date of birth of Servetus, it is true again that an isolated passage of his Geneva testimony may (as reported) be cited in favour of the year 1509; and the date is tempting as a coincidence, being that of Calvin's birth at Noyon. All his other and oft-repeated testimony, during both judicial examinations (at Vienne as well as at Geneva) and in his writings, points to 1511 as the true date; and this was the date ultimately accepted by Calvin. The "expiatory" stone placed at Champel (1903) by thrifty Calvinists—after getting amused Unitarians to lighten the burden of their inexpensive penance—particularizes the birth date as 29 September, 1511. This perpetuates a mere fancy of the patient and erudite scholar to whom students of Servetus owe more than to any other, my late most valued and lamented friend Dr. Henri W. N. Tollin (1833-1902), Huguenot pastor of Magdeburg, Dr.

Tollin threw out the suggestion that Servetus was named Michael, because born on Michaelmas Day. There seems no usage to this effect. Miguel Cervantes was not born on Michaelmas Day; or, if so, his baptism was long deferred. Miguel de Molinos, the great Spanish mystic, was born on Christmas Day. If, by any chance, 29 September were a lucky guess, then 1511 would have to be amended to 1510, since the date 1511 involves the supposition that, when Servetus under examination in 1553 stated his age, he had passed his birthday. In short, we know the exact date of his death, 27 October 1553, but not that of his birth.

Whenever and wherever Servetus was born, Villanueva was undoubtedly the seat of his family and the place of his early upbringing. Its situation was unknown to Dr. Tollin; I believe I was the first (beyond the immediate locality) to identify it among the Villanuevas and Vilanovas in that part of Spain. It is not a place of mark. Servetus rightly locates it "in the diocese of Lerida." His biographers have vainly sought for it in the province of Lerida. Actually it is in the province of Huesca, though in the diocese of Lerida. Its origin is due to the great and famous convent of Sigena, founded in 1188 by Queen Sancha of Aragon, and renowned in after ages as containing the stately burial place of the royal house of Aragon. When Sigena, on the bank of

the river Alcanadre, was chosen as site for the ample buildings of the royal convent, a new town, Villanueva de Sigena, to give its distinctive designation, was placed on higher ground above. This new town, now no longer new, is a tiny stone-built place, little more than a compact village, though it would be highly incensed if so called; not boasting when I first visited it (1888) an inn, even of the humblest description, and as regards its civic being, centering in the post office. The postmaster, the physician (both freethinkers) and the courteous Cura, who took no interest in heresies, were then the magnates of the place. A large and gloomy structure, shorn then of its topmost story was pointed out as the traditional mansion of the Serveto race. This building, known also as Casa Revés, on my second visit (1911) was much brightened up, and converted into a comfortable inn, whose hostess was proud of the connection of the house with Miguel Serveto.

The parish church, dedicated to San Salvador, is ancient, but has no good points of architecture saving a respectable Gothic porch. As in the majority of Spanish churches, no ancient baptismal register is preserved. The retablo to the high altar was (1888) comparatively modern, bearing date 1774; by 1911 it had been sold, apparently to defray the expense of a renovation of the interior of the church. To the right of the high altar, attached to the south wall, is a side

altar dedicated to Santa Lucia—one of the saints still commemorated in the Anglican calendar under date 13 December—and this was the family altar of the house of Serveto. An inscription states that its retablo, having paintings in ten compartments, was completed on 27 August 1558 by the care of the widowed Catalina Conesa and her son, Rector Juán. It had in 1888 an outer frame of later workmanship, not older than the seventeenth century; this bore, in three places, namely, at top and sides, a shield of arms emblazoned in colours, with the name SERVETO conspicuous to the right and left of each shield. In 1911, the outer frame was new and less elaborate; not reproducing the Serveto name, it bore, in two places, the Serveto arms more handsomely blazoned than before.

Just as the name Colombo appears also as Colón, so may the name Serveto drop the final vowel and appear as Servet; but neither does Servetus, nor his father, nor his brother, use this curtailed form—those who employ it do so in defiance of the usage of the family. On his earliest title pages Servetus owns his authorship in these words: *Per Michaelem Seruetо, aliás Reues ab Aragonia Hispanum.* Later, he Latinised Serveto into Servetus, and this (never Servet) is the form he employs even when he is writing French. In years past I followed Dr. Tollin not only in treating the double surname

as equivalent to Serveto-y-Revés—where Revés, in accordance with Spanish custom, would be the mother's name, but also in thinking the name looked as if the mother were French. The truth is that the combination was not unique, and probably appertained to a considerable branch of the Serveto race. Among natives of Villanueva de Sigena I find one Marco Antonio Serveto de Revés, born about the date of Michael's death, and dying in 1598. He was Abbot of Montaragon, near Huesca (an abbacy once held by Michael's patron, Quintana) and a kinsman of Pedro Antonio de Revés, Bishop of Albarracin. Revés is certainly not French; Dr. Pompeyo Gener, tracing it to the Catalan *rebeç*, in the sense of stubborn, treats it as denoting one who sticks to his convictions against everything and everybody; yet it seems a place-name, not a personal one.

Of the early training of Servetus no record remains. To fill the blank, Dr. Tollin has again offered a conjecture which lesser writers, the present penman included, have accepted even as solid fact. He thinks Servetus, when grounded in the elements, may have gone first to the University of Zaragoza for his higher education. Were I now to hazard a guess, I should place my guess nearer hand, at the College of Huesca, which Marco Antonio, his namesake aforesaid, entered in 1575. Somehow he acquired, in addition to a competent stock of learning, a certain deftness of

hand, contributing to his notable skill as a dissector. Deftness of delicate manipulation was characteristic also of Priestley, who resembled Servetus in his combination of the man of science with the pioneer in theology. Priestley indeed was an explorer in the field of science at an earlier age than Servetus in all probability; for Priestley as a youngster of eleven began his experiments on gases by bottling-up spiders to see how long they would live without air. Apparently Servetus was not, as a boy, alive to the scientific value of the dying agonies of spiders; any more than Calvin was, as a man, alive to the polemic value of the dying agonies of Servetus.

The notary Antonio Serveto, apparently a man of means, had planned his own profession as the destined career of his son Michael. For legal training the lad was sent to the University of Toulouse in his seventeenth year. He never saw Spain again. To the law he did not take, though evidently he acquired some knowledge of it. Fausto Paulo Sozzini (Socinus) was in like manner put to the law, the hereditary profession in which his ancestors had acquired both fame and wealth. Socinus hated the law, and in his young days read Dante, wrote sonnets (still in print, though not reprinted in his works) and sighed forth his soul in amorous verses instead of giving his mind to jurists and canonists. There is no evidence that Servetus forsook legal study out of any special

love for the poets, and it is doubtful if he ever wrote a line of verse in his life. From that distemper he seems clear. A crabbed Greek couplet adorns the title-page of his chief medical treatise; to him it is addressed, not by him composed. He does in his final publication quote (without naming them) Vergil twice and Ennius once; but the brief passages, incorporated in his text, are so familiar and so loosely recollected that they might have come to him by mere hearsay. No other poetical citations will be found in his pages except, for controversial purposes, a few lines from the Sibylline verses and a phrase from an Orphic hymn. A totally different class of study proved irresistible in its attraction for him.

In choosing Toulouse as the place of his son's professional education, Antonio Serveto doubtless had in mind, as Dr. Tollin well conjectures, not merely the prominent repute of its University as a school of learned jurists, but also its fame in divinity as a hot-bed of Roman Catholic orthodoxy, intolerant of any of those newer ideas which, in various parts of Spain and France, had been fermenting for years, provoked by Luther's outburst in 1517, wherewith not Germany alone but all Europe rang. The German or Lutheran type of reformed doctrine, it may be said, never enlisted the sympathies of Servetus. It was not radical enough on the sacraments; while its exaltation of mere faith appeared to him inimical

to the sound doctrine of good works. Perhaps the teaching of Toulouse might have definitely confirmed him in his father's faith, but for an incident which suddenly turned his thoughts from law to the Gospel. Up to the year 1528, it would appear that he had never seen a Bible. He says he had never read any of the Bible, and we may be sure that, had one fallen in his way, he would certainly have had the curiosity to examine it. At Toulouse, he, with certain other scholars, began to read "the Holy Scriptures and the Evangel." Here indeed we have a coincidence with the life of Calvin; for it was in this same year, 1528, that the future Reformer, at Orleans and as a law student, began his study of the Bible in the Vulgate version. Usually it is assumed that the Bible on which Servetus lighted was also simply the Vulgate. This there is reason for doubting. He is never in the habit of quoting the Vulgate; his acquaintance with the original texts must have been made very early. It is in the highest degree probable that a copy of the Complutensian Polyglot (published 1522) in which the Vulgate version is flanked by the Hebrew and the Greek, was *la saincte escripture et evangile* of which Servetus speaks. This finest fruit of the Alcalá press, a splendid contribution to sacred letters under the auspices of a Spanish Cardinal devoted to the interests of the Holy See, could hardly have missed its way to the University

of Toulouse, and would be sure to attract the curiosity of its Spanish students.

Not long after his initial acquaintance with the Bible, Servetus left Toulouse to enter the service of an influential patron, Juán de Quintana, an Aragonese by birth, a Franciscan by religious training, a theologian who in the bitter controversies of that age endeavoured a line of conciliation; and on this account had been selected by Charles V—for the moment desirous of an accommodating policy—as his confessor, replacing an uncompromising Dominican.

Thus it happened that Servetus, in attendance upon Father Quintana, was present at Bologna in February 1530; there witnessing the twofold event of Charles V's coronation, first as King of Lombardy, then as Emperor of Rome and of the world. Of these ceremonies we have a full contemporary account from the pen of Cornelius Agrippa, the Emperor's historiographer, whose graphic sentences enable us to realise the scene, almost as if we had been present. From every window in proud Bologna costly tapestries were hung forth. On every wall golden and silver gewgaws reflected the cheery radiance of the Italian sun. The very streets and arcades—the mighty arcades of Bologna which lift our imagination till those of Chester shrink to a decrepit insignificance—were carpeted with fresh flowers. Wine ran in the fountains from eagles' beaks and

lions' gaping throats. Every nation from Britain in the West to the isles of the Levant sent high dignitaries of Church and State, princes and peers, cardinals and canons, in robes and badges of every imagined description, to swell the pomp and multiply the paraphernalia.

In all this blaze of magnificent splendour the eyes of Servetus, to whom pomp was always repulsive—though he had a nice taste in jewelry; an unprinted catalogue of his personal effects left behind on his escape from Vienne proves this—rested mainly on one figure; and the vision of this ever after haunted and burdened his memory. The Pope who was to do the crowning was borne aloft, says Agrippa, upon men's shoulders in his chair of state, and as they carried him through the gilded throng that lined the streets, bearing him in grand procession to the high altar of San Petronio, the people knelt in the ways. Those fortunate enough to be near, pressed forward to kiss the slippers of Giulio de' Medici, known now as the seventh Clement, Vicar of God; and they received his benediction as if it were the visible assurance of the favour of the Most High. Three and twenty years after this, in the latest of his works, Servetus printed his reminiscence of a spectacle which had made on his young mind an indelible impression. "With these very eyes," he exclaims in accents of quivering indignation, "with these very eyes did I behold him, carried in

pomp upon the necks of princes, adored in the open squares by the whole populace on bended knee. Those who could kiss his shoes deemed themselves possessors of indulgence for their sins, and dreaded no more the pains of infernal fire. O beast of all beasts most execrable! Well hath Isaiah painted thee—." Then follows a terrible passage, adapted rather than translated from the prophet.

An unsparing vehemence of denunciation is a feature of Servetus' latest language when he touches on the Papacy, language which one cannot but wish that he had been able to keep in restraint. What makes it the more startling and, in a sense, the more impressive is that there was nothing of it in any of his earlier works. It is the discharge of a long pent up fury, to which he must needs at length give vent. It should be said, however, that he never assails the Catholic Church as such. In his first publication, while frankly submitting his own views, he affirms: "the Church shall judge." In a later one, he claims to write *pro ecclesia, ut pro matre filius*. It was not merely from fear of consequences that he habitually conformed. In many respects the Catholic ideal was consonant with the breadth of his religious mind. For that very reason it came about that with the Roman travesty of Catholicism he entirely lost patience. The Pope to him was essentially a usurping Antichrist. Valued

friends he had among Catholic dignitaries, close intimates among the priesthood—one of these intimates, Jacques Charmier, got into trouble on this score, and suffered imprisonment at Vienne after his friend's trial—yet the rank and file of the sacerdotal class constituted in his judgment an unclean, unwholesome crew. In the scornful section of his latest work, quoted above, he does not measure terms in his fierce reprobation of their morals and their hypocrisy, though he lays the ultimate blame of this unworthiness upon the Pope, their evil master, their unscrupulous tyrant. We must recollect what too many Popes were, in his day. At the time when he printed his denunciation, the Papal throne was occupied by Julius III—of fame so unsavoury that particulars are not desirable. We may hasten from them with the *Catholic Encyclopedia* as "very disagreeable rumours." He it was who kindly absolved this country from heresy and schism when Mary Tudor drew it back to the Roman obedience. His end is thus sketched by a mild writer: "He died from the consequences of his own folly, and no tomb was erected to his memory."

The Bible made Servetus a theological student, compelling him as it did to investigate the grounds of his ancestral religion, and especially convincing him that to-day, as at first, Christian doctrine must start from a realizing knowledge of

the Man Christ Jesus. *Ab homine exordiendum* is his pregnant phrase. The spectacle of Bologna turned the theological student into the would-be missionary of a better theology. In the year following the Bologna pageant, Servetus, having quitted the service of Quintana, issued his first little theological work. One would like to know how he managed to obtain the services of his printer, Johann Setzer of Hagenau in Alsace. Setzer was a Protestant of discrimination, who seems to have chosen the books he printed as carefully as he printed them. In neat little volumes nicely got up he brought out numerous reprints of reforming tracts, favouring especially those by Melanchthon. Uniform with these and in the same type he produced in 1531 the sevenfold tract by Servetus on Trinity Errors (*De Trinitatis Erroribus*), withholding however, his name as printer. The second work of Servetus (*Dialogorum de Trinitate libri duo*) consisting of six short chapters, the first two being in dialogue form, was brought out in 1532 by the same printing firm, though meanwhile Setzer had died.

That first little book, on Trinity Errors, found its way to the Diet at Ratisbon (17 April, 1532), where Quintana was in attendance on Charles V. It seems that Servetus had secured its coming under the notice of the Diet by sending a copy to one of its members, Christopher von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg. Servetus had gone to Augsburg with Quintana in 1530. Perhaps he hoped that in this prelate he might find a friend. Stadion was not an irreconcilable. As Lord Acton notes, he thought his own people blind, not to coalesce with Protestants on the basis of the Augsburg Confession.

A contemporary letter (in Italian) from Ratisbon to Rome by the Italian Nuncio, Jerome Aleander, soon to be made a Cardinal, begins with the exclamation: " I do really believe we are very near the end of the world ! " Having delivered himself of this terrified forecast, he proceeds to say that a young Spaniard, one " Mihel Serveto, alias Dereves " has written a book against the Trinity, cram-full of misused Scripture, interspersed with shreds of Greek and Hebrew, a very distasteful piece, but clearly by a very shrewd fellow. Quintana, he goes on to say, knows the writer, says he is a young man of very great talent and a great sophist, but cannot imagine that a book so replete with Scripture knowledge and so polished in style, can really be the production of one of his years; and this, though he overestimated those years by five. Aleander means to get together some of the theologians attending the Diet, especially those connected with Spain, to have the book condemned, and instructions sent which would procure the burning of the book with the effigy of its author, *al modo di Spagna*. This laudable project was not carried out, so far

as we know, though Aleander assures his Roman correspondent that the most reverend Legate, in the belief that Serveto belonged to his diocese (Huesca) will write instructing his Vicar-general to see about it. The Vicar-general was the bishop's brother, who administered the diocese for him, since this bishop had graver occupations on hand, being no less a personage than the Bolognese Cardinal Legate, Lorenzo Campeggio, who already had appeared in our own history as Papal Commissioner in the first of Henry VIII's conscience-stricken suits of nullity.

The polish of style here signalized as pertaining to the first work of Servetus is an imaginary quantity. The Latin, though clear, is crude; yet very likely it impressed Quintana by its superiority to the ordinary dog-Latin of the friars with whom he was most familiar. On the other hand, every reader must share Quintana's amazement at the proofs of learning and reading (not in Scripture alone) which the little book presents, especially in the first of its seven subdivisions. How, we want to know, did a lad not yet fully of age acquire this breadth of attainment? Where did he find all the books he quotes, and quotes moreover with point and fairness? Let us make a list of them in alphabetical order: Aristotle, Augustine, Basil, the Chaldee Paraphrase, Rab Chimhi, Clement of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, the Clementines, Corpus

Juris, Cyprian, the Decretals, Dionysius of Alexandria, Erasmus, Glossa Ordinaria, Gregory of Nazianzum, Henricus de Gaudano, Hilary, Robert Holcot, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Joachim of Flores, John of Damascus, Lactantius, Maxentius Constantinopolitanus, Mahomet in his Alcoran (not printed till a dozen years later), Rab Moyses, Occam, Paulus Burgensis, Peter de Aliaco, Peter Lombard, Ricardus de Media Villa, Tertullian. Of these, Irenaeus and Tertullian were throughout his life, especial favourites with him. His reference to the Qorán of Muhammad is ushered in with the wholesome reminder: "Hearken to what saith Mahomet, and remember that one truth confessed by an enemy is better worth credence than a hundred lies though authorised by our own men." He must have ransacked the libraries at Toulouse and elsewhere to come upon all these writers. Even if he found some of them in extracts (as is evident in the case of Joachim of Flores) the industry and research are obvious.

Nor had he, as Andrew Kippis is said to have done, crammed so many books into his head that his brains refused to move. Who taught him Hebrew? Not the ordinary Hebrew only, for he introduces a cryptic Hebrew abbreviation when he wishes to administer a sly slap at the theologians of his day. It puzzled Dr. Tollin, till I suggested to him, Try Buxtorf *De Abbreviaturis*, and you shall see what you shall see. This little

trick on our Michael's part is prize-worthy, for it is one of the very few instances in him of a subrident humour. Where he got his Hebrew to begin with, he does not say; only that he never had any communication with the Jews. This question, however, we can perhaps answer. His master in Hebrew, at a later date, was certainly the venerable Sanctes Pagnino, whose translation of the Bible he subsequently (1542) re-edited and annotated. Now Servetus tells us that when he left Quintana he went to Lyons, and Pagnino was settled in Lyons from 1525 till his death in 1541. If this is the answer, it necessarily follows that his command of Hebrew was gained in much less than a year. Throughout life his rapidity of attainment was truly marvellous.

His little book made a great stir. Luther, as we might expect, would none of it. Luther in his big-hearted way (reminding us of Dr. Johnson) liked what he liked and scoffed at what he disliked. He scoffed at Servetus in his Table Talk, just as he scoffed at the Epistle of St. James in print. The cautious Erasmus wrote that the Spaniard had tried in vain to gain his ear, so Aleander tells us. Melanchthon read the little volume and read it again. It frightened him; and it was some time before he tried to rebut its positions. The Roman Catholics held aloof from the controversy over the book, but scarcely any Protestant theologian of repute abstained from

having his say about it, and usually his fling at it.

The Swiss Reformers—Oecolampadius in particular, who to the disgust of Aleander received Servetus into his house—entered into friendly disputation with him as with no mean adversary.

It was to meet their objections that he wrote his supplementary booklet, with a modest foreword admitting the imperfections of his boyish essay, *tanquam a paruulo paruulis scripta*. This description is something more than a humble apology for acknowledged defects. It throws a clear light on the nature of his early work, and the method of its composition. He had begun the study of Scripture, so he declared at Geneva, in company with certain of his fellow students. The curious and sometimes puzzling personal appeals characteristic of his first publication are unintelligible till we realize that we have before us again and again what amounts to a record of actual disputation carried on at the University of Toulouse between the young enthusiast and his youthful compeers, who for their parts were not slow to put forward objections which they deemed fatal to his novel views, while for his part these were met by his eager and skilful defences. Lad as he was, debating with lads, he evidently felt himself to be a man with a mission. In the original preface to his *Christianismi Restitutio*, which exists only in a manuscript copy, he speaks of himself as moved by a divine impulse in his twentieth year to

treat of matters pertaining to the salvation of Christ's people, matters respecting which he had learned nothing from any human source. This purpose he had ever kept before him, though conscious of the many dangers to which it exposed him. At times, like Jonah, he felt impelled to flee from duty, and betake himself to some distant and solitary isle. The voice of Christ came to him as an irresistible mandate bidding him be true to the Master's cause.

Nothing is more characteristic in the religious development of Servetus than the growth of a vivid sense of the personal relation in which he stood to his Divine Master. From his earlier works this is absent; in these he is bent on the recovery of the historical Christ. In his latest work, so full is his mind of the presence and stimulus of the ever living Lord and Leader, that to Christ his heart leaps forth in the spontaneous approach of personal address.

In regard to such address, we may mark some notable contrasts of thought and feeling, distinguishing Servetus from Faustus Socinus on the one hand, and from Thomas Emlyn on the other. Emlyn who in 1704 wrote his "Vindication of the Worship of the Lord Jesus Christ on Unitarian Principles," rests the claim to worship on the fact of dominion—his own word. Worship, in short, is with him purely an act of homage; an idea which we find reflected in many of our older

hymns: "To Thee, O God, we homage pay," as the gentle Doddridge has it. To our Lord also, in Emlyn's view, like though not equal homage is due; he would have been ready to use the words of one of Dr. Martineau's own rather stiff and stilted hymns, in which our Lord is apostrophized with the address: "O King of earth."

Turning to Socinus, we find him, in his critical manner, distinguishing between *adoration* of Christ—and by this he means that feeling of the heart which constitutes the Christian attitude—and *invocation* of Christ, direct verbal address and petition, and this by no means necessarily accompanies the Christian emotion. It is lawful but not imperative. We have evidence of its employment by his English disciples, but it has not been possible to detect Socinus himself in the actual use of it, though he will make no terms with those who deny its legitimacy. To the temperament of Servetus the distinction thus critically drawn between emotion and utterance would have been a practical impossibility. Just as, in his denunciations, the flow of feeling and the rush of language constitute one act, and he could no more be reticent in word than quiet in mind before any evil which pressed upon him as a dire reality to be repelled with the whole force of his being, so in his religion the cry of the heart and the appeal of the lips come surging up in unison from the same sense of a gracious presence

very near to his spirit. Break forth then in supplication he needs must: "O Christ Jesu, Son of God, liberator most clement, who hast so often delivered thy people from their straits, pity and deliver us now!"

The introduction of Servetus to a scientific career took place at Lyons, where he was earning his bread as editor for the press. Dropping his patronymic, he borrowed a place-name from Villanueva, appearing in Latin as Villanovanus, in French as de Villeneufve. This dissociated him from his theological speculations, which would hardly have ingratiated him with the Lyons booksellers. The excellence of his literary work was conspicuous in his edition of Ptolemy's Geography, published in 1535, and reissued, further improved, in 1541. His additions to Ptolemy are copious and curious, showing a good deal of enquiry, an original grasp of the future science of comparative geography, and a keen study of the manners and characteristics of various peoples. It may be of some interest to extract, from the folio page of his observations on the British Isles, the main things which struck him in regard to our country and people. There is the more reason for doing this, inasmuch as Dr. Willis has given an attempt at a version, with extraordinary blunders. It will be observed that he sets down his points, just as they occur to him, like jottings transcribed from a note-book,

not worked up into any systematic arrangement. Taking as basis the first edition of the Geography, the omissions in the second are here indicated by italics, while the additions are enclosed in square brackets.

"Among Scots," he says, "there are few differences of customs, *language or manners.* Their temper is hasty, prone to revenge, and fierce. They are brave in war, very patient under fasting, watching and cold, shapely in mien, careless in dress. *Unfriendly in disposition, they look down on all other mortals.* They are vain of their noble blood; even in the depth of poverty tracing their pedigree to a line of kings. *They flatter themselves on their argumentative skill; in lying they delight, and do not study peace, like the English.* [The northern parts of Scotland are tenanted by wild men, bearing the name of foresters; their speech and dress are as in Ireland; they wear a rug over a tunic of saffron dye, and go with bare shanks and a shaggy kind of footwear; they live on game and fish, though with plenty of cattle, milk and cheese; their weapons are bows and arrows, and broadswords; hunting is their chief pursuit; they have a provincial code, different from the civil law. The rest of the Scots are similar to the English in language and civilization. Almost throughout the island] the use of coal for firing is so common that beggars meeting charitable persons ask for coal."

Speaking of England, he says "the climate is more temperate than in France, with less extremes of cold and heat. The land is well wooded, rich in produce, suitable for feeding cattle and horses, of which there are great numbers, especially of sheep, for there are no wolves. Formerly the country produced no wine, but now there are vineyards in some localities; it yields gold, silver, iron, lead, tin, and coal in abundance [and exports hides and excellent hounds for the chase]. It has large fisheries in tidal rivers, salt springs and hot springs, precious stones, pearls, and the finest jet in large quantities. The population is enormous, and, *according to Plutarch*, long-lived. *The English language, a composite speech arising from diversity of races, is very difficult both to understand and to pronounce.* In war they are intrepid, and the best of archers. They are a wealthy people, and for the most part given to commercial pursuits; they are celebrated for the finest cloth, owing to the abundance of good wool. On their music and their banquets they especially pride themselves. They are of blue eyes and tall stature." Here he tells the story of Beatus Gregorius and the fair young Angles, inserting in his second edition ["Recently, however, they have separated from the Roman Church, like a good part of Germany"].

"Another island," he says, "near to this, called Hyrland, is [for the most part] subject to

the King of England; it is situated to the West, and is half the size of Britain. So rich is it in fodder that unless in summer the cattle are kept off the pastures, they are in danger of overeating. This island produces no noxious animal, no spider or frog, nor will it maintain them if imported; it kills all noxious animals brought from another soil, smothering them in dust. Bees are not found here. The climate is marvellously temperate, the fertility remarkable. Yet the population is inhospitable, uncultivated and cruel, given to hunting and sports more than to agricultural labour. They are called Hybernians from one Hybernus, a Spaniard, who reached the island in a three days' sail." Finally, with a two-edged compliment he remarks in the second edition ["Whence it happens that in most respects they resemble in characteristics those Spaniards who are their nearest neighbours, namely, the Basques"]. Elsewhere in this Geography Servetus speaks some home truths about the characteristics of his own nation, a people "restless in mind, vast in endeavour, quick of genius, impatient of discipline." Here, with an unsparing candour, he drew his own portrait.

More important than his geographical work in its influence on his future career was his employment as corrector of the press for sundry publications of Dr. Symphorien Champier (1472-1539), herbalist, physician, Platonist, and astrologer

at Lyons. Champier is embalmed for ever in the great work of a brother physician; for a book "per § C.," with an odd title, finds a place in the immortal library of St. Victor. Francis Rabelais, who rendered his neighbour this service, was not merely a physician, but one of the first anatomists to conduct a dissection in public at the Lyons hospital. Servetus may have been present. A singular poem by Etienne Dolet, published in 1538, introduces the corpse of a malefactor, priding itself on having been the honoured subject of this dissection. This poem Servetus had certainly seen or heard, for he owes to it a turn of expression which he subsequently reproduced on the wonderful "artifice" of the human body. He must either have personally known Rabelais, or, what is perhaps less likely have been a reader of Pantagruel; for he follows Rabelais in locating the faculty of memory in what was then known as the posterior ventricle of the brain.

Servetus reckons Champier as his second patron, and owns his considerable debt to him as teacher. It was with Champier's backing that he repaired in 1536 to Paris, there to study medicine. Again we stand amazed at the rapidity of his advance. He was little more than a couple of years in Paris. During that time he graduated in arts; was licensed in medicine; as assistant to the anatomy professor, in succession to André Vesale, gained repute as a dissector;

vindicated Champier in print (1536) against the attack of a German critic, Leonhard Fuchs; lectured on geography, and on astronomy or astrology (the terms were then used indiscriminately) with an archbishop as one of his hearers; published his rationale of digestion in the shape of six lectures on Syrups (1537) which ran through five editions in eleven years; was prosecuted by the medical faculty for alleged libels in his astronomical lectures (1538) and inhibited from meddling with that branch of the science of the stars which we now set aside as astrology. This is pretty well for two years' work, and largely original work. His penetration was equally remarkable for its quickness and its depth. Well does his contemporary, Sebastian Münster, a rival editor of Ptolemy, characterise him by the epithet *oculatissimus*. His eyes were eyes of mind, his observation was instant and sure.

As for the connection between medicine and astronomy in some of its practical applications, we shall not forget that Chaucer tells us, of his Doctour of Phisik, that

> In all this world ne was ther noon him lik,
> To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
> For he was grounded in astronomye.

The astronomy of Servetus, like that of Ptolemy, was strictly geocentric. He held, indeed, that the earth was created first, before the heavens, to serve as the centre about which the whole

organic system of the universe was in succession arranged. In his capacity of astrologer, Servetus was *inter alia* a meteorologist and a weather prophet. His weather forecasts, not being random guesses, but founded on observations really scientific in their character and in the principle of their interpretation, had a perverse habit of coming true. Hence some of that jealousy which led to his prosecution. Furthermore, he was in advance of his age in his detection of the influence of climatic conditions on certain forms of disease. It is noticeable, too, that in his treatise on Syrups he deprecates the use of drugs as aids to digestion in ordinary cases, prescribing rest, sleep, massage (*frictiones*), baths, attention to diet, and use of warm drinks.

This treatise (*Syruporum Universa Ratio*) is the only one of all his publications into which he introduces no theology. It is also the best written, so far as classic Latin goes, of all his works; and in controversy the most temperate. One could wish that all his medical pamphlets had been in equally good taste; but no doubt he had his provocations. No doubt also it was sufficiently galling to grave and learned members of the faculty, addicted to the Arab school of physic with its multifold theory of digestion, to be taught the elements of true science by a young beginner in his twenty-sixth year, who knew his Galen, and made skilful use of that great name as

of paramount authority. Unpoliteness in rebuke and in retort were perhaps natural in the circumstances. In the Syrups treatise Servetus is careful to attack no living person directly or indirectly and even apologizes for his references to John Manardus, then recently dead, the inventor while living of three digestions in the same human frame. It gives me pleasure to note his commendation of my namesake, Bernard Gordonius (who died, I believe, in 1305, at any rate he is not living now) for frankly owning that physicians, of whom he was one, sometimes do make mistakes. The dominant anxiety of Servetus is that the science of medicine, of which he speaks enthusiastically, as coming to a new birth, should be as free from error as possible.

Soon he took to medical practice as his means of livelihood, exercising his profession at Avignon and for a longer period at Charlieu. Two romantic episodes mark his sojourn, of a couple of years or so, at the quaint old town of Charlieu, with its ancient castle, and its venerable inn, which yielded once upon a time, to a traveller in search of traces of Servetus, a welcome supper of milk and grapes. Here it was that Servetus would, had he been competent to do so, have married *une fille dudict lieu*. Here too, one night, on his way to visit a patient, he was set upon by friends of a rival physician. Swords were drawn, wounds given, and Servetus was put under arrest

for two or three days. He says he never got into such a scrape before; nor did he again, till the Inquisition was hounded on to him by hints from Geneva.

Finally, after some further study in the medical school at Montpellier, he found a permanent settlement (1541-53) at Vienne, on the invitation of its Archbishop, Pierre Paulmier, the same who had been his hearer in Paris; who now attached him to his person as confidential physician. In addition to this he had a considerable practice, and made money. He still continued to do some work for the Lyons publishers, bringing out the revised edition of his Ptolemy, and his noble annotated edition of Pagnino's Bible (1542). This contains his remarkable theory of prophecy, perhaps the only theory which preserves the element of Christ-predicting vision, while admitting the immediacy of the prophet's historic outlook. He certainly also pursued his anatomical researches, for his discovery of the pulmonary circulation of the blood, not made in Paris, had been reached by him before 1546.

Being now in easy circumstances, and the master of some leisure, his main business from his own point of view was the revision and completion of his theological work. For this task he had prepared himself by larger learning and more searching study. So subsidiary did he reckon everything else to this, that he made no immediate publication of his great physiological discovery, reserving for incidental exposition in his *Christianismi Restitutio*, "a truth which Galen himself had not perceived." This exposition is but a stage in the process by which he endeavours to pass from physiology to psychology, and to determine how and where the Spirit of God operates upon the soul of man. As we are not now dealing with his scheme of doctrine, but touching only on points which illustrate the man and his characteristics, it will suffice to say that of the contents of the *Christianismi Restitutio* (1553) the portion which will best repay the general student is its final piece, the *Apologia*. This is the only piece which has been separately reprinted (1896) and is easily accessible, though marred by errata, some of which belong to the original text, others to the reprint of 1790. It takes its title from the circumstance that its primary *raison d'être* was the writer's desire to defend himself in the face of criticism by Melanchthon, to whom the *Apologia* is addressed, as he had attacked Servetus by name in his *Loci Communes* (1536). From a mere reply, the *Apologia* proceeds to a general and lucid outline of the writer's scheme, both of Christian doctrine and of Church polity, at once temperate in tone and glowing with anticipation of its ultimate acceptance.

The earlier sections of the volume give many more evidences of the writer's scientific curiosity

than that presented by his account of the pulmonary circulation. Whether he had definitely grasped the larger truth of the general circulation of the blood may be left in doubt, for while there are indications which fit in with this, they need not be pressed too far. This wider truth was not of service to the psychological argument; and this alone determined the introduction and proof of the discovery which he signalized. Hints for many of his scientific positions—we can hardly call them discoveries, some of them being merely unverified convictions—he finds in the letter of the Bible. Thus, for example, he has an inkling of the fact that water is composite—a truth which Priestley, strange to say, repudiated with vigour to his dying day—and he is guided to it by the circumstance that the Hebrew terms for water and for sky are in the dual number. His mind is moving away from the older theory of four fixed elements. Air is a gas (as we should say) which escapes from water; flame is enkindled air or gas. On the other hand his experience as a physician prompted some of his interpretations of Biblical phenomena and Biblical data. "Contraction of the nerves," he says, "is called by Christ the chain of Satan, just as St. Paul calls his own infirmity a messenger of Satan." In regard to the retributive facts of the hereafter, he observes that, just as to those whose senses are diseased, sweet things seem bitter and fragrant things

fetid, so in the future life the conditions which make the bliss of the good, will be torture to the depraved. His glimpses of universal restoration are suggested by the thought that as Nature has remedies for all her diseases, could we only discover and apply them, so there may be ultimate modes of treatment for the depravities of the moral and spiritual being.

The Biblicism of Servetus, it must be owned, is of the most thoroughgoing order. He does not indeed with the Hutchinsonians (now, presumably, extinct or nearly so) find all science in the books of Moses, designedly there taught, though veiled in symbols; but the discoveries of science, so far as he had made them, tally with the language of Scripture, as he understands it. The absolute inerrancy of the Bible was evidently with him an axiom so patent that it never occurs to him even to state it. Here he differs from the earlier Reformers, for Luther was a Biblical critic in his slap-dash way, and the commentaries of Calvin on both Testaments are pervaded by a scientific acumen. Milton escapes the pressure of his Biblicism, at least as regards the New Testament, by pleading the presence of irreducible variations in the existing text, providentially designed to compel a resort to the guidance of the Spirit. Servetus knows nothing of textual uncertainties. In his earliest and again in his latest work, he cites and expounds the Three Heavenly

Witnesses verse, without a suspicion that it has no place in the true text. His one selective criticism—and this does not call in question the text but is founded upon it—is in his strong assertion of the superiority of St. Paul to St. Peter as an exponent of Christianity. St. Peter, he maintains, could never have transmitted to the Papacy a supremacy in the Apostolate which he did not himself possess. The more excellent organ of apostolicity was St. Paul "who from the beginning of his vocation knew perfectly the mysteries of Christ, namely, that the Gentiles were to be called, and that all Judaisms were to be done away; things which none other of the Apostles knew."

In spite of all this, while holding that the Bible is absolutely true, he claims, and on Biblical authority, that the true Christian is, for the essentials of his religion, independent of the Bible. "Christ," he exclaims, "is my only Evangelist." He means that for the knowledge of Christ he need not go to the records of the historic past, and must not be content with these. Firm faith in a living Leader is the primary requisite of discipleship, the very quality which constitutes the Christian, for *nemo Christianus nisi discipulus*. Hence it is not enough to tell a man that the Evangelists wrote so and so. The Gospel was in being before they wrote. It is not the Gospel because they wrote it, they wrote it

because it was and is the Gospel. "The law of Christ is the law of the heart. This law of Christ needs no outward writing. Yea, even had the Apostles and Evangelists written nothing, still, providing that the knowledge and the faith of Christ endured in us, this new law of Christ would stand, written with inward ink by the efficacy of the Divine Spirit, which imprints that law on tablets of the heart."

Here Servetus reaches the highest mark of his mystic faith, and here we leave him. Cut off at forty-two, his ever-growing mind had not yet shown the full extent of its insight and its powers. His last and ripest work is after all but a bundle of tracts theological, sewn up together, some rewritten (not, it may perhaps be thought, invariably mended) and some new, many of them bristling with speculations strange to the modern mind, all of them instinct with the writer's genius. They show us what he was; they point further on to what he might have become. For, of all human achievement, of all human aspiration, of all human progress in religion, thank God, "the end is not yet."

6 October, 1910.

THE TERCENTENNIAL OF A NAME

II

THE TERCENTENNIAL OF A NAME

THE nineteenth century of the Christian Era did not reach its proper termination before 24 March, 1901. The reason is, that this Era begins its years on 25 March, the date of our Lord's conception by his Virgin Mother, as calculated in A.D. 527 by the Scytho-Roman monk Dionysius Exiguus (Denis the Insignificant) by himself thus designated. To his modest labours in the chronological field we owe the introduction of the Annus Domini. The inconvenience of beginning the Christian year at Lady Day, while the historical year began on the first of January, was recognized at length by the English Parliament to whose legislation we owe the Era now in use, according to which the year, and consequently the century of years, terminates on 31 December. It follows as a matter of course that somewhere or other there has been a shortened year; the century in which this has occurred, though it consist of the full number of years, will nevertheless be of necessity a shortened century.

Amateur chronologists seem inclined to play tricks on their own account with the first of all the

Christian centuries. Some of them go so far as to reckon a year A.D. 0, which yet is to count as one before one; thus they make up a century closing with the year A.D. 99. Others would reckon as the first Christian year a period of nine calendar months and six days, so as to begin the second Christian year with the first of January. The really short year in our English chronology is the year A.D. 1752. This began, like all its Christian predecessors on 25 March, but came to an end by law on 31 December, having been meanwhile, in the previous September, compelled to make restitution of borrowed moments, the overdraft of previous years from the days of Julius Cæsar. This reform of the calendar, introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, had been adopted in Scotland in 1600; in Ireland it was not legalised till 1782. Thus the English year 1752 consisted of eight calendar months and twenty-five days. The eighteenth therefore is our short century; and it is in virtue of its shortness that the following century, the one immediately behind us, whose first year began by law on 1 January 1801 accomplished its full tale of years on 31 December 1900.

It is impossible to bring to mind this passage from one century to another without some salutary and even solemn thoughts on the flight of time, the procession of the ages, and the turning-points of human story. Though it be

quite true that there is no real pause or break or change when a century closes, yet the process by which we engraft upon our imagination this idea of parallels of longitude, as intersecting the unbroken flow of years, is by no means artificial. It may be called instinctive or perhaps constitutional. Our habit of marking off a decade of decades arises from our physical structure. We count by tens because we have that number of fingers, and the step to tens of tens is not arbitrary. The space of time thus measured is naturally impressive from its relation to the utmost span of human life. When, further, we contemplate the centuries past, we cannot fail to see that each, to the eye of posterity appears with an individual character, and bears a distinctive repute of its own.

What special stamp the judgment of the coming time may fix upon the century now [in Oct. 1900] near its close, we cannot safely anticipate. It is not likely to be a flattering one; for the next age will have, and rightly have, a keen eye for faults and defects, supposed or real, in its predecessor, and means of course to remedy them. The century last completed is always severely judged by its successor. It gains neither the indulgence nor the admiration bestowed upon earlier ages, which compete less closely with the present time and are seen in an historic perspective, invisible to those who stand too near. Witness the blind and

persistent disparagement, on the religious side, which our nineteenth century flung upon the eighteenth, the century of Christian hymns, the century of the rise of Christian missions, the century which shone with the catholicity of Doddridge, which thrilled with the fervour of Whitefield and, unable to resist the appeal of the consecrated philanthropy of Wesley, opened its heart to the truth of God's free grace, its mind to the fact of a human world improvable. Little Laud, little Wesley—do we doubt which of these irrepressible spirits made religion more real in his own time and for all time? Does religion, again, owe no debt to the men who put Christianity avowedly on its trial, brought its assumptions to the bar of reason, searched out its facts by the methods of history, checked its preachers into a wise caution and, unsatisfied with the appeal of mere sentiment, demanded of them the qualities of solidity and sense? That surely was no stagnant century in which Butler with new reverence traced the springs of virtue in human nature, and Hume probing the metaphysics of Deity set the witness of the firmament and the tides above the hearsay tales of men; in which Lardner awoke a living interest in the literature of the first Christian ages, and Priestley compelled the fruitful study of the mind of Christ and the process of doctrinal development. We may console ourselves with the consideration that, if those who come after us

treat the nineteenth century as the eighteenth has been treated, dwell complacently on our weaknesses, and rank even some of our virtues as the freaks or faults or foibles of our age, nevertheless time will do us justice; and at any rate the twenty-first century will avenge us, scourging our detractors, and perhaps transfiguring our poor endeavours in a fashion which our modesty forbids us to anticipate.

While then this address is retrospective in its design, the retrospect of the immediate past is a task left free to the Principal of this College a hundred years hence. Let us look further back, and extend our gaze beyond our vaunted bi-centennials, all of them, strictly speaking, bi-centennials of the old Calvinistic Dissent. The history of the Unitarian religion—not indeed under that name—has lasted long enough to permit of its Tercentennials, even in this country, did we choose to celebrate them. The year of grace 1900 happens to be the Tercentennial of the first known appearance of the Unitarian name, and the very month coincides. It were inexcusable to pass this anniversary in silence.

How the term Unitarian originated, we may perhaps conjecture, but we cannot say that we certainly know. People are apt to rub their eyes when they read that, in the sixteenth century, those who now are called Unitarians were denominated Trinitarians, and that in the Papal bull

Cœna Domini, as issued on Maundy Thursday by successive Popes, from Gregory XIII. in 1583 to Clement XIII. in 1768, Trinitarians are associated with Anabaptists and Apostates as outcasts from the Faith. The explanation is this: the heretics so designated, holding the threeness of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as distinct persons, denied their unity of being and nature. It was Servetus who first in 1531 and again in 1553 employed the term Trinitarian in its present theological sense. So novel and so repulsive was his use of it, that his judges at Geneva were more than scandalized at his temerity. It was even included among the capital charges against him that to *ceux qui croyent en la Trinité* he had given the name *Trinitaires*. His nomenclature has endured, and the term has now the force of a compliment.

As its theological correlative we might have expected to find the term Unitarian earlier in use than in point of fact we do. In vain do we search for it till we come upon a decree of the Transylvanian Diet at Lécsfalva in October, 1600, when *Unitaria Religio*, the Unitarian Religion, was first recognized as such. In old statutes of the same country such titles as Antitrinitarian and Arian had been frequently used; the one a combative, the other an antiquarian term, and both bestowed upon the new movement by its enemies. Nor does it appear that the Unitarian name was devised by its friends; they certainly did not

readily or rapidly adopt it. There are grounds for supposing that it was deliberately intended by this name to associate the would-be reformers of Christendom with the followers of Muhammad under a common term of reproach. Certainly at a later date we find it in customary use as the received translation of the Arabic *Muahid*; and as such it crops up in our own literature as synonym for Moslem, *e.g.*, in Gibbon's pages, in Wesley's well-known intercessory hymn, and more recently in one of Pusey's treatises. Be all this as it may, there came a time when the Unitarian name was first tentatively, then formally adopted by the Antitrinitarians of Hungary—not by those of Poland—as their official style and title. It is first to be found upon the official records of their mother-church at Kolozsvâr, in August 1637. Next year (1638) it took the public and authorized position among them which it has ever since retained.

Several reasons combine to stamp upon our memories this date of 1638. In our own insular history it is memorable as being the date of the Scottish National Covenant—not the Solemn League and Covenant in which the Puritans of the three kingdoms joined, that was in 1643, and was the religious sanction of a political alliance. The Covenant of 1638 was the religious sanction of an ecclesiastical reform, it meant that Presbyterianism was in earnest. There is perhaps no

picture in the religious history of Scotland more profoundly moving than the vision of that day in 1638 when the broad parchment scroll was spread out upon a tombstone in the Old Greyfriars' churchyard, the Westminster Abbey of Edinburgh, and nobles and magnates followed by the whole population swore to their Covenant with uplifted hand and affixed their signatures, filling the blank space, crowding the margin, covering the back, and, when meaner ink failed, dipping their quills in their blood.

Take this date with you, and travel to the far East of Europe, for it is a memorable date in the history of two Churches of the freer faith—the Church in Poland and the Church in Hungary. It carries very different associations in the two cases. In Poland 1638 was virtually the year of doom; in Hungary 1638 was practically the year of establishment. This contrast, fully realized, may aid the English mind to surmount the difficulty of drawing a clear distinction between the two Churches. It is true that they had many points of contact, yet they never were in close touch with each other. Like the contiguous Churches of England and Scotland they differed in spirit and in constitution; the Antitrinitarians of Hungary retained a modified Episcopacy, those of Poland were purely Presbyterian; and the Churches were further kept apart by the barrier of language.

The key to the rise as well as to the fall of the Church in Poland is to be found in the fact that its history is the record of one long-continued struggle with the emissaries of the Society of Jesus. But for intrigues which began with the incursion of Jesuit Fathers into Poland in 1558, the Antitrinitarian section of Protestants might never have been forced into separation as the Minor Church in 1565. To reaction against Jesuit influence must be ascribed the remarkable series of converts to the Minor Church from the Roman Catholic aristocracy of Poland. The Minor Church was undogmatic in spirit, and fond of the undefined use of such terms as Catholic and Christian. This avoidance of limiting appellations was, as is well known, the policy of Socinus, but it was not original to him. He did not bring it to Poland, he found it there. The Polish Church, even when most Socinian, in fact never adopted a party term as its designation. Along with a firm adhesion to the Supremacy of the Father, it cherished the adoration of our Lord, on grounds not very dissimilar to those on which Roman Catholics defend the adoration of our Lady. The recoil of its members from any magisterial office or patriotic service involving them in complicity with the taking of human life, while fatal to the social and political influence of their community, constituted it a refuge for religious minds, weary of bloodshed as an engine

of reformation and anxious for a haven of rest whence moral regeneration might proceed.

In 1569 a Polish noble, John Siennynski, for the improvement of his estate and the encouragement of trade, laid out the plan of a new town seated on a sandy reach beside a pleasant river, with mountain views to delight the eye and contiguous forest to furnish building material. In honour of his wife, whose maiden name was Rak [i.e. Crab] he called the projected settlement Raków [pronounced Ráckuff]. Siennynski had become a Calvinist, but (not availing himself of the decree of 1566 by which every Polish noble might prescribe the worship within his domain) he invited settlers of every sect to the free exercise of their own religion. We may take this as due to the fact that his wife was already in strong sympathy with the attitude of the Minor Church. Among the first to seize the proffered opportunity was a little band of Non-trinitarians, led by one of the most remarkable men of that day. Gregory Pauli, originally a Calvinist, had been ejected from the pastorate of Trinity Church, Cracow, for advancing opinions in that building utterly incompatible with the doctrine to which its dedication pointed. His ideas of reform were social and economic as well as theological. He believed in an approaching millennial reign of Christ, and in the duty of Christians to prepare themselves for it. His followers, increased by small contingents

of Anabaptists, fleeing for their lives from Bohemia and Moravia, held a community of property, and every member had to contribute by his labour to the common stock. How long this experiment lasted is not clear, but in its early stages it contributed materially to the rise of Raków, where Pauli ministered as the first in the succession of its liberal pastors. Pauli died in 1591 after ten years' enfeeblement by failing eyesight, and leaving a name of past greatness. The oldest monument in Raków stands in an ancient walled graveyard on a sand-bank outside the town. It is a lofty pedestal, surmounted by a rudely carved but very touching figure of our Saviour crowned with thorns, seated and bending forward, with pensive eyes surveying the town below. It is dated 1591 and inscribed "Erexit L.E." Local tradition makes this the resting place of Pauli, and interprets L.E.—rather fancifully—as *Lugens Ecclesia*, the Church in Mourning.

Eight years later, a strong effort was made in public conference to win the heretics of Raków from the error of their ways. The discussion had an unexpected result. James Siennynski, son of the founder, was convinced that the heretics had the best of the argument. In 1600 he openly joined the Minor Church, whose synods from 1601 met annually in Raków. To the zeal of a convert the younger Siennynski added the schemes of a patron animated by broad and wise educational

views. In 1602 he made Raków—already famous for a printing-press which issued works of science as well as of theology—more famous still as the seat of a College for the promotion of learning in every department. Teachers of eminence and of liberality were brought together from various parts of Europe, scholars rapidly poured in, and for thirty-six years it was no uncommon thing for the College roll to include a thousand names, three hundred of them representing the flower of the Polish aristocracy. Catholics and Calvinists readily sent their sons to share its advantages, and Raków gained abroad the proud title of the Sarmatian Athens. Its own authorities, still more proudly, delighted to call it Verona, the Home of Truth.

Needless to say, the Jesuit gaze was fixed upon it with sleepless enmity, and with lynx-eyed longing for some means of compassing its downfall. The Primate of Poland condemned to the flames a reprint of the Polish Bible translated by members of the Minor Church. There was in it a terrible misprint, *do* for *od*, which made our Saviour tempted *to* the Devil instead of tempted *by* him. This reprint however was not executed at Raków, which could not therefore be made to suffer. At length, in 1638, two thoughtless lads, Falibowski and Babinecki by name, furnished the first occasion of complaint against Raków, and the Jesuit wire-pullers determined that it should

be the last. The youths in question had flung pebbles at a wayside crucifix of wood, doing it some damage. Their parents had soundly chastised them. The authorities of Raków, thinking the culprits sufficiently punished, had taken no further action. The matter then was brought before the Diet at Warsaw, and urged as involving the whole community of Raków in a heinous crime. On the roof of the great hall at Kielce in what is—or was in pre-War days—the official residence of the Governor, a contemporary painting by Dolabella, the court painter, represents the sitting of this Diet. King Wladyslaw IV., himself a man of easy and tolerant disposition, but overborne by strenuous bigots, occupies the throne. On the dais beneath his feet appears the inscription: *Arianismus Proscriptus*. At his right sits Wezyk, the Bible-burning Primate, while on his left rises Zadzik, Bishop of Cracow and diocesan of Raków, pleading for summary dealing with that hotbed of heresy. The leaders of the Minor Church stand at the bar ; their best friends, the third order of nobility, have been excluded from the sitting. On May Day 1638 the decree was passed proscribing the teachers of Raków, confiscating their church and their printing-press, and dooming their College buildings to demolition.

This was the first act of a tragedy destined to be developed and completed in the course of some

score of years. When at length the throne of Poland was filled by John Casimir, who had been a Cardinal; and when the Jesuit Severin Karwath held the office of Court preacher, it is no wonder that a decree was issued for the extermination of the Minor Church. Accordingly in 1660 (a date memorable in our own ecclesiastical annals for its tale of blighted hopes) our Polish co-religionists were compelled either to renounce their religion or to become exiles from their homes. Their expulsion was the natural sequel to the suppression of Raków. Pope Alexander VII (whose portrait might be mistaken for that of Richard Baxter) decorated John Casimir with the title *Rex Orthodoxus*, and the churches of the Arians (so called) were devoted henceforth to Roman Catholic worship.

Obscure enough is Raków to-day; yet those who, with Count Krasinski speak of it as a miserable village, can never have heard the sound of its bells, or filled their shoes with the sand of its suburbs, or bowed the head within its synagogue, or, guided by the parish priest, stepped over prostrate worshippers on the pavement of its graceful church, to view the mural portrait of Zadzik. Like all old Polish towns, its main feature is a vast open square, eastward of which is a desecrated church of the proscribed community, or what remains of it patched up into a dwelling-house. A network of narrow streets

encloses a smaller square. Neither in street or square is there (1900) any sign of freedom or of literature to remind the traveller that this was once the Sarmatian Athens. The decree of 1638 did not work by halves.

Look now, by way of contrast, to what was effected by the kindred Church in Hungary in that same year. It cannot be doubted that the course which things were taking in Poland had made a strong impression on those of the like faith across the Carpathians, warning them of a common danger. The Hungarian Church had wavered more than once between the alternatives of framing a policy of its own, or following in the wake of its Polish sister, which certainly took the lead in learning and culture, perhaps also in wealth. It had received teachers and pastors from the College and Church of Raków, and had even elected one of them, Valentine Radecki, as its bishop. Radecki, as was natural enough, proved a warm adherent to Polish ideas. The ill success of his advocacy of them was in part due to the circumstance that, confining himself to Latin, he never learned the Magyar tongue, thus never getting into accurate touch with the community over which he presided. So strongly was this felt that, on his death in 1632, a law of the Hungarian Church was enacted, excluding from the episcopal office all but native-born Hungarians.

Radecki's death was followed by internal dissensions in the Church; questions of policy became questions of party and of personal rivalry. After the election of Daniel Beke as bishop, at the end of 1636, the divisive action of a disappointed candidate very seriously endangered the position of the Antitrinitarians as one of the Four Religions of the country recognized and protected by the State—a position never attained by their co-religionists in Poland.

The fall of the thunderbolt on Raków was convincing proof that the need of internal unity was imperative and that the work of consolidation could not safely be delayed. Beke, a strong man, convened a Synod synchronously with the Transylvanian Diet, which was meeting at Dées. Gaining the co-operation of both Synod and Diet, Beke on 7 July, 1638, effected the famous *Complanatio Deesiana*, at which the Unitarians—jointly taking that name for the first time—achieved a united front, presented a common Confession, and obtained from the Diet, assembled under a Calvinistic Prince, the ratification of their place among the Received Religions of their country. Never since has this position been questioned, even in the bitterest times of persecution. That it should have been established at such a moment was no small attainment, and compels us to admiration of the statesmanship of Beke, the sagacity with which he grasped the

situation, the skill with which he treated it.

As the symbol of this *Complanatio* appears for the first time in history a document with the heading *Confessio Fidei secundum Unitarios*—a Confession of the Faith according to Unitarians. If we say that the statesmanship of Beke is nowhere more conspicuous than in the official adoption of the term which first emerged in 1600, it is not meant that the choice of this distinctive Name did the work of preserving the Unitarian Church of Hungary. The adoption of a common name was a symptom rather than a cause. It was the symptom and outcome of a spirit which had become alive to the necessity of standing closely together, not merely for self-preservation, but for the health and strength of a cause greater than any self-interest, greater than any private preference.

Yet it was not from Hungary that the bequest of the year 1600 came to Western Europe and reached our own shores. By a strange irony of fate the Unitarian name has been derived from the exiled Poles, who never, even in exile, adopted it as their own. Next to Gregory Pauli the most remarkable champion of the liberal faith that Poland ever produced was Andrew Wiszowaty, grandson of Socinus. He it was who rallied the fugitives from Raków in 1638, and again who, later on, piloted to Holland the main body of the exiles of 1660. Obtaining the willing services of a

learned printer at Amsterdam, he projected in 1665 the series of Latin folios designed to secure for his faith through the press a hearing denied to it from the pulpit. On the general title-page the series is described as the Library of the Polish Brethren. Then come the words, added in concert with Stanislaus Lubieniecki, *quos Unitarios vocant*, called by others Unitarians.

As their writings show, Wiszowaty and Lubieniecki would have preferred phrases such as "simple Christians," "mere Christians," "Catholic Christians." In this they were in accord with the tenacious sentiment of the body to which they belonged. Within the limits of that body, these phrases were perfectly intelligible; they meant not many things, but one thing. Whereas in Holland the exiles had taken in hand the task of introducing the views of their representative men to an outside public. From that public they sought the justice of which at home they had been ruthlessly deprived. They must therefore make their position plain and intelligible to those to whom they appealed. Hence they yielded so far to the schooling of events as, for literary purposes at any rate, to pay some heed to the lesson of Hungary. Precisely similar in its motive was the adoption of the term in England; first, so far as is known, by Henry Hedworth in obscure pamphlets of 1672, and further (1687) in a publication which speedily became widely known,

"A Brief History of the Unitarians, called also Socinians"—the work of Stephen Nye, with a short addition by Hedworth. It was to furnish a rallying point for existing adherents and present a standard for anticipated accessions that the Name was adopted in England, which in Hungary had stood since 1600 for a Religion, since 1638 for a Church.

In the march of the world three centuries cover no great stretch of time, yet in the history of a movement they mean much, and may not unreasonably be interpreted as an augury of endurance. It was indeed a great thing to go into exile for conscience and for truth. It was something greater to stand so firm in the tenacity of purpose and the comradeship of faith as to impress even unfriendly powers with the conviction that here was a people whose mind was clearly made up to stay, to speak, to live and grow.

Gregory Pauli may have been justified in his millennial vision, though overhasty in his chronological surmise and fanciful in his colouring of the spiritual prospect. The millennium may in truth be on its way, and in its advent be expected to eclipse, and by eclipsing sweep into oblivion, our tentative endeavours for the establishment of the true kingdom of the One True God. Meanwhile Pauli was certainly right in holding that this expectation should not damp but should rather stimulate the determination to be found, when

the triumph of our ideal brightens the sky, robustly active in its behoof, ready to welcome it with girded loins and with the responsive glow of our lighted lamps.

3 *October*, 1900.

EARLY NONCONFORMITY AND EDUCATION

III

EARLY NONCONFORMITY AND EDUCATION

FRANCIS Hutcheson, the future philosopher, when on the threshold of his career as an ethical writer and teacher, had a friendly discussion in 1726 with his neighbour—and almost namesake—Francis Hutchinson, Bishop of Down and Connor, the subject being the question of conformity. The Bishop thus laconically stated this question from his own point of view:—"We would not sweep the house clean, and you stumbled at straws." While the candour of the former half of this pronouncement has not always been imitated by episcopal advocates of Anglican claims, its latter half very well expresses the estimate of the Nonconformist conscience entertained by bishops, and by other persons, in the most modern times. Indeed something may be said for it; if we remember that, by Nonconformists themselves, the obstacles in the way of their conformity are often and characteristically described as "scruples." A scruple, when we go back to its original and literal meaning, is indeed a tiny matter, less bulky even than a straw.

Now it is the privilege and almost the prerogative of minutiæ, that to them belongs much and momentous significance. The analogy of the grain of sand that blinds the eye, the spark that fires the mine, the pinprick that entails death and destruction, forbids us—in spite of Alexander Pope—to think of any causes which breed real events as trifling. To dismiss niceties as petty, is to fail to understand life. Only by securing exactitude *in minimis* can the stern persistent resolve, nay, the uncompromising inappeasable strife, with which wise men toil after truth, reach and attain any kind of permanent satisfaction. If, then, the starting-point of Nonconformity be scruple, it must be added that the aim of Nonconformity is the complete adjustment of thoughts to things, of words to thoughts, of deeds to words. Are we not saying the same thing when we affirm, with emphasis, that the very life-blood of Nonconformity is Education ?

This was well understood by the authorities in Church and State, when from the passing of the Uniformity Act in 1662, they employed every effort in their power to debar Nonconformists from the exercise of the teaching profession, and to break up their schools. A bishop's licence was required in the case of every Teacher; the Teacher not so licensed was prosecuted, and subjected on conviction to fine and imprisonment. Had these prosecutions succeeded in their object, Nonconformity would have been strangled in its cradle. By hurried moves from place to place, Teachers sometimes managed to evade arrest, at least for a time. The prosecutions continued, even after the passing of the Toleration Act; and were not finally abandoned till (in 1734) proceedings against Doddridge were stopped by the personal order of George II.

In the earliest days of Ejected Nonconformity, the scope of its Teachers went no higher in secular learning than the curriculum of the grammar school. Of set purpose they abstained from trespass upon those branches in which the Universities then held a close monopoly. This self-restriction was due to conscientious scruples, raised in the minds of ejected graduates, by the terms of their graduation oath. As far back as the reign of Edward III, disputes in the older Universities had led to migrations of tutors and students, till at Stamford the attempt was made to establish a rival University. Hence the oath; which bound graduates not to lecture *tamquam in universitate* elsewhere than in Oxford or Cambridge. Many of the Ejected felt this oath as a conscientious bar to the exercise of their gifts in the higher learning. Calamy has preserved for us the elaborate arguments by which, after a time, Charles Morton, of Wadham College, Oxford, and Samuel Cradock, ex-fellow of Emmanuel, convinced themselves that the oath prohibited, and

was designed to prohibit, merely prelections in order to a degree; and that, since Nonconformists did not pretend to give degrees, or to qualify for them, the oath did not close their lips as teachers of university learning. They cited examples of conformists, including even a bishop, who had lectured in philosophy and divinity at their own abodes. These precedents, however, did not satisfy the consciences of all their brethren.

In the North of England the need for some further provision for the higher learning was acutely pressing. To supply a long-felt want Cromwell had founded a college at Durham in 1657; but at the Restoration Cromwell's patent was reckoned void, the endowments went back to the Church, the college collapsed. Among its tutors had been William Pell, eminent as an orientalist. His friends, after his ejection, repeatedly urged him to take up, as a volunteer, the tutorial work from which he had been excluded. Pell was one of those whose scruples could not be overcome. At length the work was begun in Yorkshire by Richard Frankland, of Christ's College, Cambridge, who, it seems, had been designed for some post at Durham College, had it continued. Him we must ever revere as the Founder in this country of the Nonconformist Academy.

Why Academy? The answer is interesting. In 1559 Calvin established at Geneva the first

European university not fortified by powers conveyed under a Papal Bull. For this reason, in all probability, the name *Universitas* was not adopted as its official description. Calvin gave it the style and title of Academia. *Universitas* and *Collegium*, though we distinguish between them in modern usage, are, in Latin, practically synonymous terms; they simply mean a corporation. *Accademia* was, and is, in use in Italy, as the designation of a literary club, perhaps because Cicero had employed it in a somewhat similar sense. There can, however, be no doubt that Calvin went back to the original associations of the term, recalling the scene where Plato taught in the suburbs of Athens, at "the olive grove of Academe" the Attic hero. There may be something in the suggestion that, in thus invoking Plato, as the ruling spirit of his new foundation, Calvin as a humanist intended to emphasize his breach with the Schoolmen and with Aristotle, their idol, though not, it must be confessed, their model.

Four years later the town council of the Scottish capital projected a seat of the higher learning on Calvin's lines. I am somewhat proud to think that my *Alma Mater* was the earliest University within the British Isles in whose establishment no Pope ever had a finger. Naturally, the Scottish hierarchy of that day put obstacles in the way, and the University did not obtain a royal charter

till 1582. Its official title still runs *Academia Jacobi VI Scotorum Regis Edinensis.*

Thus for our Nonconformist predecessors the name of Academy (or as they called it, and as John James Tayler always continued to call it, *dcdd̄my*) was suggestive of reminiscences congenial with their object and their spirit. They desired to keep alive in their land the solid substance of the best university learning. They did not profess to grant degrees; though, had they done so, one may suspect that a degree at Rathmell in the seventeenth century, or one at Daventry in the eighteenth, would have meant a good deal more than a contemporary degree either at Oxford or at Cambridge, if measured, not by its value for merely social purposes, but by its worth as an index of the intellectual stimulus promoted by careful and enlightened study.

Frankland set about his work at a time and in a spirit which may entitle him to be viewed as the rescuer of Nonconformity from destruction at the hands of the oppressor. He chose the moment when, by the provisions of the second Conventicle Act (the Act of 1670), the persistent Nonconformist preacher was laid under penalties meant to be ruinous—unless, indeed, he were a peer of the realm, as the Act set forth, with subtle and cruel irony. This Act it was which, so far from inclining Frankland to feel himself crushed,

roused him to action, drew him from the comfortable quiet of his private estate, and made him join for the first time the persecuted ranks of the "conventicle" preachers. He journeyed to London, gained audience of Charles II, and, with a faithfulness as severe as its utterance was dignified and impressive, went straight to the mark, calling upon the pleasure-loving king, in the name of the King of kings, to reform his life, his family, his kingdom, and the Church. Charles was well aware that he was listening to no Court-preacher; not only did the transparent earnestness and sincerity of the appeal succeed for the moment in touching him; he recognized in his reprover the man of culture and the gentleman, and his response was more marked than usual: "'I thank you, sir,' and twice looking back before he went into the Council Chamber, said, 'I thank you, sir; I thank you.'" Then Frankland returned to Rathmell, and the Northern Academy was opened. Partly in remembrance of its Tutor's ancient place of learning, it was also known as Christ's College, Rathmell. It was no clerical seminary, either in design or in fact. Its first student was a baronet's son, a young layman, bred an Episcopalian, though of the Puritan type, who went to Rathmell just as he would have gone to Oxford, to receive a learned education. For observe, while the Academy was Nonconformist, its *alumni* were not asked to commit

themselves, either actually or implicitly, to the Nonconformist position. Its *raison d'etre* lay in the fact that the older Universities were not open to Conformists and to Nonconformists alike. It would have been contradictory to its very principle of existence had it been closed to either party. "This securing of the key of knowledge," wrote Charles Morton in words which seem to have a very modern significance, "and tying it fast to some men's girdles, or making it too hot and heavy for others to touch on any terms, might well enough comport with popish designs, to keep people in the dark, that they may lead them the more quietly by the nose." To maintain an open door was vital to the very being of the old Nonconformist Academy. Some of Frankland's students were intended for the legal, others for the medical profession. Though Frankland himself was a Presbyterian, his early divinity students belonged to the Independent denomination. Not till the Academy had been conducted for two years did it receive any divinity students from Presbyterian families. For, until the Indulgence of 1672, the Presbyterians (with only a rare exception here and there) were not satisfied to fall in with the separating ways of the Independents. It is from 1672 (not from 1662) that Stillingfleet quite correctly dates "the Presbyterian Separation."

Frankland was never imprisoned; but prosecutions and excommunications (which then were no mere *brutum fulmen*) dogged him all his remaining days, and it was only by constant removals from corner to corner of Yorkshire and Lancashire that he was able to keep his Academy going during the whole of the eight-and-twenty years which intervened between its origination and his death. One hardly knows which most to admire—the unflinching tenacity of the middle-aged Teacher, or the brave young courage of the Students who followed him in his wanderings. In every year but one, the bitter year of 1685 (the year when Jeffreys tormented Baxter from the bench), new pupils came eagerly forward to freshen and increase the list of Frankland's scholars.

It was much against the grain with Frankland's diocesan, Sharp, Archbishop of York, that he felt driven to countenance proceedings against Frankland; for Sharp had close family connections with Nonconformists. His clergy besieged him with petitions to suppress the Academy. He resorted to Archbishop Tillotson for advice; and, with Tillotson, severity toward Nonconformists was still more against the grain, for he had been a Nonconformist himself. Tell him, he wrote, that it is not as a Nonconformist you proceed against him; that a bishop is bound by his oath not to license anybody to give public instruction in university learning; that will be

"the fairest and softest way of ridding your hands of this business." Sharp, however, found what he thought a fairer and softer way. He invited Frankland to Bishopthorpe, and in the library there they talked matters over, not without the soothing aid of a pipe of tobacco, and the gentle stimulus of a glass of good wine. Henceforth Sharp and Frankland understood one another. But prosecutions from other quarters did not cease.

Quickly was Frankland's example followed; and in a very few years Academies sprang up in all parts of the country. It is far from my intention to go into the history of these Nonconformist Academies; but I desire to direct your attention to some features of the earlier ones, those before Doddridge. I draw the line here for a very good reason. Doddridge initiated an important change in the Nonconformist Academy, amounting to a revolution. Before his time, following the practice of the older Universities, all lectures were in Latin, prayers were in Latin, and Latin was the customary speech during business hours within the Academy walls. English was only permitted on stated occasions, *e.g.*, always on Sunday evenings, when sermons were repeated. Indeed, the amount of linguistic facility which was exacted from ingenuous youth in those days may well surprise, if not shame, our modern backwardness. Thomas Hill,

of Findern Academy—who died in 1720—expected his students to sing their Psalms, not merely as rendered into Latin, but in Greek verse too. A Tutor of a yet severer stamp made his pupils sing them in the original Hebrew. The day for such heroic exercise is long gone.

Whether or no it was entirely for good, Doddridge changed all that; lecturing in English, as the appropriate vesture of a more modern Science, a more modern Philosophy, a more modern Theology. The three branches just enumerated were the main items of the curriculum, and formed the staple of the old Academy courses of instruction. Prominence was given to Philosophy; which constituted, indeed, the chief intellectual interest of an age when the older forms of thought were being supplanted by the influence of Descartes, and again of Locke. In none of these old Academies was Science neglected; and though it was the nascent Science of that age, it was pursued with a keen curiosity, and often with an apparatus as efficient as was then procurable. The weak point was the treatment—or non-treatment—of History, which rarely appears in the schemes of lectures, except under the denomination of Chronology, and this was largely Biblical. Sacred history was to some extent dealt with incidentally under the head of Jewish Antiquities, but ecclesiastical history was not touched, nor history of doctrine.

Another department, much cultivated in some of the later Academies, under the name of Belles-Lettres, was unrepresented in the earlier ones. At Oxford, it is true, the professor of Poetry used within living memory to lecture on English poets in the Latin tongue; but we can quite understand that, with Latin as the sole medium of class instruction, English literature would come off badly. At Rathmell, however, as we are told by one of the students—James Clegge, in his excellent gossiping Diary—"Mr. Frankland's daughters" supplied to some extent their father's deficiencies in this respect. They "led me," he says, "to read poetry and novels; and such like trash," he somewhat ungratefully adds.

It may perhaps be thought that, when the burden of the Academy work fell upon an individual, with the assistance of one (rarely two) of his senior pupils, the multitude of subjects was felt to be quite as much as could be reasonably accomplished, without taking in the additional departments above specified as not represented. This criticism would hardly be appropriate. For the topics treated in the Academy actually covered the whole range of needful knowledge as then realized. From the course, which extended over five years, nothing deemed desirable was deliberately omitted. The defects were partly the defects of the educational ideas of the time; but largely also due to the fact that a later time has

witnessed the rise of new knowledges. What real grasp of history, or of ecclesiastical history for that matter, had men's minds before Gibbon? As for not teaching history of doctrine, we might as well blame the old Academies for not teaching Geology.

This further we must remember, lest we suppose that the *alumni* were necessarily subjected to the disadvantages of a one-man system in all departments. As the Academies multiplied, it soon became apparent to students of quick parts, eager for the best instruction, that each had its specialty or specialties. One Tutor had a reputation for philosophy; another for science, and so on. The student bent on reaping in all the most profitable fields would migrate from Academy to Academy, to his own advantage, and also to that of his new associates. For he would bring with him something, as well as learn something that to him was fresh. To finish their studies abroad, or at a Scottish University, was no uncommon thing with Nonconformist students, whether lay or clerical.

There was another ground of choice, deciding the reputation of Academy and Academy, apart from the special qualifications and accomplishments of Tutors. That was the question of books. There were no Academy libraries in those days. Doddridge, I think, was the first to establish one. The pupils, however, had the free

run of their Tutor's often scanty shelves. A new arrival would tell of a better store under the roof of some other Tutor, and so tempt to a migration on this ground alone.

Thus, Thomas Emlyn left John Shuttlewood's Academy at Sulby, simply because Shuttlewood "had very few books, and them chiefly of one sort." It was, indeed, hardly likely that he should have many, or rejoice in a rich variety; for he was one of the hunted Tutors. He had seen the inside of a gaol at least four times; and Sulby was an obscure hamlet, in Northamptonshire, extra-parochial, where he kept his Academy in hiding, and held himself ready for a further flitting at a moment's notice. Eventually, Emlyn went back to Shuttlewood; for though he found more books at the Bodleian, he did not find what he felt he could gain from Shuttlewood himself.

John Chorlton, of the first Manchester Academy, had many books, yet, as Emlyn puts it, "chiefly of one sort." On the other hand in Manchester there was—and is, though few people seem to be fully aware of the fact—Chetham's Library. James Clegge, who became Chorlton's pupil after Frankland's death, tells us that he placed himself in Manchester for the benefit of this "library, and the conversation of other young scholars," who had previously benefited by it. Chorlton's students listened in the mornings to the exposition

of a sound Calvinistic theology. In the afternoons they helped themselves to the quartos of Episcopius, and the folios of Socinus and Crellius, with the result of broadening their outlook. Clegge, who was always what is called "moderately orthodox," very significantly remarks: "The writings of Socinus and his followers made little impression on me; only I could never after be entirely reconciled to the common doctrine of the Trinity." He became a Clarkean in this respect. Then he goes on: "I admired the clear and strong reasoning of Episcopius; and, after that, could never well relish the doctrines of rigid Calvinism." It is safe to say, that among the liberalising influences which have acted upon Lancashire Nonconformity, the Chetham's Library, during the thirteen years of the life of the first Manchester Academy (1699-1712), is entitled to no mean place.

It is not to be supposed that the teaching of the old Academies was in all cases consciously one-sided. This is true of some of them, but (if we except Attercliffe, where Mathematics was tabooed as "tending to scepticism") it was not true of the best. Choice of systems was freely allowed, perhaps more freely in Philosophy than in Theology. In Frankland's Academy, we read "one Tutor was a Ramist," but Aristotle and Ramus were permitted to rival each other in their attractions for the studious mind. At Taunton,

Frankland's contemporary, Matthew Warren (as one of his students, who was afterwards a Tutor, tells us), "though bred himself in the old philosophy, and little acquainted with the improvements of the new, yet encouraged his pupils in a freedom of inquiry, and in reading those books which would better gratify a love of truth and knowledge, even when they differed widely from those writers on whom he had formed his own sentiments." When we recollect how deeply the theology of that age was rooted in its philosophy, we can appreciate the necessarily liberalising effect of this procedure. Of Warren, too, we read (and this is true of all the best of the earlier Tutors) that he "encouraged the free and critical study of the Scriptures, as the best system of theology." Perhaps to-day we should be inclined to add: best, because least systematic.

One other and kindred feature of the old Academies must not be passed over; that is to say, the fostering of freedom of discussion among the students themselves. Of course, the most conspicuous example of this is to be found at Daventry, at a later date, but, in truth, the freedom of the students' discussions began with Frankland. Every evening, after supper, their English tongues were loosed; the day's work was passed in review; they were invited to canvass it freely among themselves, not hampered by any Tutor's presence.

It may be said, and has been said, that this large liberty of discussing topics, forming opinions, and speaking them out, led to a sort of unrestraint, injurious to the Nonconformist temper and training. This was the burden of the frequent attacks upon the Academies in the early part of the eighteenth century. They were represented as hotbeds of faction and revolution, political and religious. Especially was this charge brought against the London Academies, and made an argument, even in Parliament, for their suppression. So far as it is based on any truth, it applies to London only. I think I have studied all the evidence on the subject; and it is true that behind their Tutors' backs the *alumni* of rival Academies lampooned each other; that those of Independent Academies held calves' head feasts under the rose on January 30th, and were not too respectful to the memory of the Royal Martyr and his anointed offspring; and that religious opponents, whose weapon had been persecution, were made the subject of disparaging remarks, more pointed than polished, after the rough humour of those days. It is equally true that, had these dangerous youths not been Nonconformists, no charge of really serious import would or could have been founded on such unauthorized effervescences of boyish spleen and displays of rude juvenile wit. The discipline within the Academies was surprisingly good; the

charges here mentioned would not be worth referring to, save as an indication of the atmosphere of the time, and of the eagerness with which the enemies of Nonconformity sought an excuse for ignoring and suppressing its invaluable services.

The immediate work of the Nonconformist Academies was to fit and equip men for public duty, not in the ministry alone, but in all the professions; it was to make them thinkers—not closing their minds with fixed opinions, but opening their intelligences, and giving them an impetus towards the acquirement of further knowledge; it was to make them workers for the good of their kind, to train them for the application of knowledge in all the departments of life. Far more was this their aim than to make Nonconformists. They had to deal primarily with a class of people, Nonconformist already, expelled from the unity of the nation into Nonconformity; and they made it their task to develop in that class the powers of thought and powers of life which would qualify them to fill their places in the work of their country; to do their part in forming its future, to take their share in building up on sound principles its prosperity, to advance its culture, and to ensure its progress. Small wonder that many who were not Nonconformists were ready to avail themselves of an education thus conceived and thus pursued. Nor need we grudge

that infusion of new blood into the older institution of religion, for which the Anglican Church stands indebted to able and conspicuous men, made what they were, in the obscurity of the Nonconformist Academy. It was not Oxford, it was Tewkesbury, that nurtured the mind of Butler.

In addition to its immediate work, the Nonconformist Academy rendered a service of the first importance to the education of England. The founders of the old Academies were (to quote Charles Morton again) "willing to have knowledge increased, and not confined to the clergy or learned professions, but extended or diffused, as much as might be, to the people in general." They taught the teachers. The ministers of the old Nonconformity, not merely in some cases, but as a general rule—almost as a part of their recognized duty—were the educators in their several neighbourhoods. To their schools, simply because they were good schools, where real teaching was done, came pupils from outside their own flocks. They did not increase their congregations by their school-keeping, it is said. Quite so; but that is not the point. The point is that, up and down the country, they were the great spreaders of an education, serviceable to the people, and not otherwise supplied. Up to a time which many of us can remember, this function of the liberal Nonconformist minister,

the cultured *alumnus* of the Nonconformist Academy, was not merely a tradition, but a reality. Your own recollection will furnish many an instance of men, never in any sense associated with Nonconformity by religious connection, but owing to Nonconformist scholarship an initial education, conducted for education's sake, and not for a sect's sake.

We cannot easily over-estimate either the actual good thus done, or the force and value of its example. The conditions of our public education are now entirely changed, and changed, on the whole, doubtless, for the better. Let not the pioneers be forgotten. With an admirable modesty, Morton expressed the hope that the work done by him, and his like, might move "a noble emulation. A poor hackney," says he, "may put a racehorse upon his brisker career." The good work of the despised and shackled Nonconformist "may stir up to greater diligence and industry in the Universities." With the advent of greater diligence and industry, he thought that Nonconformists might be readmitted, at least to "some of the meaner Colleges and Halls." Then the goal of his desires would be in sight.

All this does but touch the fringe of a great subject: What Nonconformity has done for Education. Had that been the theme of this Address, its readers would reasonably have complained that whole sections of the answer to this

question had been left unnoticed. It has been treated simply at the upper end; and for a good reason. Later developments of the zeal of Nonconformists for the instruction of the people—their activity, for example, in their Sunday schools, indispensable nurseries of all useful knowledge, freely opened to the uninstructed masses during the major part of the century past—these and the like are familiar in most men's minds. The memory of man is short and fitful; and it is desirable to have refreshed in our imaginations the clear and patent fact that, in the art of Education and the love of Education, Nonconformists are no novices. From the very beginning of their history they have striven manfully in the sacred cause of the educational welfare of all classes in the land. For on their hearts was inscribed indelibly the motto which of old the Franklands bore: *Libera terra, liberque animus;* and thus they understood it: "'Tis no free country till the mind be free." On their work might fittingly be written that which was Cradock's chosen motto: *Nec ingratus nec inutilis videar vixisse.* By rendering services to their own generation, they have sought to approve themselves grateful to their teachers in the past.

In concluding, it may be allowable to quote Morton once more. I suppose this eminent Cornishman is better known in America than in England, though here he educated Defoe and the

father of the Wesleys. He became the first Vice-President of Harvard, and is honoured as one of its benefactors. Among his writings is an "Advice to Candidates for the Ministry," from which it may be worth while to cull a couple of brief sentences. His advice is often quaint enough, and even a little sarcastic, especially when it is of a negative character, setting forth what not to do. Thus, in giving some sermon hints, he deprecates what he is pleased to call "an impertinent filling up some interstitial time with an ill-favoured heap of superfluous words"—a practice which we must presume that Morton had encountered in America.

This, however, is the quotation from his "Advice," and it is both a wise and a kindly word of counsel from a Tutor of an older time. "I would not," says he, "have young men so personate Fathers, as to put on an affected gravity, or conceit to themselves greater authority than indeed they have; this would render them and their discourse more ridiculous than reverend. But yet they should, with a modest and humble seriousness and boldness, so address themselves to the consciences of men, that there may be perceived in them a hearty desire to do real service to God, and real good to men's souls." So speaks to-day, out of the past, one who made it his aim, both in the Old World and in the New, to imbue those whom he was training with a

high and true sense of their spiritual calling.

In the legal phraseology of ancient Rome, *duo faciunt collegium*. The sentiment is expanded in the wise saying of the old Book: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour; for, if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow. But woe unto him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up." By earnest and conscientious co-operation, Teachers and their Pupils, alike learners together, may expect from the Divine Hand a good reward for their labour, granted to their efforts and their prayers. If the Tutor droop or tremble, may the brighter hearts of those among whom and with whom he conducts the common studies, combine to help him up; it being the joint resolve of each and all, not merely to "prove his own work," but, in comradeship, in the spirit of united endeavour, to learn that great lesson of human service and sympathy, which teaches how, in every relation of life, to bear one another's burdens, "and so fulfil the law of Christ."

8 *October*, 1902.

THOMAS FIRMIN
UNITARIAN PHILANTHROPIST

THOMAS FIRMIN.—Born (Ipswich) June, 1632; Befriended Bidle, 1655; First provision of employment for the destitute, 1665; Governor of Christ's Hospital, 1673; Started factories for the poor, 1676; Issued the first Unitarian tract, 1687; Died (London) 20th December, 1697.

IV

THOMAS FIRMIN

UNITARIAN PHILANTHROPIST

IT is five o'clock on a Sunday evening in the latter half of King Charles the Second's reign, and the boys of Christ's Hospital, arrayed in their picturesque costume of long blue coat and bands, are filing in for their evening service and evening meal. They say their prayers, recite their catechism, sing an anthem, and then comes supper. Conspicuous in the scene is a little man, nimble and dapper, of complexion fair and bright, bustling about with an eager face, easily moved to smile or to frown. His pocket is filled with Scripture catechisms, in case any lad has lost his book, or any new boy needs one; in the corner of his fob lurks a silver sixpence, for the urchin who knows his lesson well. When the pudding-pies, one for each young man, are set upon the long tables, he scans them with a critical eye. Woe be to the cook if these appetising delicacies are not up to the mark in size and quality. He has been known to rush off to the kitchen with a diminutive specimen, expostulating on its defects,

and hardly to have been appeased when the scales proved that the viand, though small, was heavy.

This indomitable little personage, quick-witted and indefatigable, a boy among boys, a leader among men, friend everywhere of the friendless, is Thomas Firmin, known in one aspect of him as "almoner-general for the poor"; in another, as "curator of the Unitarian religion"; and, moreover, if I may quote the character given him by the biographer of a nonjuring saint, "a gentleman of universal goodwill." Pepys the diarist, in a remarkable letter to the Lord Mayor, declares that Firmin's "good works have been too many and too conspicuous not to have covered errors of a much greater magnitude than any I hear him charged with." "I am satisfied," writes a contemporary, "that he might, perhaps, have been a better believer; but he could not have been a better man." Till he had become an old man (eighty-three) John Wesley does not appear to have read any account of Firmin's life. When he had done so, "I was exceedingly struck," says he, "having long settled it in my mind that the entertaining wrong notions of the Trinity was inconsistent with true piety. But I cannot argue against matter of fact; I dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous."

It is the object of this Address to induce some

contemplation of the spirit which was characteristic of the pioneers in the seventeenth century of the movement known as English Unitarianism, with the specific purpose of exhibiting the intimate connection of two closely associated lines of their activity. These men of the past, of whose worth we are content to form, perhaps, a rather vague estimate, were interested in theology, and were equally interested in philanthropy. Their work lay in both directions. They were interested in clearing and improving the ideas of men on two great subjects, and I believe that they were in no small degree successful in purifying and enlightening public opinion on these topics. They themselves would have reckoned lightly of any success won simply in the world of thought and the realm of speculation. They were practical men. Their aim was, while rendering all homage to theology as a science, to go further than this: to find in it elements of life, as well as materials for thought; in short, to apply its data to the suggestion and the maintenance of a better kind of religion. Not less, but more religious were they than others around them; and this, on the confession of their contemporaries, who marvelled at the paradox. While recognizing, and endeavouring to discharge, the universally admitted duty of ministering to human needs, it was their further aim to discover right methods of helpful service·

methods tending to improve the conditions of human life, and lift society on to a higher level. Above all, they sought to introduce into the sphere of religion, as into the sphere of common life, a broadened and a softened spirit; being convinced that the word and the example of the Founder of Christianity were not meant to be buried in the Bible, but were really worth trying in the England of the seventeenth century, and would reward the trial. So much by way of preamble. Now to disinter some of the facts.

In the year 1635 a Puritan divine of Ipswich, Samuel Ward, was in the clutches of the High Commission Court for reviling the Book of Sports, and for affirming (with a suspected reference to the designs of Archbishop Laud) that "the Church of England was ready to bring changes in religion." It was possibly in a hope of mending his own position with the authorities that, in the same year, Ward placed two of his parishioners within the tender mercies of the same court, for certain "erroneous tenetts by them held and divulged." Though not specified, I conceive there can be little doubt that the incriminated tenets were those of "the queasie stomacked Brownists" (as Ward styles them), the precursors of Independency. One of these erring Ipswich parishioners was Henry Firmin, who, after suffering imprisonment, making renunciation, and paying costs, was set free to return

home to his wife Prudence, and his little son Thomas, then but three years old.

Henry and Prudence reared their boy in a good stiff type of Calvinism, the Calvinism of Dort, with its five bristling points of Dutch orthodoxy, directed against the inroads of Arminian novelty. In due time they sent him to London to get his living, apprenticing him to a mercer, who in religion was a member of the Independent Church, organized by John Goodwin, at St. Stephen's, Coleman Street. Young Firmin's education was slight; but, like nearly every good Puritan, he could write shorthand; and perhaps this influenced his ordinary spelling, which, to the end of his days, was as original as Sir Isaac Pitman's, though not so uniform. In his autograph will he adopts the spelling "leagesies," an original orthography which suggests an original pronunciation. Pen in hand, inkhorn at his breast, our prentice took down John Goodwin's sermons.

Now Goodwin, a republican in politics, was in religion one of the broadest minded men of his time. Anticipating George Fox, he maintains that the Word of God "was extant in the world, nay, in the hearts and consciences of men, before there was any copy of the Word extant in writing." Without the letter of the Gospel, he argues, heathens may be saved. Discarding the distinction of Jeremy Taylor, who pleaded for the

toleration only of those whose errors were not fundamental, he affirms that error even on fundamental points may be innocent. Toleration he bases on the difficulty of arriving at truth; and bids men "call more for light, and less for fire, from heaven." Even a denial of the Trinity he will not treat as a "damnable heresy," for orthodoxy is a doctrine of inference. One who is fond of Goodwin will often open one of his dusky brown quartos, simply for the pleasure of gazing upon his luminous old sagacious face; his clear-cut features, delicate and manly; his high forehead, and higher skullcap; and the fingers of his right hand, seizing a fine point and pinching it firmly. A wrathful contemporary (George Walker) does not hesitate to call him "Socinian John"; which simply means that he could not answer him. Goodwin himself claimed to be a Calvinist; but his Calvinism was of the immature type, before Holland had improved upon Geneva. Unhandsome critics have been known to put the difference thus. Calvin, they say, devised a way by which no more than ten in a hundred would be saved; the Dutch divines, by patient industry, discovered a method of damning nine of these ten. Most people thought that between Goodwin and Arminianism there was only very thin ice. Firmin, on the strength of the shorthand sermons, dropped into Arminianism directly. He adopted Goodwin's republicanism; simply, however, in

theory. Goodwin's width of heart, and breadth of spirit, took full possession of him; his attitude towards the whole question of religion was formed by Goodwin.

Meanwhile, in his master's shop he was learning his business. Customers called him "the sprite." He showed tact as well as quickness. His apprenticeship over, he set up for himself as a mercer, having a patrimony of £100 as capital. The date was apparently 1655: the place, Three Kings Court, Lombard Street. Of his purely business life it may suffice to say that, after twenty years' trade, he was worth £9,000 odd. Twenty years later he died worth about £3,300. According to the calculation of his nephew and partner, Jonathan James, his philanthropies had cost him upwards of £16,000.

Soon after setting up in business, Firmin made the acquaintance of a real "Socinian John," namely, John Bidle, who in 1652 had started in London an Independent Church, closed in 1654 in consequence of his antitrinitarian opinions. It is assumed that Firmin had attended this church; of this there is no evidence, and the idea seems improbable. It is stated also, on the authority of a relative, John Mapletoft, M.D. (1631-1721), but not at first hand, that, while yet an apprentice, he had interceded with Cromwell for Bidle's release from Newgate (prior to 1652), and had been met with this answer: "You curl-pate

boy, you, do you think I'll show favour to a man that denies his Saviour—and disturbs the Government?" Very neat; but this vein of humour is obviously not in the Cromwell strain. "Curlpate boy" may be a true fragment of Cromwellian speech, and doubtless the description would fit Firmin's looks even in his twenty-fourth year (1655). It was then, as his biographer distinctly tells us, that Firmin "happened on" Bidle, gave him hospitality, and on his banishment to Scilly, obtained from Cromwell, with the help of a friend, a yearly allowance for the banished man. For a short time, during that year, Bidle lived under Firmin's roof. It was long enough for his influence to tell decisively upon Firmin in two paramount directions.

First, then, Bidle taught Firmin "that the unity of God is a unity of Person as well as of Nature." This remained with Firmin a central point of conviction, through all the subsequent developments of his belief.

Secondly, from Bidle he learned to distrust the efficacy of mere almsgiving for the relief of the necessitous; but rather to make it his business to fathom the condition of the poor by personal investigation, and to reduce the causes of social distress by economic effort. Of this guiding principle, also, he laid firm hold, and shaped the main lines of his philanthropic course with full intelligence of its truth; though it must be confessed that, whenever he came close to individual cases, his heart insisted on having its own way, in triumphant rebellion against the dry logic of the situation. His critics sometimes found his charity as heretical as his theology. They counselled him to leave to their own punishment the undeserving poor, and the improvident debtors, who had rightly earned the straits and miseries of their conditions. "It would be a miserable world, indeed," replied Firmin, "if Divine Providence should act by that rule . . . should grant no help . . . to us, in those calamities that are the effects of our sins. . . . Do we dare to argue against the example set by Him, and . . . without which no man living may ask anything of God?" It is not every philanthropist that has a heart; and one would hardly have expected that a London tradesman, twice married, and with two families to provide for, would have spoken and acted thus directly as a knight-errant imbued with the compassions of the Most High.

Firmin's religious home was the parish church of St. Mary Woolnoth. The parish minister (1655-9) was Samuel Jacombe; and with Jacombe began that succession of intimacies with London clergy which formed so remarkable an element, both in his private life and his public influence. From the very beginning of his housekeeping, he rarely dined without ministers at his table. The

conversation of the dinner-hour was Firmin's opportunity for informing his mind on the current topics of the theological world of his time, for he was no reader. The learned divines, whom he welcomed to his board, attacked his theological opinions without mercy. They found him immovable, but always willing to listen, always ready with a reply; and the battle of argument did but make them better friends, for Firmin was, as the redoubtable Daniel Burgess observes, "complaisant and sweet even to such as detest and oppose his heresy." Queen Mary at one time took an interest in his conversion, and bade Tillotson "Set Mr. Firmin right." "I have often endeavoured it," was all the Archbishop could say. There was scarcely a divine of note whom he did not know. His closer intimacies, as we should expect, were with the men of latitude, the broad churchmen of the day, men of the Cambridge school, such as Whichcote, Worthington, Wilkins, Fowler.

When the Restoration came, Firmin was on the side of conformity, perhaps naturally. I do not doubt that he would have wished the terms of conformity to have been made easier. Nonconformity, broadly speaking (there were, of course, exceptions among the Baptists, and a few among the Independents), was not prepared to tolerate Arminianism, much less Socinianism. In the Establishment no questions were asked of the

laity; neither at the font nor in the sick-room was the parishioner asked to pledge himself to anything beyond the Apostles' Creed, which Firmin always endorsed. That Fowler, after refusing conformity, ultimately conformed, was probably due to Firmin. That Tillotson, originally a Nonconformist, took the same course, was not improbably a result of the same influence. These surmises may be drawn from the exceedingly confidential relations which Firmin maintained with Tillotson, and scarcely less with Fowler, in spite of their differences of opinion. When Tillotson became Dean of Canterbury (1672), he frequently needed substitutes to take his place as Tuesday Lecturer at St. Lawrence Jewry. He "generally left it to Mr. Firmin to provide them," knowing that he would send acceptable preachers and that his freedom of opinion did not bias his judgment of men. As his friends rose to positions of dignity in the Establishment, it was a recognised thing that, by their means, he helped young clergymen to preferment. It was not their theology that recommended them to his good offices, but their religion and their personal worth.

There was, indeed, a species of Nonconformity in which Arminianism found a home, while much of the technical language of Trinitarianism was discarded. For a moment it seemed as though Firmin might have been drawn toward the Society

of Friends. This was in 1668, the year of the publication of William Penn's "Sandy Foundation Shaken." With this book Firmin, it seems was "wonderfully taken," and "fell into great intimacy" with its author. In the following year he "broke all bonds of friendship" with him. He thought Penn had not stood to his colours; his "apology" of 1669 was indistinguishable from a retractation. Such, at least, was Firmin's opinion; nor did he hesitate to express it; a fact which accounts for the disparaging terms in which Penn (in 1672) alludes to Firmin as a "little great" man and a "pragmatical" person, "all tongue and no ear."

Among the ejected of 1662 was one who found his way to Firmin's hospitable board, with good results both to host and guest. To look at the portrait of Thomas Gouge, the ejected vicar of St. Sepulchre's, is to be always reminded of John Hamilton Thom. Not that there is much facial resemblance, but there is the same unmistakable stamp of serene benignity, joined with a majesty of bearing, which marks a nature that seems to have come among men from a loftier height. Gouge was shy of Firmin at first, till he found that, in matters of practical Christianity, the heretical mercer was willing both to learn from him and to aid him. Having a large and poor parish, and alive to the evils of indiscriminate almsgiving, Gouge had maintained, up to the date

of his ejection, a local industry of flax and hemp spinning. This had furnished employment, though it had involved him in loss. The scheme supplied to Firmin a model for the larger industrial enterprises to which he ultimately devoted the largest share of his energies and his resources. Thus Gouge completed for Firmin the education in philanthropy which Bidle had begun; giving him a clue to the working method by which he was to attempt to realize the ideal which Bidle had raised before his mind. Firmin did something to discharge the debt. When Gouge, silenced in England, turned his thoughts to the evangelization of Wales, and to the circulation of Bibles and religious books in the Welsh tongue, Firmin found money for the project; interested Tillotson and Whichcote in the plan (which was, we may say, the first public platform of united religious and educational work in which Anglicans and Nonconformists found it possible to co-operate); acted as treasurer for the book fund; and, after Gouge's death, continued zealously to discharge the trust bequeathed to him. Nor must the point be omitted that from Gouge, a lover of children, Firmin derived his warm interest in Christ's Hospital, which, indeed, he remodelled, and did much to rebuild.

Gouge was Firmin's senior by twenty-three years. It was to a younger clergyman that Firmin owed the development of his theological

ideas and the materials for his theological propaganda. Stephen Nye was Firmin's junior by sixteen years. By his father's side he was grandson of Philip Nye, the well-known Independent leader, Philip of the "thanksgiving beard," the same who, dispatched into Scotland as a commissioner for framing a Covenant for the three kingdoms, astounded the elect of Auld Reekie by preaching in the Tron Kirk "from a paper book" and, taking for his topic "a spiritual life," based it on "a knowledge of God as God, without the Scripture, without grace, without Christ." By his mother's side Stephen Nye was grandson of Stephen Marshall, the greatest pulpit orator of the Commonwealth Presbyterianism; whose rolling eyes and "shackling" gait made him but an uncouth figure in private, but whose fervid eloquence constituted him a political force of the first magnitude from the opening of the Long Parliament to the close of the Civil War. Thus mixed in blood, Stephen Nye found his vocation in a heretical conformity. He was rector of a Hertfordshire parish (Little Hormead) having fewer than a hundred inhabitants, and possessing one of the tiniest churches in England. In what year he became acquainted with Firmin has not been disclosed, but it was some time after our friend had been fairly launched on his career of public philanthropy.

Nye approached Firmin with thorough sym-

pathy as regards the central doctrine of the Unipersonality of God. He found, however, that Firmin held with Bidle (and with John Milton) a doctrine of the Divine Personality curiously rigid in its adherence to the letter of that picture speech which is familiar to us in the older Scripture. According to this reading of symbol, the Almighty exists in an organized body corresponding to the human frame. Hence there is no literal omnipresence of the Divine Being, who views the world from afar, and rules the universe by delegated agencies, carrying out his will. This theory the two friends discussed, both by discourse and by letter. Firmin had an able coadjutor (Henry Hedworth) a Bidellian like himself. Nye convinced both of them that the spirituality of the Divine Being is absolute, bringing them to confess the actual omnipresence of the all-pervading Spirit. There followed a total change in Firmin's adjustment of the theological problem of Christ's relation to God. Hitherto he had held a Trinity which was a triad of unequals; there was the Father, the Most High God, the only true God, God by inherent right; there were our Lord and the Holy Ghost, minor Gods by delegation. Now he embraced under Nye's tuition the doctrine of indwelling. The Father and the Holy Spirit became to him synonymous expressions. He still thought it right, because Scriptural, to apply to Christ the title of God, as the Man in whom

pre-eminently the Godhead dwells, and in whom the divinity, discoverable throughout the universe by those who have eyes to see, is exhibited in an unmistakable manifestation.

Moulded in his ideas, as we have seen, by the impress communicated to him by a few influential minds (Goodwin, Bidle, Gouge, Nye), Firmin was drawn into action by the salient events of his time. His philanthropy first took large shape in 1665, on occasion of the trade disorganization induced by the Great Plague. He provided employment in making up clothing, for hands thrown out of work. It was the only one of his enterprises by which he suffered no pecuniary loss. Next year his premises were burned in the Great Fire. He at once got temporary accommodation; drove a great trade while others were bemoaning their losses, and soon rebuilt.

Ten years later (1676) he gave the sole management of his private business into the hands of his nephew and partner, Jonathan James, and opened premises in Little Britain for the employment of the poor in the linen manufacture. He had 1,700 spinners, with flax dressers, weavers, etc., in proportion. In the matter of actual wage, he would never go above the current rate; but at normal wage it took sixteen hours' work to earn sixpence. Philip II, had long before established in Catholic Spain the eight hours day, but it had not yet reached Protestant England. Firmin, therefore,

gave all sorts of bonuses, in coal or in coin, to good workers; and sometimes to indifferent ones. His arrangements for the comfort and cleanliness of his hands, and for the industrial training of children rescued from the streets, were admirable. The scheme never paid its way, and the annual loss tended to increase. He invoked the aid of the Press, in the vain hope of getting the Corporation of London to take up the matter as a civic enterprise. In 1690 the patentees of the Linen Company took over the scheme; Firmin was to be managing director at £100 a year, but he was never paid, and soon the whole burden was again transferred to his shoulders. Sooner than dismiss any of his hands, he put down his coach, the coach which conveyed him to his beloved garden out at Hoxton. So the work went on till he died.

Similarly he started a woollen factory in Artillery Lane; but this description of handicraft proved too difficult for his waifs and strays. Meanwhile he was visiting prisons, on the track, not unfrequently, of his missing hands. The release of debtors, the amelioration of the barbarous conditions of prison life, the prosecution of inhuman officials, occupied much of his time. No call of distress from any quarter reached him unheeded. He did not employ exclusively his own money. He was a most admirable and pertinacious beggar. Likely people he would assess at so much, say, £100 at a time. It was not his

plan to tease them, but to watch the right moment, when his victim was in fit humour, and then strike home. Many thousands of pounds, to be reckoned in hundreds rather than tens, passed through his hands. Scarcely was there a public work of charity whose projectors did not look to Firmin as collector, treasurer, distributor of the funds. According to his methodical plan, to every donor he sent a minute account, copied out of his books, detailing the application of each man's bounty, with names, addresses, and particulars. His contributors, tired of the details, said they could trust him absolutely, and wanted no vouchers. It is characteristic of the society of his time that he raised little sums for relieving the poor by insisting on the statutable fines for profane swearing. An ordinary person he charged five shillings, according to the Act; but if a nobleman swore, or if a clergyman swore, he charged a double and a treble penalty. They sometimes kicked. "Very well," quoth Firmin, "I shall put your name in my list of 'Incorrigible Swearers,' and I shall not speak to you again." That bled them.

A glance must suffice at a few of his more conspicuous beneficences, leaving untold the multitude of details, and the touching narratives of his personal kindness to individuals. In 1662 he had raised money, partly by collections in churches, for the exiled antitrinitarians of

Poland. When, in 1681, the Polish Calvinists met the same fate which they had rejoiced to see inflicted on their heretical countrymen, Firmin was foremost in efforts for their relief. He was a good patriot, as regards English manufactures, strenuously opposing the importation of French silks. Yet when, in 1680, the Protestant refugees came over from France, he was the first to assist them to set up their trade in Spitalfields, and in his native Ipswich.

When the conservative Anglicans refused the oaths to William of Orange, Firmin remonstrated with one of them, Robert Frampton, Bishop of Gloucester. "My lord," said he, "I hope you will not be a Nonconformist now in your old age." Frampton was nettled by the term Nonconformist. It made him wince, as modern Anglicans winced when Leo XIII, in his prayer to the Virgin, called them his "dissenting brethren." He gruffly replied that he was getting old, no doubt, but not old enough "to be upbraided with Nonconformity by you, that are a Nonconformist to all Christendom, besides a few lousy sectaries in Poland." Firmin administered the retort Christian by starting a fund for the relief of the deprived Nonjurors. It was the only one of his plans which the Government interfered with and stopped.

His exertions for the relief of the Irish Protestants, rendered destitute by the miseries of

the civil war of 1688-91, were acknowledged in a manner which is probably without parallel. In October, 1692, John Vesey, Archbishop of Tuam, and seven other Irish bishops (one of them, Wetenhall, a liberal in theology), sent him a letter of thanks under their hands. They just allude to his opinions, with some episcopal unction: "We doubt not that you and they [the other contributors] have the earnest of your reward in the peace of your minds, which we pray God to fill with His comforts and illuminate with His truths; making His grace to abound in them who have abounded in their charity to others." An Irish dean addressed to "this God-like man" a long string of grateful verses, of which the sentiment is much more melodious than the refrain. He exclaims:

> Who'll then call that faith bad, that does so well?
> Without works to believe, belongs to hell.
> * * * * *
> Goodness attempers all, in man and Maker,
> And may, for aught I know, e'en save a Quaker.

The occasion of Firmin's first resort to the Press in behalf of his theological convictions, was furnished by the arbitrary dispensations of James II. Our friend was far too good a lover of his country to fall in with the pretensions of a Stuart to dispense with the constitutional safeguard of English freedom. Indeed, for the first time in his life, he came out as a politician, against

the measures of the court, and was deprived for a time of his governorship of Christ's Hospital in consequence. Liberty is liberty, however fleeting its foundation; and when James's Declaration for unrestricted liberty of conscience came out in 1687, Firmin saw his chance, and availed himself of the immediate opportunity. For the first time in English history, heretics of all kinds were promised free play. Up to this date, no anti-trinitarian book had ever been published with impunity; now, for the moment, the Press lay open. Again, I think, Firmin took a hint from Gouge. Might not the Gospel be recommended through the Press, as well in a Unitarian garb as in a Welsh one? At any rate it seemed worth while to make the experiment. Firmin resolved upon the circulation of Unitarian literature. It was part of his philanthropy to do so. He thought it would be good for men. He got Nye to write "A Brief History of the Unitarians, called also Socinians," which, in fact, is little of a history, but clear and powerful as an argument. He printed it in 1687, in a tiny octavo.

The name Unitarian, which Bidle had probably never heard, certainly had never used, and which first appears in an obscure pamphlet of 1672, was introduced by this little book as a generous term, of a very broad and most ungrudging hospitality; a term of union and of comprehension. It was recommended as a roomy

name. There was room in it for the votaries of Bidle, room in it for the disciples of Nye, room in it for the Arians, room for the Sabellians. All these, and others (who with whatever differences, and with whatever peculiarities, concurred in the one great central conviction that Almighty God is in Person, as in Nature, one and undivided) were invited to make common cause for this paramount truth, and to take the Unitarian name as the symbol of their religious fellowship. Firmin did not expect to reconcile Christians with non-Christians by the magic of a name. What he did anticipate was, that by relieving Christianity of the encroachments of Trinitarian dogma, a way would be opened which would facilitate the entrance of the Jew, the Muhammadan, and the "wise heathen," into the pure faith of Christ.

In 1689 came the Toleration Act, excluding a Nonconformist from toleration if he preached or wrote against the Trinity. Neither Firmin nor Nye was a Nonconformist, and though, doubtless, there was the common law as well as the canon law, yet till 1698 there was no statute, enabling you to deal with an Anglican utterance against the Trinity. So Nye went on writing, anonymously, I grant; and Firmin went on printing, and made no secret of it. A graceless antagonist, Luke Milbourne, one of the only two men who vented calumnies about Firmin (Daniel Burgess being the other), speaks of him as "the Socinians' hawker to disperse their newfangled divinity." Between 1691 and 1697 were issued, chiefly at his expense, a uniform series of Unitarian tracts, already filling by 1695 three squat quarto volumes, printed closely in rather small type, with double columns, not particularly comfortable to read, but worth reading, well worth reading, to this day. Subsequent volumes include tracts, some collected, others issued, after Firmin's death.

These "double columned tracts," as the wits styled them, were by no means all of them expressive of Firmin's own opinions. He reprinted in them the works of Bidle, and did not refuse place to an Arian tract, if it were well done, and seemed to be a valuable contribution to the theological discussions of the time. "I don't remember ever to have met with any person," writes John Toland, the Irish Deist, "who spoke with such disinterestedness and impartiality of our various sects in religion, except Thomas Firmin, whose charity was as much extended to men of different opinions as it was to the poor of all sorts in good works."

The immunity enjoyed by these anonymous prints was certainly remarkable, and perhaps (though, of course, they were not licensed) there is something in the suggestion of William Penn, that Firmin's dinner-table helped him to stand well with "the licensary chaplains." While

Firmin's tracts were "openly sold by the booksellers," there were two prosecutions for issuing pamphlets of similar matter and appearance. That of William Freke (1693) was provoked by the temerity of the pamphleteer. Freke had posted one of his pieces to every member of both Houses of the Legislature. Parliament voted the tract an "infamous libel," burned it by the hangman, and brought its author to trial and punishment. That of John Smith (1695) was a prosecution in the Spiritual Court, due apparently to the "unusual confidence" with which the worthy clockmaker had put his name upon one of his tracts. When Freke and Smith wrote for Firmin, as they both did (anonymously), nobody touched them.

Towards the end of his life, Firmin began to have qualms about the practical effect of conformity on the part of Unitarians. He did not doubt that it was right in principle, but it was not working well. His working rule had been to take the Scriptural parts of the prayers and formularies, and interpret them as they are meant in Scripture, however they may have been understood by liturgical compilers. As for the non-Scriptural parts, the worshipper must put a good construction upon them, and read them in a Unitarian or Sabellian sense. Nye confirmed Firmin in the persuasion that this Unitarian sense was the true original meaning, and expressed the real mind and

intention of the Church, any other interpretation being a merely vulgar misconception. Hence he published (1697) a clever tract of Nye's composition, called "The Agreement of the Unitarians with the Catholick Church." There is no reason to doubt the perfect sincerity of the plea made in this tract; and its argument is certainly ingenious, if short of convincing. Moreover, it was incumbent on those who reprobated Firmin's plea for a Unitarian sense of the formularies, to tell him what their true sense was; here his critics were hopelessly at issue among themselves. This struck shrewd men like Pepys, who hinted pretty plainly that the real scandal was not Firmin's heterodoxy, but the inability of "our own doctors" to arrive at any accord in their pronouncements of the Church's doctrine.

Clear as he was that his own reading of the formularies was the just one, Firmin had come to perceive that the continual use of phrases in worship which, in their ordinary acceptation, were taken to imply a plurality in the Godhead, was, to say the least, a dangerous habit. The ritual language of Christendom, being everywhere associated with corrupt ideas, was but too likely to "paganize" the minds of men. He proposed, therefore, to form what he termed "Unitarian congregations"; in a different sense, however, from that which we now understand by the expression. They were to be societies of Unitar-

ian believers, whose business it should be to maintain the faith, and hold meetings for a worship couched in unambiguous forms; yet not as separatists from the Church, but as "Fraternities in the Church." The plan was never tried. Firmin's death intervened. Nor was any endeavour to establish a distinctively Unitarian worship permanently successful, till the secession of Lindsey from the Establishment in 1773 induced a fresh conviction at once of Unitarian duty and of Unitarian possibilities.

The question may arise, To what purpose this rattling of the bones of dead men? A valid answer may be found in the suggestion that they are not entirely dead. Among real and living forces may be counted the impulse and the vitality of their example. They shine as a glorious group of men; even to those who are by no means blind to their limitations, or unaware of their defects. Some things, indeed, they have done, and well done; others they have made more possible to be done by their successors. They have left plenty of work behind them, labour of thought, and toil of life. It may be that, in some moments of slack resolve and self-distrust and weakening purpose and flagging endeavour, their memories may confront us with the steady, if silent, plea: "Quit you like men, be strong." It may be that the thought of forerunners may make us glad to gird our loins with a closer

faithfulness for our own race. It may be that, when our course is ended, those whose images have encouraged us, may prove the angels to welcome us. So may we echo the last words of Firmin, when he took affectionate leave of his old friend Fowler, then Bishop of Gloucester, who "did not doubt but his works would follow him." "I trust," said the dying man, "that God will not condemn me to worse company in the other world than I have loved, and delighted in, in this."

6 *October*, 1896.

THE STORY OF SALTERS' HALL

V

THE STORY OF SALTERS' HALL

LET us go back to the year 1719, four years after the first of the rebellions which were intended to replace the Stuarts in the stead of the Hanoverians upon the throne of this country. In the year 1719 two things happened which have had results. One was the publication of "Robinson Crusoe," by Daniel Defoe. If you have read "Robinson Crusoe," in full, you will perhaps remember that the book contains one of the most remarkable endeavours to present Christianity to the heathen, with a full perception of the difficulties which Christianity would offer to the heathen and untaught mind; and, also, that it contains—wonderful to say, in that age, and from such a writer as Defoe, himself a strong Calvinist in his religious views—one of the most sympathetic presentations of the possibility of a *modus vivendi* in matters of religion between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. It is presented in the person of a Roman Catholic clergyman of the Order of St. Benedict, who explains his own views as regards the relation of his own Church and the Protestant Church, to the

conversion of the heathen. Observe that Defoe's writings were always didactic; he did not write "Robinson Crusoe" as a mere story of adventure; he meant it to point a moral, to have an ethical value, and intended it also to have a religious meaning.

Now while Defoe was thus preaching the value of Christianity in itself, whatever its special form, in contradistinction to a wild, untrained, untaught, savage state of mind outside the Christian pale; at this very time Dissenters, alike in London and in the West of England, were accentuating their differences, bringing these to the front rather than their points of agreement, and leading the way to a rift in their body. So far they had been included together in the body of Protestant Dissenters. That was their legal name, and that was their common standing. At Salters' Hall they came to a split. Our subject is the story of that split, with a view to estimate, if possible, its causes—its consequences may be left to speak for themselves. It is a somewhat complicated story, and some points of it may lead, perhaps, to tedium in narration.

To begin with, let us try to set clearly before our minds, and before our imaginations, if possible, three prominent figures. There is James Peirce, there is Thomas Bradbury, and there is John Shute, afterwards John Barrington Shute, and finally Viscount Barrington. All these three had

belonged to the same section of the Protestant Dissenting body; they were all Independents in the first instance. James Peirce and Thomas Bradbury were both of them members, in London, of Stepney Meeting. Still to be seen are the entries of their admissions. James Peirce was a ward of Matthew Mead, the Minister of Stepney Meeting; Bradbury was admitted somewhat later. Peirce was a Londoner, and Bradbury was a Yorkshireman.

James Peirce was, at that time, perhaps the most learned of the Dissenters, on several lines. He had gained for himself the position of being the champion of the Nonconformist cause against Conformity, by his "Vindication of the Dissenters" in reply to William Nicholls, the champion of the Anglican position. He had been minister at Cambridge, then at Newbury, and was now minister at Exeter.

Thomas Bradbury came to London from the North, and had filled some positions there; but in the North he had never met that recognition which he considered, and rightly considered, to be due to his remarkable talents. He was not a man of learning; he was, however, a man of humour, and of great popular ability. It had been his ambition to become the minister of the old Dissenting congregation in Newcastle-on-Tyne. He had been proposed as minister of the old congregation at Cross Street, Manchester. But

it was not until he came to London that he really found a sphere which was consonant with his own very just estimate of his striking abilities.

John Shute, of Hertfordshire birth, came of a family which had connexions with Exeter, and represented the political side of "the Dissenting interest." He was, of course, a Whig politician; and I am not sure that he was quite free from some of the peculiarities which attached to the Whig politician, both in his century, and in the century through part of which we all have passed. He was looked upon as the leading Parliamentary representative of Dissent; and, in such part as he took in the Salters' Hall matter, you must observe that he was actuated by political considerations. He desired to keep Dissenters at one, as a political force, as a force on behalf of the Hanoverian régime.

Now, in Peirce's "Vindication of the Dissenters" there is a chapter—in the original edition, 1710—in which he vindicates the absolute orthodoxy of Protestant Dissenters; and says that, whereas in the Established Church it was well known that there were Socinians, in the Protestant Dissenting body there were none. He pledges himself to the fact; and no doubt he is right, unless we except possibly some obscure Independent and some few Baptist Congregations. Certainly some of the latter could not even at that date, 1710, be regarded as strictly Trinitarian

in their orthodoxy, as we shall see later on. The second edition of his "Vindication"—the original was in Latin—was published in English in 1717; and in the second edition he omitted this chapter. Why did he do so? What had happened in the meantime?

A very important development had taken place in the meantime. In the year 1712 Dr. Samuel Clarke, who was the rector of St. James's, Piccadilly, otherwise St. James's, Westminster, published a work to which he gave the title, "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity." Many of those who read it said: Well, it may be Scripture, or it may not; it certainly is not the doctrine of the Trinity. That book exercised an extremely important influence. It created in the Church of England what we might call a school of theologians, who were known as "Clarkeans." They did not admit that they were unorthodox. Clarke himself was sometimes described as a semi-Arian; but at any rate he endeavoured, on Scripture ground and in Scripture terms, so to state the doctrine of the Trinity that, though it might not agree with the ancient creeds, it should nevertheless be seen to agree with the Word of God. His work, while thus it created an Anglican school, which lasted on until quite the end of the eighteenth century, was even more operative upon and among Dissenters. It was eagerly read by them. It was read by the young men in the

Dissenting Academies, who were going to form the ministry of the future. It made them pause and think. It turned their attention away from the old scholastic definitions of the Trinity, to the Biblical data on which the doctrine of the Trinity was founded. So it was that, in the intervening period between the publication of this book in 1712, and the publication of Peirce's second edition in 1717, it had become no longer possible for him to say that there were, among the Protestant Dissenters, no symptoms of unorthodoxy.

He might perhaps have repeated *literatim* what he had actually said; because the tendency was not to Socinianism at all. It was not to what we call, restricting the term to its most modern acceptation, Unitarianism. It was rather towards that which is usually referred to under the denomination of Arianism. That tendency had exhibited itself in 1717 in London, and it had earlier exhibited itself in Exeter. It had exhibited itself at Exeter in an Academy there; and I grieve to say (as there is a Baptist minister present) that the students found that, while they were not allowed to talk their heresies in the Academy, they were welcomed at the house of the Baptist minister in Exeter, and they might talk there as much heresy as they pleased. This was a safety valve for these young spirits.

Things in Exeter were becoming uneasy. There was one of the students—Hubert Stogdon by

name—who, as early as 1716 was let into the ministry on easier terms than had hitherto been possible. He was not so much questioned about the Shorter Catechism—then an invariable standard of Protestant Dissenting orthodoxy—as about the Bible itself; and he managed, by confining himself to Scripture terms, to satisfy his licensers, and so got his licence. By the year 1718 things had come almost to a crisis in Exeter. The Judge of Assize, whose name was Sir Robert Price, in charging the Jury, had referred to the spread of crime in the city. He had said that there was also a spirit of Arianism, and he thought there was some connexion between the two. Moreover, in Peirce's own pulpit a neighbouring divine, who thought the Atonement was in danger, had created impressions unfavourable to the orthodoxy of Peirce himself.

Before going further, we must try to lay before our minds the condition of things as regards Church government among Dissenters in Exeter. The situation was very peculiar, and very complicated. The first Dissenting congregation in Exeter was a French Huguenot Church, and one cannot help thinking that some French manners and customs had influenced the special state of affairs which prevailed in Exeter at that date. It is well known that, in France, Presbyterianism is so organized that, in any given city, however many congregations there may be, there is but

one Church Session (consistoire). That is to say, each congregation has not its own separate and independent eldership, but there is a joint eldership for the whole city. Recent discussions between persons of different views of theology in Paris, have shown how this arrangement gives to the general majority an absolute power over every single congregation.

Well now, in Exeter there were three meeting-houses, called Presbyterian—due stress is intended upon the word "called." Two of these had congregations duly organized, with two pastors apiece. In each of these two meeting-houses the two pastors preached alternately; one in the morning, the other in the evening. The four took in rotation the preaching in the third meeting-house, which had no pastor of its own. Then there was a self-elected body of thirteen. They are always called "the Thirteen," though in the lists of them I have never seen more than twelve names. The Thirteen acted very much as a finance committee. They had control of the financial administration; they collected stipends from all three meeting-houses, and apportioned them amongst the four ministers. They assumed, too, some of the powers which ordinarily belonged to the Eldership or Church Session. Then there were three smaller bodies, known as Proprietors, who owned the buildings; four Proprietors for each. They seem to have been more than

trustees; they are always spoken of as Proprietors; and it may be true that the buildings were, as used not infrequently to be the case in the older history of Dissent, proprietary chapels, not put in trust at all (partly for fear of the insecurity of Toleration) but belonging to certain persons who might devote them to such purposes as they pleased.

Further, the four ministers were members of what was known as the Exeter Assembly. It was in point of fact a Devon and Cornwall Assembly, but the Cornish element at this time was no more than a minimum. This Assembly was not a Presbyterian body, it was a council of ministers which contained Presbyterians and Independents; the only section of the Three Denominations which was absolutely non-represented, and practically excluded, was the Baptist section. Baptist principles were not in high favour in that part of the world at that time; indeed, they were not in high favour in Dissenting circles generally at that time. This clerical body had no jurisdiction; but this it could do. If any member were displeasing to the majority of the members, on any matter, it could say, "You had better not come here any more." It certainly did administer certain funds; but at that date this was a very minor matter. There were larger funds then administered by the Thirteen, than were administered by the Assembly.

In 1718, early in the year, a deputation of the Thirteen called upon Peirce and his colleagues, and asked them to preach on the Eternity of the Son of God. They did so; and the result was satisfactory. Later on in the same year, though Peirce's preaching was satisfactory at the time to his own people, the Assembly of Ministers wanted —I do not know whether it was satisfaction from Peirce—but at any rate they did want a more general satisfaction on this subject of the Trinity. Therefore, in the Assembly, in the month of September, it was proposed by one of the Exeter ministers, the youngest of them, John Lavington by name, who was supposed to be the most orthodox of the four, that each member of this Assembly should then and there make a declaration in regard to his views respecting the Trinity. They all did this except three: and Peirce was not one of the three, nor was any other Exeter minister. All the declarations but one—that of John Parr—were accepted; then Lavington moved that it be recorded, as "the general sense" of the Assembly, "that there is but one living and true God, and that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are the one God." This was accepted as "the general sense" of the Assembly.

The fact that the matter had been canvassed in the Assembly, and that the declarations had very considerably varied—Parr had merely quoted a Scripture text without comment—

re-excited the suspicion of the Thirteen. Lavington, they knew, was all right; so they did not go to him. They went to the other three ministers, and said, "We are not satisfied with a 'general sense,' we want to know what *your* sense is." Not getting what they wanted, the Thirteen wrote up to London, addressing themselves to five ministers, including the four lecturers at Salters' Hall. To be a lecturer in London was, among Dissenters, something like being an Archdeacon, or a Dean, or it might almost be a Bishop, in the Anglican communion. There were two of these lectureships. The Merchants' Lecture had been started as far back as 1672, and there was a split from it at Salters' Hall. The feeling was that the general tone of the Merchants' Lecture was in favour of Independency, whereas the general tone of the Salters' Hall lecture was in favour of the Presbyterian form of government. So the Thirteen sent to the Salters' Hall lecturers, among whom was Calamy, who had visited Exeter, and was probably then the most distinguished Nonconformist in London. These five London ministers, thus appealed to, put their heads together and decided not to touch the Exeter bother. They said, "You had better apply to ministers in your own neighbourhood, who know your own particular circumstances better than we can be expected to do." The Thirteen took the advice. They picked out seven West of England

divines, and sent to ask them what was the proper thing to do in the situation above described. They got an answer from these seven divines on the 4th of March, and the answer deserves to be remembered. It was to the effect that denial of the "true and proper divinity" of Christ is a disqualifying error, and therefore warrants congregations in withdrawing from their ministers. That was their position; they did not go further.

This was on the 4th of March. On the next day the Thirteen, armed with this opinion, approached the four ministers. Lavington satisfied them at once. John Withers, the senior minister, after some hesitation, said he would subscribe the Nicene Creed. John Hallett, the next in seniority, declined to give an answer. Peirce parried the question. The matter of the elements and conditions of Dissenting orthodoxy, he told them, was now under consideration in London; and therefore he did not wish to give any answer in this individual case until it was known what the general body, meeting at Salters' Hall, had to say about the matter at large. The Thirteen were not satisfied. "Salters' Hall!" said they, "why, we understand that into that conference Baptists are admitted. We are not going to listen to the advice or decision of any body of ministers including Baptists." Peirce by this time had got his back up, and he said he would not subscribe or make answer to anything

that was not in Scripture. "If you ask me whether three and two make five," said he, "I will give you no answer, because it is not in the Bible"—a rather foolish utterance, but that was the ground on which he took his stand. Next day the four Proprietors of James's Meeting stepped in and shut him out of his pulpit, and Hallett with him. They were allowed on the following Sunday to preach at the third, the Little Meeting, by the Proprietors thereof; but on the 10th of March the three groups of Proprietors had a meeting together, and, "without consulting the people," refused to allow either of the recalcitrant divines to preach again in any of the three meeting-houses. Accordingly on the 15th of March they started a new (Mint) meeting-house of their own; and that was the Exeter split.

Meanwhile many things had been going on in London, as Peirce was very well aware. The real man who, as early as January, had appealed to a general conference in London, was undoubtedly Peirce himself. He was in close relations with Barrington Shute. Peirce had been in the habit of going up to London periodically for literary purposes. Barrington Shute and he were friends, and worked together both in politics and religion; though, in religion, Shute ultimately went a good deal further than Peirce ever did. As regards Peirce, I should say that he was one of those men who, orthodox to a fault, or

obstinate to a fault, as you like to put it, are so determined to be punctiliously exact that, in point of fact, they satisfy nobody. He was well able to draw extremely fine distinctions; but in his own mind he was from first to last unquestionably a man who kept tight and firm to the rigid limits of nicely formulated and precisely definite doctrine. He was not an emotional man; although they say that, in his prayers, he exhibited a fervour which rarely came out in his preaching.

Shute was a member of Bradbury's congregation. It is unfortunately true, and not of Dissent alone, that the big man and the minister do not always get on as they should do. It turned out that, in the Salters' Hall dispute, Bradbury was the visible head of one side, and Barrington Shute the invisible head of the other. Shute was anxious to secure the repeal of the Schism Act, passed under Queen Anne, and designed to produce the collapse of Dissent by shutting up all the Dissenting Schools and Academies. The intention, presumably, had been to follow it by an Act which should also shut their meeting-houses; and in some places the prospective legislation was actively anticipated. In Ireland, particularly, persons full of faith and—no, not the other qualification—had gone about nailing up Dissenting meeting-houses.

Shute was anxious about the repeal of this unworthy Act. He wanted its unconditional

repeal, like the good Independent that he then was; whereas there was a party among the Presbyterian members of the House of Commons, against repealing it without a test in regard to the Trinity. Shute defeated their amendment, and in order to facilitate the repeal, he was extremely anxious that there should be no appearance of any rift, doctrinal or otherwise, among the forces of Dissent. He therefore called together a body of laymen, who were in the habit of meeting as a committee to protect the civil rights of Dissenters. He put the matter before them. It was essential, in his view, that ministers whose opinions would carry weight, should be got to issue a joint manifesto, calculated to compose the Exeter difference.

The draft of such a manifesto, under the name of Advices for Peace, was drawn up by him, and passed by the select committee of laymen. These laymen were in fact the cream of the Dissenting magnates in London, including several members of Parliament. The Advices, if we strip them of their setting—the opening, exhortations, details of procedure, and so forth—really consisted in the statement of two points of principle. The First was this: There are doctrinal errors which warrant congregations in withdrawing from their ministers. Of course, we know what that meant. It meant stopping the supplies; and therefore, the ministers must go. The position

of the minister was saved, by putting it the other way and allowing the congregation to go. The Second was this: The people are to determine what these errors are. These were the two points of principle.

How would it have been if these two principles had been adopted and applied at Exeter? The people there had no opportunity of expressing their voice in the matter, in any constitutional way. It was the Thirteen first, and the Proprietors next, who had acted on their own responsibility. The congregations, as such, had never been consulted. No one can say that the main result would have been entirely different. Yet it is certain that Hallett and Peirce carried away with them, from the three meeting-houses, enough people to fill a fourth. Had therefore the Advices been tendered in time to be put into action at Exeter, it is quite possible that there might have been a different issue. The people when called upon, might have said: "No, we are not prepared to withdraw either from Hallett or from Peirce."

The next step in Shute's programme was to get the Advices accepted by the most representative and influential body of ministers that could be got together. For this purpose the Baptists were convened to Salters' Hall, as well as the Presbyterians, so called, and the Independents; both those in London and those in the neighbourhood of London, were convened; and we may fairly

say that the total number of those who attended was one hundred and ten.

Reference was made above to "Presbyterians so called"—and why? As soon as the Toleration Act was passed, when the year 1689/90 was young, there was raised in London a common Fund for Protestant Dissenters, who with the exclusion of Baptists, and of course Quakers, at that time formed a common body. Their ministers called themselves United Brethren. They formally agreed to drop the dividing names, Presbyterian and Congregational, and, if they called themselves anything, simply to call themselves United Brethren. This was a ministerial compact, and nothing more; and ministerial compacts are not always carried out or backed up by congregations. The Union in London was followed elsewhere. In London it soon came to a rupture; elsewhere it was taken up when London dropped it, and it managed to endure for a very long period. In London it came to a rupture owing to the suspicions of the section formerly known as Presbyterians, in regard to Independent doctrine. The Independents were more free in doctrinal matters than the Presbyterians, or, to put it in another way, they went to further extremes. You could find at that time, among the Independents, men whose orthodoxy was suspected. You could find also men whose Calvinistic orthodoxy was so high that it was spoken of as Antinomian.

It was this last manifestation which had excited the suspicions of those who had formerly been counted as Presbyterians. They were very anxious to sharpen their controversial swords against the rise of what they deemed to be Antinomianism. Daniel Williams was put out of his lectureship by the Merchants because he had attacked Independents, on the ground of their alleged leaning to Antinomianism. Richard Baxter was living at the time when the fray began, and he had been eager to do what Williams did; but John Howe kept him from publishing. Williams was a younger man, and a Welshman at that; and Williams was not to be kept down. The end was that Williams was put out of the lectureship. The common Fund ceased to be the common Fund. The Congregationalists raised (Dec. 1695) a separate Fund of their own; and from that time the old Fund, originally a Fund for both forms of Protestant Dissent, came to be called the Presbyterian Fund, though it was not fully recognized officially as such till 1784. This rupture in London exhibited itself mainly in ecclesiastical matters. When it was a question of pleading before Kings, in the general interests of Dissent, the two sections came together. Probably that was why the Baptists were at length brought in, to go with them on deputations to the throne. For sometimes, when you quarrel with an old friend, you find it eases your feelings to

have a third party in, at the subsequent meeting. So it happened, at any rate, that the Baptists found themselves in what was to them the unusual position of being recognized as part and parcel of London Protestant Dissent. The Dissenters would even take their addresses to their Sovereign with a Baptist at their head, perhaps as a compromise. "Better have a Baptist than a Presbyterian," some might say. "Anything is better than an Independent," some might rejoin.

The inclusion of the Baptists in the Salters' Hall conference was important. In the year 1700, an event occurred which is very often forgotten. It is sometimes forgotten by Baptists, as well as by those who are not Baptists. The General Baptist Assembly passed, in that year, the very first formal resolution of tolerance for heterodox opinions on the subject of the Trinity, that was ever passed by any Nonconformist union of congregations, in other words, by any co-operating religious body in this country. That was in the case of Matthew Caffyn. The General Baptist Assembly did not endorse Caffyn's views, but they tolerated them. They tolerated the man, opinions and all (and some of his opinions were queer enough) because he was a good, sound and Christian man, who was doing good, sound Christian work. Consequently, there was among the Baptists a habit of tolerance, of some standing,

which would incline them to go for conciliation, looking, perhaps, rather more at character and conduct, than at peculiarities of opinion, when giving advice as to what congregations had better do when ministers were suspected of heresy.

This threefold body came together, then, at Salters' Hall, and first met the very day following that on which the royal assent had ratified the repeal of the Schism Act. It was thus repealed on the 18th February, 1719, and they met on the 19th. Bradbury was at once to the front. He knew about the Advices, and he did not quite like the look of them. He therefore proposed that, instead of sending any Advices to Exeter, the ministers should pause, and fast, and pray, and then go to Exeter by deputation, and try to settle matters on the spot. This proposition was not well received. Whether the suggestion of fasting was not satisfactory, we cannot say; whether it was thought the selecting of a deputation would be an invidious procedure, we are not told At any rate Bradbury was defeated, and the Advices were discussed. Though, as above said, there were but two fundamental propositions embodied in these Advices, there was of course a good deal of subsidiary matter, tending to smooth their way, and the document was discussed clause by clause.

Bradbury saw clearly that the Advices were going to be carried. Consequently at the next

meeting, which was on the 24th February, he proposed that to them should be prefixed a preamble. This preamble was to set forth the doctrine of the Trinity, and Bradbury drew up a formulary with this view. Now it is rather singular that, when Bradbury was ordained, he made his confession, which was strongly Calvinistic, and strongly Trinitarian, in words of Scripture only. The confession is in print, and is a very remarkable effort. He managed—and for the most part legitimately, from his point of view—by the aid of Scripture terms alone, to construct a very strongly Trinitarian and very strongly Calvinistic confession of faith. Now in drafting the preamble he departed from this former usage of his; the defining terms were taken from the Shorter Catechism; and why? Clearly because now the question was how best to satisfy outsiders; and outsiders would say, "Oh! Bible, yes; but everybody takes the Bible in his own sense. We want something which is pat and plain, the language of which is indisputable."

On the production of this preamble came the first, and in point of fact the most memorable division; the division which has been described, and indeed satirized, by Sir Joseph Jekyll, who was present as a spectator on the occasion, when he said, "The Bible has it by four." Those who were against the preamble were asked to go up into the gallery, while the others remained on the

floor of the house—the old way of making a division. Fifty-seven went up into the gallery to divide against Thomas Bradbury. Fifty-three remained on the floor with him. Consequently his preamble was lost by four votes. A good many stories are told about the amenities of the occasion. When some of the (let us hope, younger) divines, as they went up to the gallery, hissed Thomas Bradbury while he sat in his seat, he replied, "The seed of the serpent!" Very apt at retort was Tom Bradbury. When the Dissenting clergy went to their German King in their black cloaks, "Pray, gentlemen," sneered a courtier, "is this a funeral?" "Ay, my lord," replied brave Tom, "'tis the funeral of the Schism Act, and soon you will see the resurrection of Liberty." However on this occasion, in regard to the preamble, he was beaten; and then they adjourned.

In the meantime both parties sent out whips. These do not seem to have had much effect; for the numbers were pretty much the same in the next division as in the first, though both sides tried to increase their strength. Nothing would induce Calamy to attend the conference. Watts also stayed away, and so did some other men of mark. On Bradbury's side, four Presbyterian divines whipped up their men in defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, which was thought to be at stake; and others whipped up their men on

behalf of the liberty of private expression. Both parties took the line of saving the Dissenting interest from division. The underlying interest, with the leaders, was politics on one side and orthodoxy, or presumed orthodoxy, on the other. When they met again, Bradbury proposed that the preamble be put once more; the Moderator ruled this out of order. Then he proposed that they should do as the Exeter ministers had done —call upon each minister present to make his own declaration. The Moderator, Joshua Oldfield, ruled this out of order also. Then Bradbury said he would call upon all those who were of his mind to follow him up into the gallery, and then and there subscribe the Anglican article in reference to the Trinity, and two answers of the Shorter Catechism. Sixty are said to have gone up with him, while fifty remained below. Among the sixty, there were no General Baptists, but of the Particular Baptists more favoured Bradbury than went against him.

While Bradbury, you observe, thus got a majority to subscribe the recognized formularies, this majority, you also observe, was quite out of order. Going up into the gallery was, in the circumstances, much the same as going out of the house. The Moderator had ruled that no business could be taken except what we may call the committee stage of the Advices, which were now under discussion. Out of the house, when the sub-

scription was accomplished, Bradbury went with his sixty; they betook themselves to another hall, elected a Presbyterian as their moderator, continued their meetings, and adopted the two principles governing the Advices, just as the others had passed them; varying, it is true, the mode in which these principles were to be carried into effect, and taking care to prefix Bradbury's preamble.

So far, we may say that those who remained behind, and had refused to subscribe in the gallery, were taking a consistent position. When it came to the finish, and they were to send their Advices to Exeter, what did they do? They had declined individually to make their declaration of belief in the Trinity. They had declined to approve the preamble setting forth their belief in the Trinity. They had not gone up to subscribe. Yet now they drew up a letter to be signed and sent by their Moderator, in the name of all present, in which they declared their adhesion to the doctrine of the Trinity. More than that, in this letter they departed further from Scriptural terms than the rejected preamble had done. In addition, they expressly denounced Arianism. Finally, they added that nevertheless they were not prepared to quarrel with anyone, supposing that he held the true doctrine, if he were not prepared to adopt their terms, or even if he preferred to limit himself to Scripture terms only. Thus both parties,

it is important to notice, put themselves before the world as genuine Trinitarians; and both parties absolutely agreed on the cardinal principles of the Advices which they sent to Exeter.

Obviously, the Advices came to Exeter too late to be of any effect whatever. They first reached Exeter as forwarded by the non-subscribers on the 17th of March; the meeting-houses having been closed on the 10th of March against Hallett and Peirce, who set up their separate tabernacle on the 15th. The Advices were not dispatched by the subscribers until the 7th of April. The subscribers were, however, the only Advisers to whom any attention was paid in Exeter. The Thirteen wrote (11th April) stating that, having got nothing from London in reply to their own application but a put-off, they had hardly expected to hear further; and having already taken their own action, there was no more to be said.

Now there is one thing which it is well to understand as clearly as possible. It must be pretty obvious to anyone following the course of things, that this Salters' Hall split was not a split between Independents and Presbyterians. The most prominent men on both sides were, or had been, Independents. The political mover was an Independent, the orthodox mover was an Independent. If Peirce himself had ceased to be a genuine Independent, he certainly had never become a Presbyterian in any sense of the word known

before his time. Personally, he declined the name, and called himself merely a Christian. He had got out of Independency and on towards Presbyterianism to a certain extent. It is a curious point which he had reached. He published a couple of sermons on Ordination. In the one published later of the two, he gave his own idea as to what a regular Ordination was. He claimed it as the privilege of ministers to make ministers; the people cannot make them. How they were originally made he does not say, for he does not expressly claim Apostolic continuity for the Dissenting clergy. Ministers, and they only, have the power of licensing a man to preach. When the ministers have done this, the congregations may take their choice among those whom the ministers present to them. If they select one, again it is the ministers, and they only, who are to say whether they will or will not ordain him as pastor. That is as far as he got in a Presbyterian direction; but anyone who knows anything about Presbyterianism, knows that this is not Presbyterianism at all. The Presbyterian polity is not a clerical aristocracy of this kind, but an organized democracy, in which laymen sit side by side with clergy in every court.

The split, then, was not one in which the Presbyterians, as such, took one side, and the Independents the other. Both bodies were divided. Doubtless among the Independents there were

more in number who went with Bradbury than went against him; but, if you pass from number to quality, among the Independents who went against Bradbury, there were Hunt, and Lowman, and Jennings; and Lardner, the best acquainted with early Christian history of any man in his century; to say nothing of Watts, and Daniel Neal, the Nonconformist historian, who kept aloof from both parties. On the other hand, among the Presbyterians, the old stagers were mostly with Bradbury, and actively with him, as we have seen. Seven out of the twelve Presbyterian trustees of Dr. Williams' foundations who voted at Salters' Hall, were subscribers with Bradbury. The younger Presbyterians, no doubt, did make up the majorities against Bradbury; though even here there were exceptions. Daniel Wilcox, Bradbury's henchman at the conference, was a Presbyterian.

What became of the younger non-subscribing Presbyterians? A considerable number of them did not remain in the Dissenting interest at all, but shortly after conformed. One sees instances of the same proclivity, or something like it, at the present day. A man may say in effect: "I am not going to pledge myself to this opinion or that —but I will sign the Anglican articles; because that does not pledge anybody to anything, beyond keeping the peace of the Church." That seems to have been something like the position which

some of these younger Presbyterian divines took. They were pressed into conformity by Hoadly, the great Whig Bishop, who let men in on easy terms of examination, satisfied with their momentary use of the goose-quill.

Again, it is clear that the split was by no means a decisive rupture between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism. Both parties stoutly and staunchly affirmed that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, they held as clearly as they could the doctrine of the Trinity. What then was it on which the division really turned? It was a conflict precipitating a cleavage between the spirit of uniformity, and the spirit of liberty. We may fairly claim that the Salters' Hall rift worked out —perhaps not altogether well—but worked out so as to sever two tendencies, and let each do its best in making English history. Pass a few decades, reach the middle of the eighteenth century, and from that point, no doubt, those who were for doctrinal uniformity got the name of Independents, and those who were not for uniformity, but for tolerance and liberty, got the name of Presbyterians. If you ask why this distinctive nomenclature, the answer must be that in this, as in sundry other cases, there was a close connexion between ecclesiasticism and finance. The old Fund, the Fund instituted for Dissenters in common, came, as we have seen, to be called the Presbyterian Fund. Thus the Presbyterian name attached itself to that position which, in theory at any rate, was of broader scope.

Yet the important thing to remember is that, whatever distinguishing name they then bore or afterwards acquired, both parties registered themselves at Salters' Hall as Independents, pure and simple. The Advices, to which all agreed, embody a charter of Independency in its most unrestricted form. Of doctrinal truth and error, the people are to be judges. Each congregation is to say whether in their judgment the doctrine preached from the pulpit is, or is not, right and good. This judgment is to be subject to no exterior jurisdiction whatever. There is to be no constitutional appeal to any deliberative body outside. Each congregation is to be responsible to itself, under its Divine Head, for its own orthodoxy, or non-orthodoxy, as other men may choose to deem it.

For the moment, as it proved, these Advices made strongly for the Trinitarian cause. Congregations in the West of England followed the example of the Thirteen at Exeter, stranding all ministers whose orthodoxy was questioned. This was the effect at first; but of course when the time came for Unitarian notions, be they true or be they false, to gain ground in congregations, these congregations were authorized to take precisely the same action that had been taken by Trinitarians before them. They found their

warrant in the Salters' Hall Advices, and made appeal to them as the charter of their liberties. So that, in a very real sense, the Salters' Hall rift issued in what proved to be an all-round charter of the liberties of congregations, whether Unitarian or Trinitarian.

It must, in estimating the full result of the break at Salters' Hall, be added that the general prosperity of Dissent from that time began very considerably to decline. Its unanimity was lost. People became suspicious of each other. In individual congregations a critical spirit was engendered. In the clerical unions—the only pledged tokens of the corporate unity of Dissent—the old bonds of common association were relaxed. Old men looked anxiously at the future, as did Calamy. Young men, unless they had the enthusiasm of a Doddridge, began by writing tracts lamenting the decay of Dissent, and ended by slipping into the Establishment. We know what caused the revival of Dissent; but that is neither here nor there. We must remember that every gain in this world involves a loss, and in the order of Providence gain is compensation for loss.

Barrington Shute saw clearly that, as a political force, Dissent was no longer what it had been. The Viscount Barrington, of 1720, soon slackened in his hopes of the political future of the Dissenting interest; and in religion left Bradbury for

Hunt, and Hunt for parish Church; still, as "Papinian," corresponding with Lardner on the latest developments of theological criticism. Many others saw that, as a religious force, Dissent was no longer what it once was, and what it had been hoped it might continue to be, in increasing measure—a spiritual power, battling with united strength against the common enemies of all morals and all religion. This, its true mission, was for a time impeded; this, its best work, was for a time delayed. Not for naught. The retarding check was the condition of the assimilation of a permanent boon. The rift at Salters' Hall will be for ever memorable; for then and there the future of the liberties of English Dissent was at high cost secured.

31 *October*, 1902.

PETER BAYLE
OF THE
DICTIONARY

PIERRE BAYLE.—Born, 1647; Professor of Philosophy at Sedan, 1675-81, and at Rotterdam, 1682-93; Author of *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, 1696-7; Died, 1706.

VI

PETER BAYLE OF THE DICTIONARY

IT is too probable that for centennials, bicentennials, tercentennials, and quatercentennials we have by this time not much appetite left. The present offer to attempt another resurrection of this kind may be received with a yawn, or even with the ejaculatory interruption ascribed to the Scottish bailie, who, at a public ceremony, when the length of the dedicatory prayer had proved visibly trying to the patience and to the nerves of her late Majesty, twitched the official robe of the Moderator of the General Assembly, and muttered the hoarse whisper, "Dash it, man! Can ye not haud your gab?" Still, an impulse of gratitude is upon me, urging me to call forth before your imaginations, if I can, the figure, remarkable and even picturesque, of one who first saw this world's daylight in 1647, and passed into the light beyond in 1706.

It has not, I think, been observed in any of our public prints or literary organs that the bi-

centennial of the death of Peter Bayle falls in the last month of this year (1906). Alexander Chalmers, in his *General Biographical Dictionary*, which, published as long ago as 1812-17, is still the only English work of the kind on the same generous and inclusive scale, opens his account of Bayle with the description of him as "a French writer who once made a great figure in the literary world." The Abbé Glaire, whose *Dictionnaire Universelle des Sciences Ecclésiastiques* (1868) is as terse, comprehensive, and impartial as any I know, begins his article on Bayle by affirming that "he made himself celebrated particularly by the deplorable scepticism which led him into incredulity." With more appreciation of the true basis of his renown, the tenth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* introduces him as "author of the famous Historical and Critical Dictionary."

Certainly it is as the greatest, and perhaps the wickedest, of dictionary makers that Bayle is remembered and known, where he is remembered and known at all. In fact, when you speak of Bayle, it is the book you mean, not the man. This was in the mind of the law student, afterwards a distinguished judge, who, lamenting his lack of books, exclaimed "I wish some damned fool would give me a Bayle."

My possession of a Bayle is due to the munificence of the Trustees of the Hibbert Fund. A worthy divine, on withdrawing from the ministry

to agricultural pursuits in a remote locality, reduced his library to little other than a collection of dictionaries. He more than once asserted in my hearing that experience had amply vindicated the wisdom of his preference. Accordingly, when my Hibbert Fellowship was followed at an interval by a grant of books, I went in largely for dictionaries, and Bayle headed the list. Nor have I repented of my choice, for though one of them has lost value, and one been quite superseded, Bayle in his way is perennial. We shall see that Bayle the book was the *alter ego* of Bayle the man.

Peter, the second of three sons of John Bayle, a stiff and stern Huguenot divine, was born on November 18th, 1647, at Carlat, a little place in the South of France, within the domain of the Counts of Foix, and in the diocese of Rieux. Till his nineteenth year he was educated by his father, who then sent him to a Protestant Academy at Puylaurens. His studies there were seriously interrupted by successive illnesses, due to overapplication. Dissatisfied with his opportunities at this academy—where, however, he acquired his lifelong predilection for Plutarch and for Montaigne—he betook himself, when just twenty-two, to the University of Toulouse, going for his philosophy to the Jesuits' College. In this, says his biographer (Des Maizeaux), there was nothing remarkable. Not infrequently did the Protestants of France send their sons to receive the

benefit of the excellent instruction provided by the Jesuits, though to do so was prohibited by their Synodical regulations.

Now, it seems that at Puylaurens young Bayle had dipped into books of Catholic controversy, had held talks with the Catholic curé, and been shaken in his hereditary faith. At Toulouse a priest was his fellow lodger. Bayle became his convert within a month. This shows him to have been of an easily sympathetic nature. The exact line of his divergence from Calvinistic orthodoxy is not clear. It may be inferred from a letter in which he endeavoured to convert his elder brother, now his father's colleague, that the modernity and schism of Protestantism, with its innovations of doctrine, had made a strong impression upon him. Being a young man of parts and promise, his conversion was regarded as a catch. The Bishop of Rieux, who belonged to one of the great families of Toulouse, became his patron, undertaking the cost and direction of his studies. His family intervened. A cousin, repairing to Toulouse, took rooms in the same lodging, and the cousin's influence proved stronger than that of the priest. The advantage was followed up by an able friend of his father; and, when the elder brother arrived on the scene, the convert was ready to avow, with tears, that reason and Scripture were adverse to the claims of Rome, the innovator. Bayle's Catholicism, in short, had

melted away after no more than seventeen months' trial. He specifies the cultus of Saints and the dogma of Transubstantiation as the determining factors of his return.

Slipping quietly out of Toulouse, Bayle made his formal recantation, before his brother and three other Huguenot divines, at a country house on the way from Toulouse to Carlat. He was at once packed off to Geneva. Introduced at its University to the system of Des Cartes, he abandoned in its favour the Aristotelian philosophy which he had learned from the Jesuits. For several years he acted as tutor in families of distinction, thus gaining some few of the advantages of travel. In particular he was able to make a stay in Paris, where the fine libraries, and the facilities for learned intercourse, made him some amends for the ill paid drudgery of the despised position of a tutor.

It was now that, through the good offices of his friend Basnage, he was invited to compete for a chair of philosophy in the Protestant Academy at Sedan, at the head of which was Peter Jurieu (1637-1713), a famous theologian in his day. For a time he held back, alleging that his philosophy had got rusty; he had been obliged to forsake Des Cartes for Homer and Virgil; he had even forgotten his logic. The secret of his reluctance was this. At present, no one in that part of the world suspected that he had flirted

with Catholicism; should he take a public position, the decree against the Relapsed might be put in force to his injury and that of Sedan. Jurieu, who was anxious to have him, and knew nothing of the relapse, wormed this secret out of Basnage, and decided that, as nobody else knew about it, there would be no risk. Hastening then to Sedan, Bayle triumphed in disputation over three local competitors, and was appointed professor in 1675, being then just under twenty-nine years of age.

The striking ability with which he fulfilled the duties of his chair, the charm of his personal qualities, and the blameless excellence of his private life won him favour with all. We can hardly recognize in the Bayle of Sedan, noted for his sweetness, his modesty, and his straightforwardness, the impious sceptic of his later reputation. Jurieu himself, who had fine capacities, though adding an irritable temperament and a turbulent disposition to a dogged and contentious orthodoxy, wrote of Bayle, even after their bitter estrangement, that the beauty of his genius and the nobility of his principles had attached him to the young professor with a warmer regard than he had felt for anyone else.

In July of 1681 the Sedan Academy was suddenly suppressed by Louis XIV. Bayle, however, was not long without similar employment. At Sedan he had entertained, as boarder and

pupil, young Van Zoelen, a near relative of the burgomaster of Rotterdam of that name. Van Zoelen had interest enough with his friends to procure for Bayle an invitation to Rotterdam. Simultaneously, efforts were being made to bring him over to the Catholic Church, in utter ignorance of his previous conversion and lapse. Naturally Bayle preferred Rotterdam, though unseen, to Rome whose acquaintance through its emissaries he had already made. He stipulated, however, that a post should be made for Jurieu as well; and managed to smooth over some difficulties created by the demeanour of Jurieu, whose temper had not been improved by the mortification consequent on the suppression of his Academy. The civic authorities of Rotterdam established them, in December, 1681, as professors of philosophy and theology respectively; but the popularity of Bayle as philosopher was greater than that of Jurieu as theologian. Hence the beginning of a rankling jealousy, which ripened into a persistent antagonism.

To Rotterdam, Bayle had brought with him a manuscript of which he had vainly sought to procure the printing in Paris. In December of 1680 the superstitious fears of men had been aroused by the apparition of a great comet. Halley viewed it in Paris; but it was not what is known as Halley's Comet, made familiar to many of us who are not astronomers by Dr. Martineau's

noble sermon, " Views of the World from Halley's Comet "—this was the comet of 1682, and the sermon is reprinted in a volume of Martineau's " Essays."

Bayle was beset by anxious inquirers, who insisted on regarding the 1680 comet as a supernatural phenomenon, a presage of coming woe, a warning to return to religion. Early in 1681 he embodied his own views on the matter in a Letter, which grew to a treatise. No Paris printer would touch it. At Rotterdam he found, in 1682, a printer who was willing to print but not to own it. It was still entitled " A Letter," addressed to a doctor of the Sorbonne; it was anonymous; it was written as from a Catholic; it professed on the title-page to be printed at Cologne. Very soon it became known that Bayle was the author, and the treatise was loudly applauded. Ultimately—but not till after the quarrel with Jurieu, who at first joined the applause—it led to charges of pernicious teaching, amounting even to secret Atheism. It became the cause, at any rate the nominal cause, of Bayle's subsequent dismissal from his chair.

Let us see what ground there was for the accusation. Bayle maintained that a comet was a purely natural phenomenon, and urged that no merely natural effect could possibly be the presage of a contingent event. Assuming it, however, to be supernatural, then he reminded

his readers that the pagans of old had been visited by comets, had likewise taken them as announcing celestial displeasure, and had actually been driven by them to renewed and increased practice of their own religion, namely, idolatry. Is it likely, he asked, that the Divine Being would work a miracle, knowing that it would reinstate idolatry; and with that result as the very object of the miracle? This seems at first sight a harmless query; but there was more in it than at once appeared. For it may be shrewdly suspected that Bayle, to whose mind the Catholic religion, by allowing creature-worship, promoted idolatry, meant to insinuate that God would never work a miracle in support of the Catholic Faith. Even so, the treatise, when this point had been perceived, would not thereby offend Protestants. Bayle had still another question to ask. It was this: Which would the Divine Being prefer, that men should be in entire ignorance of the existence of God, or that they should practise the vile worship of false gods? The question is a searching one. Not all serious minds would give the same answer to it. Bayle's answer was readily surmised. The term Agnostic was not then coined; so Bayle was construed as implying that blank Atheism was better than idol-worship; better, that is to say, than Catholicism, which included idol-worship. On reflection, the charitable inference was drawn—Bayle is an Atheist at heart.

His critical pen once allowed free exercise, Bayle engaged in many of the religious and philosophical controversies of his day, measuring himself against such men as Leibnitz and Le Clerc, and gaining no small renown in this country, to which, at a later period, Shaftesbury and others vainly tried to induce him to remove. He wrote always anonymously, and his publications appeared with false imprints. The disguise was easily penetrated; it was adopted, partly as a protection to the printer, partly, too, because anonymity whets curiosity, and curiosity aids a sale. In the same year (1682) in which his dissertation on comets appeared, he brought out a trenchant critique of Maimbourg's "History of Calvinism," in which, with great effect, he exposed the blunders and the bad faith of that able and even brilliant, but most unfair writer; whose "History of Arianism" exhibits the same type of shining but slipshod unscrupulousness. Bayle's work won the admiration even of Catholic writers. Ménage speaks of it as a fine book, the work of an honourable man, contrasting it with another and very inferior effort against Maimbourg, by Jurieu. We cannot, in this slight sketch, follow Bayle into his controversies, interesting as they are. This may be said. The air of Holland seems to have had a decisive influence on the spirit of Bayle. For the first time he lived in a land of Tolerance. Nor is it without significance that for the first

time he came into personal contact with exiled Socinians from Poland. Their position, it is evident, he had studied with close and appreciative attention.

A word must be added about that mysterious publication which brought about his estrangement from Jurieu. It was issued anonymously in April, 1690, and bore the title "Important Advice to the Refugees on their Approaching Return to France." Written in the person of a Catholic, it criticized severely the general attitude and temper of the French Protestants in exile; dwelling on the virulence of their pens, the defamatory spirit of their polemics and lampoons; accusing them of seditious tendencies; contrasting the violence of their intemperate pamphlets with the moderation of English Catholic refugees in France, and with the general tone of French writers on religion; and somewhat peremptorily counselling an amendment of their courses. Jurieu took this advice as meant for himself (as probably it was, among others), accused Bayle of its authorship, and attacked him furiously. The question of authorship is still a problem. Bayle expressed great indignation at the charge, and disclaimed many of the views put forth by the alleged Catholic, as well he might. Yet it would be hard to say that he ever directly and categorically denied the authorship. It is true that he wrote a critique of the pamphlet; but he had

already displayed his powers in this respect, by writing a ludicrous Defence, in the name of a French marshal accused of witchcraft, and then an equally ludicrous demolition of the Defence. It is certain, in any case, that Bayle was equally sensible of the dangers of intolerance, whether practised by Protestants or by Catholics, whether exercised in word or in deed. Entering the lists against Jurieu, he did not spare his adversary, though he employed keener and more polished weapons than those he had to encounter. The quarrels of literary men are not altogether pleasant reading. They are too common, and they tend to detraction. Dr. Johnson once said: "The Irish are a fair people, they never speak well of one another." Something of this exaggeration might be applied to literary men, when they form parties and fall out.

It was during his occupancy of the Rotterdam chair that Bayle, dissatisfied with a kindred venture in which he had taken some part, founded and conducted a literary journal, the first considerable effort of the sort, and, indeed, unique in its kind. Its aim was, under the title of *News of the Republic of Letters*, to furnish a monthly guide to the European Press. It lasted from March, 1684, to February, 1687, its discontinuance being due to Bayle's ill health. In this magazine he first developed his remarkable power of interesting and entertaining his readers, while

epitomizing and criticizing, with a fine mixture of shrewdness and tact, a wide range of current literature. A keen remark in the number for April, 1686, led to his famous correspondence with Queen Christina of Sweden. In response to an appeal by a zealous Catholic, this royal lady (who had renounced Protestantism to embrace the Catholic Faith) had published her sentiments in regard to the extirpation of heresy in France. In a strain at once vigorous and wise she declared that she would have nothing to do with a mission of persecution. "Dragoons are strange Apostles," she affirmed. "Our Lord made no use of that method of converting the world." "Do you really believe in the good faith of such converts?" Bayle reprinted the piece in his magazine, and, briefly commenting on it, made this observation: —"This is a remnant (*un reste*) of Protestantism." Deeply hurt by the phrase, the good Christina remonstrated with Bayle through an agent. After a little correspondence Bayle, who assuredly, as he explained, had never meant to throw suspicion on her Catholic allegiance, wrote to the Queen herself, offering an apology at once complete and dignified. She replied in handsome terms, imposing on Bayle, as penance, that he should henceforth make it his business to supply her with any books of note that might be published, whether in Latin, French, Spanish, or Italian, and on any subject, provided they were

worth reading. She made room in her order even for romances, satires, "and, above all, chemistry." "And don't forget to send me your magazine, and the bill for all expenses. God prosper you." Truly a royal lady of catholic tastes. One thinks that, perhaps, there may really have been a little "remnant of Protestantism."

In November, 1693, Bayle was summarily dismissed from his chair by the magistrates of Rotterdam, and even prohibited from private teaching. Nominally, as already said, this was on the ground of the pernicious tendency of his Comet publication eleven years before; in reality, as he maintained, the injury and affront were due to local faction. Bayle's personal friends belonged to the party which was losing ground in general politics, consequently in municipal management. Every effort was being made by their opponents to humiliate them in gaining the upper hand. It was to show their power, and to spite the other side, that they found a shabby excuse for striking at Bayle. Such things, of course, never occur in our own municipalities. Hence, perhaps, we may find it difficult to credit the true explanation of the case.

Advantageous offers were made to Bayle from our own country and from France; but he had work in hand which induced him to stay where he was. Already had he conceived the idea of his

Dictionary; to its compilation and perfection he devoted the thirteen years which remained to him of life. He would have issued this great work anonymously, but could not obtain a licence for the printing, without his name. Its first edition appeared in two volumes, 1696-7. The second edition, in which, out of deference to prejudice, the article "David" was modified by evisceration, was issued in 1702. The author left improvements, incorporated in subsequent editions, the best being that of 1740, four volumes. All these were in folio. There is a modern edition, in octavo, 1820-4, sixteen volumes, with additions not by Bayle, and some serviceable criticisms. There is also an anonymous English version, 1710, four volumes folio; and an expanded edition, 1734-41, ten volumes folio, by Birch and several coadjutors, including Sale, the Orientalist. I have seen the 1710 translation ascribed to Birch. This would be a somewhat remarkable feat for a little Quaker boy in his fifth year, so perhaps the translator was some one else.

This work is called an "Historical and Critical Dictionary." Yet there is nothing in it of history, in the modern understanding of that science; no grasp, or even vision, of the chain of events. On the other hand, there is none of that magnificent waste of power which makes Sir Walter Raleigh's "History of the World" (1614), an eloquent and monumental torso of sage and

learned nescience. Bayle guessed, if he did not know, that the view which took primeval history as simply controlled by the Bible must yield to the view which places the very Bible itself in the control of historical science. His work is biographical, sometimes geographical, always critical, yet never free from learned gossip.

Voltaire has said of Bayle's Dictionary that it is the first work of the kind in which a man may learn to think. He had even better have said, which compels a man to think. For Bayle does not help a man through the problems that he starts. He forces you perpetually to say: What does he mean? What does this lead to? What does he not mean? He leaves you no option. In Bayle's pliant and pleasant hands you find yourself, without a word of warning, flung easily and suddenly into deep and sometimes dirty water; you don't know where you are, or where he is; but there is no mistake about it, you must begin to learn to swim or, faith, you'll sink. Such is the mystery and the magic of Bayle.

How his Dictionary began to be, and achieved its growth, he tells us in his inimitable preface. He had originally intended a "Dictionary of Errors," and had issued the prospectus of one, after compiling it to the first three letters of the alphabet. There is such a dictionary, bearing the too proud sub-title "Errata and Supplement to All Historical Dictionaries," by Augustin Jal

(1867) a useful book, though apparently little known. For when you refer to Jal, people look as if they had never heard of him. Bayle found his first project did not take. He says people don't mind about errors; one thing will do as well as another if they "like the spirit of it," as John James Tayler used to say. He quotes ludicrous examples from sermons. Here is one:—"How now, Christians, you are not touched by the spectacle of our Saviour Christ nailed to the wood of the cross! Why, the Emperor Pompey was moved to pity, when he beheld the elephants of Pyrrhus pierced with arrows!" The effect of this, says Bayle, was just as good as if it had been true. The resources of present day students are quite equal to efforts of this kind—especially in Examination papers—but the effect is sometimes disappointing.

What put Bayle on the correction of errors? It was the appearance in 1688 of the posthumous fifth edition of the "Great Historical Dictionary," originally published in 1674 by Louis Moréri, D.D. (1643-1680). It must not be supposed that Moréri's was an exceptionally bad book. On the contrary, it was, as Bayle fully allows, an exceptionally good one, and that was just why he thought it worth while to show how it could be bettered. In many respects Moréri's is a much more generally useful compendium than Bayle's. Under successive editors (greatest among them

Le Clerc) it has swelled from a single folio to the ten huge folios which have an honoured place among my books, as a really indispensable work of reference.

Perceiving that Moréri was especially weak in mythological and classic articles, Bayle had devoted himself to the correction of these. He found that people did not care for exact information, either about heathen gods or Roman heroes. So he discarded all the gods, and most of the heroes, from his plan. It then occurred to him to compile a Dictionary, which, as far as possible, should contain nothing that was to be found in other dictionaries. Popes, emperors, kings, cardinals, Fathers of the Church, and so on, were common property; he resolved to let most of them severely alone. Hardly had he begun, when he heard of an English version (1694) of Moréri, with national additions; this stopped him from including the illustrious men of Great Britain. A similar publication cut off from him the illustrious men of the United Provinces. A new Biblical Dictionary checked his design of including most of the persons mentioned in the Bible. D'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale* came out, and interfered with him in that department. Church History, too, was otherwise provided for. Think of the erudition of the man who would willingly have undertaken any or all of these special branches, and robbed of them all, still had

matter in abundance on which to fall back.

Yet here it is well to interpose a *caveat*. Bayle, a man of extraordinary erudition, was not (as Jal, for example, was) a man of research, as we understand that term. He probably knew by heart more books, of all sorts, than any man before or since his day. He did not, as we try to do, go beyond books in quest of things knowable. Pardon the egotism of a small illustration of the difference. Some time ago I was in company with certain scholarly friends, who know much more about books than I can pretend to do. One day they benevolently informed me that I had given in the *Dictionary of National Biography* a wrong year-date for the birth of John Cotton, who came from Boston No. 1, and was the means of giving its name to Boston No. 2. "It is very likely," said I, "for the Pope of Rome is the only infallible person, and he wisely avoids the exercise of his prerogative in regard to dates." They brought me five books, all placing Cotton's birth a year later than I had ventured to put it. I demurred. "These are few and modern, and all American." Well, by dint of their labour and my insistence, they found above eighty printed authorities for their date, and wondered what I had to say. "Only this, gentlemen: I took the trouble personally to visit St. Alkmund's, Derby, where Cotton was baptized, and here is the record of that event, copied by me on the spot, and

certified by the custodian. As a child is not usually born a year after his baptism, I think you will admit that research sometimes beats erudition." Let me add that the whole honour of the discovery is due to Mr. B. Tacchella, who in a small and unnoticed publication had put me on the right line of search. So, to all students I would say: Never feel quite sure, before you have got at the original sources for yourself. Till then, don't say, "It is so," but, with Bayle, be content to say, "So-and-so says it is so." For Bayle knew the limits of his erudition, and was careful always to distinguish between things his authorities personally vouched for, and what they merely cited from others. Indeed, one express purpose of his toil was to induce rising scholars, and youth generally, to form an idea of, and taste for "the most scrupulous exactitude."

How had he gained this vast range of reading, amid the frequent interruptions of failing health? "Little use do I make," says he, "of Cato's motto: *Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis.* Diversions, parties of pleasure, games, treats, excursions to the country, visits and such-like recreations, necessary (so they say) to many studious persons, are not in my line. I waste no time in them. Nor waste I any in domestic cares, in seeking favours, courting patrons, or anything of that sort. Happily freed from many distractions not much to my taste, I have enjoyed

the most complete, the most delightful leisure that a literary man could possibly long for." There was a time when Madame Basnage had tried hard to yoke him to a wife she had picked out for him. The lady, whose name is not given, had, we are assured, youth, beauty, sense, sweetness, modesty, self-command—and fifteen thousand crowns. Bayle persistently shook his head, disinclined to be drawn from solitary study by his married friend's encouraging example.

It must be owned that the arrangement of his Dictionary is of the most inconvenient kind. Opening just now a volume at random one finds, divided between three successive folio pages, only four lines of text, all the rest being notes. Unluckily, he has had imitators in this, who have followed him as following a fashion, without his reason or excuse. Kippis, in his *Biographia Britannica*, is a tiresome sinner in this respect. He tells you half a thing, and must needs put the other half into a note or notes. He reminds one of George IV's saying about Sir Robert Peel: "Peel is not a gentleman; he always parts his coat tails before he sits down." Bayle, however, has a purpose in his system. As he truly says, his text is complete in itself. Read it, and you get a plain story. No one need trouble himself with the notes, unless he has a mind to do so. Yet the notes are Bayle: Bayle at his best and Bayle at his worst. He pours into them without stint

the many-coloured, recondite, and appetizing contents of his commonplace books and memoranda, with chapter and verse for every statement.

There is one element in them which stains his workmanship. Lord Acton said, oddly enough, of Charles Dickens: "His great merit is that in all his books there is no indecency." From the negative eulogy of this faint praise Bayle is undesirably exempt. His elaborate excursus in defence of his fault is rather an aggravation of it, being little more than an impudent *tu quoque*. Plenty of other writers, some of them general favourites, he says, deal in improprieties—"as I will proceed to show you." His offence is deliberate, and its motive is frankly propounded. In his preface he affirms that the booksellers and their friends had assured him that a dull folio, appealing only to the learned, scarcely ever pays the printer, and that he must brighten up his book. Lord Acton, to quote him again, alleges that the future Cardinal Newman, anxious about the *Rambler* (the liberal Catholic organ), wishing it to be clever and amusing as well as instructive, "wants us to have rather more levity and profaneness, less theology and learning." In the course of his reading, Bayle had dived into all sorts of holes and corners, whence he brought out scandalous anecdote, in unheard-of variety. Something of this seasoning had already spiced his literary magazine. He sprinkled it about,

especially when it concerned grave persons, with an impish malice—perhaps more often found, in combination with a native sweetness of temper, in the ladies of creation than in the lords thereof. Yet Bayle, who knew more than most men, actually makes a point of his reticence. "Of the two inviolable laws of history," says he, "I have religiously observed the one which enjoins upon us to say nothing that is false. As for the other, which enjoins on us to dare to say all that is true, I cannot boast of having invariably followed it. I think it sometimes opposed, not merely to prudence, but to reason as well." One would wish that oftener he had thus thought, and when dealing with the seamy side of human nature, bestowed a little drapery upon his *nuda veritas*. Without question Bayle is a cure for optimism, if such be needed; though optimism, it may be observed, commonly cures itself.

This last remark about our author gives occasion to say, in drawing to a close, all that I have either ability or inclination to say respecting Bayle's philosophy, so called. I know not whether I have read or dreamed that some one once averred, "The real philosopher is the man who has no philosophy." Bayle is ranked as a sceptic; and if we take the literal sense of the word, Bayle was that, and something more. For the sceptic is the man who stops to look at a thing; and Bayle was prone not only to look things in the face, but

to see them all round, if he could. Vulgarly, however, a sceptic is taken to mean a person of superficial views, who doubts if there is anything beyond surfaces. Montaigne, in a well-known essay by Emerson, is taken as the type of a sceptic; yet Montaigne's motto was not, "What is there to know?" but "What do I know?" which is a very different thing, I opine. We have seen that Bayle was early a disciple of Montaigne, as also of the anecdotical and sententious Plutarch, both of them men of insatiable curiosity. Now, it would appear that Bayle had discovered, both by the experience of his personal history and by his study of all the literature accessible to him, this staring and disturbing fact, that there is much to be said on both sides of many more questions than is either convenient or agreeable to our complacency. This is what is meant by saying that Bayle is a cure for optimism. Persons fundamentally in the wrong may have something to say which we should do well to hear. The system of the Manichæans, said Bayle, is to me absurd; yet Christians cannot answer the Manichæan objections to their own theology, committed as that is to the doctrine of eternal torments. There seems no reason to doubt that Bayle's affirmations of his own beliefs are genuine and honest. He claimed to hold, on the authority of revelation, what he could not maintain by the force of reason; but Bayle was not the man to say

that every genuine and honest thinker must needs hold with him.

Evidently we have, as a rule, advanced beyond the view-point of Bayle's century. Occasionally, it is true, we may encounter people ready to repeat, in all seriousness, the old jibe that every Cardinal is necessarily an Atheist. There still may be those who think the same of every Unitarian, though too polite to tell us so. Yet, on the whole, we have come very near to perceiving that it is possible, on the one hand, to hold strong views of one's own; on the other hand, to feel not condescension, nor compassion, nor tolerance, but deep and true respect for the opposite views of others. That we have got so far, or nearly so far, is largely owing to the courage of those men who braved obloquy and misunderstanding in the determination that, in defiance of every prejudice to the contrary, the most unpopular opinions should be pressed, in their integrity, upon the reluctant attention of the public. Great, in this respect, were the services of Bayle.

For this reason it has seemed not unbefitting to conjure up the memory of the man who passed suddenly away on the morning of 28th December, 1706, with the questioning words on his lips: "Is my fire lighted?" Sundry among the bigots might then have been inclined to answer "Yes," with a stolid accent of gloomy exultation. Some

among us may now feel satisfied to echo the affirmative, in another spirit and sense. For, if the heart must be purified by the cleansing fires of love, no less does the mind demand for its clarification the searching, sometimes the scorching, it may even be the blasting, flame enkindled by the critic's art, that it may pass "*ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*," from the spectres and shadows of its own thought, into the reception of the realities of the Most High.

4 *October*, 1906.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE AND THE CATHOLICITY OF THE OLD DISSENT

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.—Born in London, June 26th, 1702; Minister at Kibworth, 1723-29; Began Academy at Market Harborough, 1729; Minister and Tutor at Northampton, 1729-51; Ordained, March 19th, 1730; Married, December 22nd, 1730; D.D., Aberdeen, 1736; Died at Lisbon, October 26th, 1751.

VII

PHILIP DODDRIDGE AND THE CATHOLICITY OF THE OLD DISSENT

THE eighteenth century was in its eighteenth year when Philip Doddridge, desiring to enter the Dissenting ministry, sought to open the way by addressing himself to Edmund Calamy, D.D. (1671-1732). The interview is known only by its unpromising result, yet the historic imagination may be forgiven if it pause to picture the momentary contact between these two great liberal unionists in English Nonconformist polity.

Calamy was now in the prime of his life, and at the height of his public influence. He had added lustre to the eminent inheritance of his name, by his services as biographer of the Ejected, and as custodian of the fame of Baxter. A genial, full bodied divine, he walked before God in the healthy enjoyment of human life and human liberty. When his Scottish friends made him a doctor in divinity, he rallied them on the pertinacity of their church courts, which reminded him of the thumbscrews of the Inquisition; but he found no fault with the theology of their claret or the orthodoxy of their salmon. An absolute

stranger to enthusiasms, he rode past Windermere, and recollected that this was the lake "so famous for the fish called charrs, which come potted to London, and are reckoned so very delicious." Seated in full view of one of the finest of Lancashire landscapes, he charmed a Tory lady by suggesting that the spot seemed specially adapted by boon Nature for the pleasant use of "a pipe of tobacco and a glass of October." Perhaps in Oxford, where he spent some studious months, and preached his first sermon, these finer tastes may have been cultivated. His devotion to Nonconformity was genuine and virile. He had espoused its principles with the full strength of reasoned conviction, and believed them essential to the maintenance of English liberties and English religion. He served his cause with a diplomatic prudence; no rash ventures were his, and few mistakes; his strong mundane sagacity told him what was timely, what was practicable, and then with courtly ease he managed men and made obstacles melt. If any ambition to go too far menaced a breach of accord in the forces of Nonconformity, he made his bow and stood aside, a mere cool-headed spectator of parties; he never mixed up in a quarrel, and would touch nothing quixotic.

Such was the man who turned his eyes upon young Doddridge, with keen yet kindly glance. He saw before him a slight and sickly orphan boy.

too tall for his sixteen years, too near-sighted to bear his height erect, the hectic flush of a consumptive habit showing through his olive cheek and seeming to explain the feverish and premature anxiety to encounter, with sanguine lack of prescience, the hardships of a calling full of trials for the robust. He learned that the resolve, vaguely formed at the ripe age of fourteen, had started into definite shape on the sudden disclosure of a reverse of fortune, which had stripped the schoolboy of his means and left him penniless. To overstock the ministerial market by training up a superfluous host of poor lads on small bursaries, Calamy had condemned as a cruel policy in the Presbyterians of Scotland. What wonder that he gave Doddridge "no encouragement, but advised" him "to turn" his "thoughts to something else." The counsel, though a bitter disappointment, seemed beneficently wise; and for the moment Philip felt that to gainsay it would be a forcing of Providence.

Doddridge was a year older than John Wesley, and, like Wesley, he came of Nonconformist ancestry on both sides of the house. His grandfather, on the one side, was an Ejected minister, nephew of a famous judge. His other grandfather was a Bohemian exile, who, after sojourning in Germany as a Lutheran divine, settled in England as a schoolmaster. The twentieth child of his parents, Philip at his birth showed no sign of

life. In point of fact, he and a sister were the only ones reared out of this abnormal family. The story is well known of his learning Bible history from his mother with the aid of "blue Dutch tiles in the chimney-place." Losing both parents before he had well entered his fourteenth year, he fell into the hands of a well-meaning but incompetent guardian, who sacrificed his property in foolish speculations. In Samuel Clark (or Clarke) of St. Albans, compiler of the "Scripture Promises," he found a second father.

His uncle Philip had been steward in the Bedford family, and the dowager duchess offered to provide handsomely for his education, with a view to the Anglican ministry. It was on his conscientious rejection of this tempting provision that the boy had carried his young hopes to Calamy. Following the sage advice he got, he now thought of the law; but before he had closed with an advantageous prospect of study for the bar, a letter from Clark, offering him facilities for a ministerial training, decided his vocation. With Clark he made his first communion; through the influence of Clark he got a little bursary from the Presbyterian Fund.

He did not resort to a Presbyterian tutor, though Clark ranked with that denomination; nor to a London Academy, though there were several close at hand. Reasons of health may explain the preference for an Academy in the

country; the choice of an Independent Academy will be accounted for later on. I simply note here that Doddridge's student life began in October, 1719. In March of that year the ghost of the parliamentary Presbyterianism had been finally laid at Salters' Hall. There and then the so-called Presbyterians, whether subscribing or non-subscribing, joined with the other denominations in issuing a formal ratification of the absolute independency of all Dissenting congregations. Such vestiges of Presbyterianism as they retained were retained as peculiarities of individual congregations. Even Calamy had admitted, as early as 1704, that his Presbyterianism might be fairly described as "a meer Independent scheme."

The picture of Doddridge as a student is drawn by his own hand in his most engaging correspondence. We see him robed in his dark blue gown of cheap calimanco, carefully saved and often turned, seated at Kibworth in a study so spacious that, if the lower shelves were but removed, the greater part of a hoop-petticoat might at a crush be accommodated within it. We find him describing himself as "an animal that locks himself up in his closet for ten hours in the day, and romps away the rest of his time in blind-man's buff, or such-like elegant entertainments." There is some truth veiled in the poetry of this overdrawn delineation. He pursued the studies of his vocation with high purpose and a willing

heart. Most young men of devout intent have formed some guiding rules for the apportionment of their time and the discipline of their conduct. Those of young Doddridge, written on the fly-leaf of his New Testament, are simple and straightforward, the self-reminders of a frank and genuine nature. Promising himself to prove "agreeable and useful to all about" him "by a tender, compassionate, and friendly behaviour," he struck the keynote of his life.

It is characteristic that a chief recreation of his student days was found in playful and quasi-confidential correspondence with ladies: with his "mamma," his "aunt," and other and younger recipients of imaginative titles. Of Doddridge's part in this correspondence, one may say (borrowing his own description of the letters of his "dear, sedate, methodical Clio") that he writes "with such unaffected wit, pleasantry, and good nature, that it must be a gloomy animal indeed that can lay them down with a grave face, and ask for something more inspiring." The ease and polish of his address, and his knowledge of human nature, are amazing in a lad under age. His sister's "kind advice" he meets with the expostulation: "Did you ever know me marry foolishly in my life?" A little later, his first serious passion produces a series of letters to Catherine Freeman, anticipating in the analysis of female motive the best efforts of Richardson.

At some of his overtures we may smile, but his gentlemanly feeling was perfect, and his purpose sincere. "If a lady could have called me a faithless lover," he declares, "I should be ashamed to call myself a Christian or a man." When at length he wedded Mercy Maris, his marriage proved a continued romance. He never lost the feelings of a lover, still writing in middle life with all the intensity and fluctuating anxieties of a courtship. His wife was not only fair to see, but, if we view her with her husband's eyes, was "the dearest of all dears, the wisest of all my earthly counsellors, and of all my governors the most potent, yet the most gentle and moderate." The impression, however, conveyed by her own few letters is that of a well-bred, well-mannered, commonplace personage, to whom transports were foreign, indeed without very acute feelings, who better knew the meaning of "honour and obey" than that of the preceding vocable.

Perhaps the depth and tenderness of Doddridge's affectionate heart were nowhere more apparent than in the upheaval of his whole nature on the death of his first child, a tiny girl. Some foolish fellow preached at the funeral on "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?" "I hope God knows," wrote Doddridge in his diary, "that I am not angry; but sorrowful He surely allows me to be." The preface to his own sermon on this occasion, while calm and free from

solicitude, is a singularly honest avowal of pain still smarting, grief unappeased, the plain dealing of a man who could not but be true to his own feelings. "Formed in such a correspondence to my own relish and temper as to be able to give me a degree of delight, and consequently of distress, which I did not before think it possible I could have received from a little creature who had not quite completed her fifth year. . . . . It is comparatively easy . . . to speak in the outward language of resignation. But it is not so easy to get rid of every repining thought, and to forbear taking it, in some degree at least, unkindly, that the God whom we love and serve, in whose friendship we have long trusted and rejoiced, should act what, to sense, seems so unfriendly a part; that He should take away a child; and if a child, that child; and if that child, at that age; and if at that age, with this or that particular circumstance; which seems the very contrivance of providence to add double anguish to the wound. In these circumstances . . . cheerfully to subscribe to His will, cordially to approve it as merciful and gracious. . . . This, this is a difficult lesson indeed; a triumph of Christian faith and love, which I fear many of us are yet to learn."

It is this strength of human emotion that gives health and animation to the religious genius of Doddridge. There was never anything very

puritanical about his tone of mind, or his ideal of life; nor any abrupt severance of his professional character from his wholesome and genial humanity. The cleric and the man were, in him, not two but one. Why should we not speak of clerical men (I mean, if we can find any) as we speak of medical men? Doddridge allowed himself in relaxations proper to his age, and could write gaily of his social amusements, even including among these, in his early days, a hand of cards ("a chapter or two in the History of the Four Kings") after a dish of afternoon tea. But his diaries and his letters prove that he wasted no time, that his calling was ever in his thoughts, that his religion was no conventional department of his life. His piety was a devotion of the whole human being to an ideal of consecrated service, perpetually renewed in filial communing with the Lord whom he truly loved, and served with a continually deepening attachment.

His religious genius is seen at its height in the powerful addresses which make up his volume on the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," published (1745) in his forty-third year, and since translated into almost as many languages as the "Pilgrim's Progress." Watts had suggested this work, had framed its plan, and had revised its earlier sections. But Watts could not have written it. The verve of its language; the pressure and piquancy of its appeal; the power

of making conscience speak, in piercing tones, the secrets of the heart; the naturalness, the appositeness, the fervour, the pathos with which exhortation soars constantly into the domain of prayer; the prophetic faculty that betimes can even chant the plea of the awakening voice of God; these make the work unique. It is not a treatise to be calmly read; those whom it does not find will quickly drop it from their hands; those whom it captivates will follow it upon their knees. Its aim is to rouse religious feeling into a regenerative force. The practical pith of Doddridge's faithful appeal is summed up in these words:—"This must be the language of your very heart before the Lord. But then remember that in consequence thereof it must be the language of your life too . . . the most affectionate transport of the passions, should it be transient and ineffectual, would be but like a blaze of straw, presented instead of incense at His altar." In an earlier publication (1736) he had asked, "What is true religion? Is it to repeat a creed, or subscribe a confession, or perform a ceremony? If it be, I am sure religion is much changed from what it was, when the Scriptures were writ; and the nature of God must be entirely changed too, before such a religion can be acceptable to Him, or before it can have the least value in His sight."

While speaking of his religious genius one thinks of Doddridge's hymns. On these I make

but one remark. The hymns of Doddridge, which never rise so high nor fall so low as those of Watts, have sometimes, what Watts never achieves, a rare quality of sustained joyousness, as in "Hark! the glad sound," which sings itself through every verse, through every line, in every tone. It is worth noting, in this connection, that Orton speaks of Doddridge as "a man who had no ear for music."

In theology Doddridge classed himself at the outset of his career (1724) as "in all the most important points, a moderate Calvinist"; and such he remained to the last. He attentively read John Taylor on "Original Sin" (1740), and was by no means shaken by it. He speaks of it as "a vain attempt to prove that impossible, which, in fact, evidently is."

Calvinism is compatible with various views of the doctrine of the Trinity; Calvin himself has not escaped the censure of purists; and it is on this doctrine that Doddridge's theological soundness has been chiefly called in question. The period of his student life was one of keen discussion of this topic, following the rupture of Salters' Hall. Many adopted the semi-Arian position of Samuel Clarke, the metaphysician; a few went beyond it. Doddridge admits that he was "wavering." Some of the proof-texts against Arianism never seemed to him in point. The recollection of his hesitancy always disposed him

to respect the difficulties, and deal dispassionately with the conclusions, of other minds. His own doctrine tended towards heresy in a direction the opposite of the Arian. It was essentially Sabellian, a Trinity of divine aspects; "persons" (*prosopa*, vizors) as they were called by Sabellius, who introduced this term into Christian theology. A cruder, pre-Sabellian form of the doctrine, identified historically with the name of Praxeas, and polemically disparaged as Patripassianism, was, according to Peirce, the common creed of the unlearned among Dissenters. There is plenty of footing for it in the hymns of Watts. Doddridge held the Sabellian doctrine in its later or post-Sabellian form. This mode of thought, while admitting eternal distinctions in the Godhead, denies that they amount to co-ordinate personalities. Its advocates claim to be in good accord with the teaching of St. Hilary and St. Augustine. Wallis's exposition of the Trinity on these lines was left unchallenged by the Oxford decree (5 Nov., 1695) which condemned as "impious" the alleged Tritheism of Bingham and Sherlock.

A Sabellianism of this kind is often accompanied by a Socinian view of the nature of the Mediator. Doddridge escaped this by borrowing from Watts a doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul, which has ever been inseparably united to the Godhead. Barling treats this

doctrine as a "graft of Arianism"; but its ancestry is not referable to the Arian school, being of older date and of different complexion. Watts got it from Henry More, the Platonist. In the estimation of Doddridge, this scheme guarded, on the one hand, against the error of reducing Christ to a mere creature, and on the other, against that of conceiving him as another God, either inferior to or co-ordinate with the Father. Except in his theological lectures, this rationale of his Trinitarian confession makes no show. In his practical writing, as in his hymns, the mediatorial work of Christ occupies the field. To all who are one with him in embracing this central and cardinal idea, his religious teaching will be acceptable, and will fall into harmony with theological systems diverging from his own on either hand.

In truth, the details of a technical theology were brought home to Doddridge by no necessity of his own mind; and, perhaps, had it not become part of his duty to act as an exponent of systematic theology to others, he would have himself lost interest in this department of study. Practically the theological text-book which was always in his hands, which formed his habitual phraseology and inspired his living thought, was the Bible. The Bible to him was the New Testament. I do not mean that he discarded the Old Testament, but that he read it as a part of the New. To him its theme from end to end was the

Christian salvation. There is no evidence that he anywhere detected in it a failure of the evangelical spirit, though, of course, there were degrees in the completeness with which that spirit was apprehended by those whom the Biblical writers from time to time addressed. Watts, in his paraphrases of the Psalms, thought it necessary, as he says, to make David "speak like a Christian." I do not know where there is in Doddridge any similar confession of the discovery of a jarring note, a felt discord between successive strata of revelation. He brought the harmonizing element with him in the evangelical fullness of his own spirit.

We are using the language of very thoughtless ingratitude when we permit ourselves to speak of the eighteenth century as a period of religious stagnation. It was not an age which readily responded to an enthusiasm, or suffered itself to be led by a sentiment; it was an age of strong and resolute thinking. It was not an age of fluent preachers; but why? Because the preachers were not allowed to take anything for granted. Christianity was put upon its trial; everything was brought to the test of fact; everything was examined with full use of all the resources of reason. Bishop Butler told Wesley (1739) it was "a horrid thing, a very horrid thing" to pretend to "gifts of the Holy Ghost"; and advised him, "You have no business here, you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese." Anglicans were not alone in failing to comprehend Wesley, or to estimate the value of those religious forces of which Methodism was the instrument in the hand of God. Doddridge was an exception, but his goodwill to the Methodists brought down upon him the indignant remonstrances of his London friends. These good people honestly held that to encourage Whitefield was to play into the hands of infidelity, that the enthusiasts were simply making fresh ground for the deists. They pointed triumphantly to the fact that Henry Dodwell's anonymous brochure, "Christianity not founded on Argument" (1742) was so well calculated to serve the interests either of enthusiasm or of deism indifferently, that men did not know to which school it should be assigned, and remained in doubt as to the quarter from which it had been launched.

An age of religious stagnation is an age when religion ceases to provide matter for the exercise of independent thought, when tradition and superstition send the mind to sleep. In the eighteenth century, all who thought at all, applied a keen and alert intelligence to religious matters, with the robust intention of distinguishing realities from shams. Certainly it was an age of controversy within Christianity, rather than of conquests by Christianity, though these also were not wanting. Yet we must not forget

that we owe to it, through Watts, the modern Christian hymn, and through Doddridge, as we shall see, the forecast of the modern Christian mission.

Near the close of the seventeenth century (1689) the Nonconformists had accepted the Anglican articles as their authorized doctrinal standard of public toleration. Hence upon Dissent there lay, till 1779, the dead-weight of a Toleration Act which was practically another Act of Uniformity. This was a serious bar to the bolder enterprises of religious thinking within the recognised bounds of Nonconformity. To mark the progress of ideas by the proclamation of new results was penal. It is said that the example of the early Quakers might have been followed, in defying the law, and extorting privilege by persistent and invincible efforts of self-assertion. I have often thought that it might; I have sometimes wondered that it was not. The truth is, that this course would have been impossible to the ordinary Dissenter. He looked to Parliamentary law as to a divine institution. It was the very foundation of the State, the only basis of the throne. He believed in its omnipotence. Already it had done much for him, and could do more. A martyrdom of restriction and repression, meanwhile, he was prepared to endure; but to come into open and avowed conflict with the safeguard of society would have appeared to him suicidal,

and a flying in the face of Providence. So he bided his time and guarded his course; but his mind was wakeful and his thought progressive.

The stream of learning and the currents of thinking were kept in movement within his borders by the action of the Dissenting Academies; institutions, to the history and scope of which a very insufficient attention has been directed, considering their national and permanent importance. The Dissenting Academy was the Nonconformist University, the university of private enterprise. Richard Frankland has the honour of being the first to set on foot (1670) in the North an institution for "university learning." The succession of Academies descending from Frankland has its lineal heir in Manchester College. Frankland's, however, was not a school for theology alone, nor were his first pupils either designed for the ministry, or drawn only from the ranks of Dissent. He represented the Cromwellian tradition of a Durham University, and he pursued in his northern refuges the methods of his Cambridge training. Frankland's institution set the model for all the older Academies whose Tutors ranged themselves under the Presbyterian name. Philosophy and theology formed the solid nucleus of study; philology, science, Biblical apparatus were added in varying proportions, according to the aptitudes and particular tastes of individual Tutors. It was not uncom-

mon for a studious youth to keep terms in succession at two or three of these Academies, selecting those whose departmental advantages promised to reward his curiosity on specific topics. Secker, for example, was at three Academies, one in the North, one in the West, and one in London. He was also at Paris, and at Leiden to boot, before he went to Oxford. Perhaps all this was overdoing it a little. For Tom Secker in his young days had a merry wit. He was not born to be the block for a bishop's wig, and to crown a Lord's anointed such as George the Third-rate.

The first of Secker's many *almæ matres* was the Academy of Timothy Jollie at Attercliffe. Now Jollie's Academy, though an offshoot from Frankland's, was an example of the Independent Academy, as contrasted with those of the Presbyterian type. How did these types differ? To fancy that the Independents cared less for learning than the Presbyterians did, or were excelled by them in point of attainment, is to fall into a ludicrous mistake. The pursuit of learning was equal in these bodies; but the Independents, numerically the smaller of the two, can claim a larger proportion of scholars distinguished by great achievements. In illustration of this point, it may suffice to recall the "Vindiciæ Fratrum Dissidentium" (1710), by James Peirce; the "Credibility of the Gospel History" (1727-57), by Nathaniel Lardner; the "History of the Puritans" (1732-38), by Daniel Neal. Again, there was no denominational difference in the matter of an entrance subscription to the Academies, so long as these institutions were regulated by private enterprise. Subscription on entrance was later introduced into some Academies founded and managed by societies. The Presbyterian Academies had their origin in private enterprise till 1754, when Warrington Academy was projected (opened 1757). The London Independents had founded the King's Head Society, for establishing an Academy, in 1730. When subscription began in it I do not know, perhaps in 1730, certainly not later than 1744. This was the Academy which Priestley would not enter because of its subscription. Its Divinity tutor, Zephaniah Marryatt, was a Presbyterian, while the Academy to which Priestley repaired on account of its non-subscription had an Independent divinity tutor, Caleb Ashworth, and was managed by Independent trustees.

Not less learned than the Presbyterians, the Independents were, however, less conventional; hence, perhaps, sometimes more free. They were readier for extremes on either hand than was consonant with the steadfast Presbyterian middle way. They showed this in their Church administration, and they showed it in their Academies.

Thus, among teachers of philosophy, Thomas Rowe, the London Independent, was the first

to desert the traditional text-books, introducing his pupils, about 1680, to what was known as "free philosophy." Rowe was a Cartesian at a time when the Aristotelic philosophy was dominant in the older schools of learning; and while in physics he adhered to Descartes against the rising influence of Newton, in mental science he became one of the earliest exponents of Locke. Watts, Neal, Hunt, Grove were among his pupils. None were sent to him from the Presbyterian Fund.

On the other hand, at Attercliffe, Jollie, in 1689, put under a ban "the mathematics," a term of wide significance then, on the supposition that this class of acquirement tended to make sceptics. The prohibition acted as usual: "Don't read this." There was much private study of the mathematics among Jollie's young men, one of whom ultimately held a mathematical chair at Cambridge. Whether from this spur of revolt, or from whatever reason, I believe it may be admitted that Jollie turned out men more prominent in the gifts of leadership than Frankland, his master, had done. Among Frankland's pupils, I suppose the best known name is that of William Tong, the biographer of Matthew Henry. Jollie's much shorter list includes such types as Thomas Bradbury, the zealot of orthodoxy, leader of the subscribers at Salters' Hall, and Benjamin Grosvenor, equally a zealot, though a Calvinist, for freedom in religious opinion.

Again, Jeremiah Jones, of Nailsworth, was an Independent tutor; and Jones' posthumous "Method of settling the Canonical Authority of the New Testament" (1726), a work of original plan, and, for its day, exhaustive research, was certainly the most valuable outcome of the tutorial work of the old Academies, or, indeed, of English contemporary scholarship. It was several times reprinted at the Clarendon Press. Next to it in permanent importance among the fruits of the erudition of the old Dissenting lecture-room may be ranked the posthumous "Jewish Antiquities" (1766) of David Jennings, a London Independent tutor.

Moreover, it was a London Independent Academy which furnished the solitary instance of a theological chair filled by a layman, John Eames, F.R.S., whom Watts considered the most learned man he knew, and whose reputation was made in natural science, Sir Isaac Newton being his patron and friend. The appointment (made by the Congregational Fund in 1734) was as successful as it was unprecedented; but the Presbyterian Fund sent no bursars to this Academy while Eames filled the Divinity chair.

I mention these facts, in order to bring out, what I think some have missed, the character of variety, fresh force and unconventionality, which distinguished the Independent Academies from their more staid competitors in the Presbyterian

Dissent. Doddridge, you remember, entered as a pupil in the Independent Academy at Kibworth. His tutor was John Jennings (d. 1723), son of an Ejected minister, elder brother of David Jennings above mentioned, and grandfather of Mrs. Barbauld. In theology Jennings was an eclectic. "He encourages," writes Doddridge, while at his Academy, "the greatest freedom of inquiry, and always inculcates it, as a law, that the Scriptures are the only genuine standard of faith." How did this work out? Doddridge writes again: "I have almost finished Mr. Jennings' system of divinity, and the better I am acquainted with it, the more I admire it. He does not entirely accord with the system of any particular body of men, but is sometimes a Calvinist, sometimes a Remonstrant, sometimes a Baxterian, sometimes a Socinian, as truth and evidence determine him. He furnishes us with all kinds of authors upon every subject, without advising us to skip over the heretical passages for fear of infection. It is evidently his main care to inspire us with sentiments of catholicism."

The four years' plan of studies under Jennings was very comprehensive. Mathematics suffered no exclusion; Jennings was himself an elegant mathematician. His pupils learned French, this being somewhat of a rarity; and they learned it "without regarding the pronunciation, with which Mr. Jennings" was "not acquainted."

They learned anatomy, a subject which Eames, I think, had been the first to add to his curriculum. They learned architecture; probably that they might be able to plan additions to their meeting-houses. For some occult reason they also learned heraldry, an accomplishment cultivated in other Independent Academies. These were some of the ornaments of a solid course of philology, philosophy, physical science and divinity. There is a very curious little manual, published (1721) by Jennings as a conspectus of lectures in certain departments. It begins with vocal music, and winds up with a philosophical alphabet. Jennings compiled his own logic, which, though written in Latin, is founded on Locke. His metaphysical compend is scholastic to a fault. It still contains (it is true, in a recreative appendix) such refreshing problems as the following: "Si bucephaleitas separaretur ab equinitate, utri istorum adhaerebit hinnibilitas?" One exceedingly important branch of study came off badly in all the old Academies. While general history, and especially chronology, received some attention, it is not a little surprising that both constitutional history and ecclesiastical history were ignored. Priestley was the first to call attention to these serious defects, and to introduce the study of constitutional history, on his own motion, at Warrington in 1761. His lectures when published (1788) were recommended at Cambridge by John

Symonds, professor of modern history. It does not appear that the curriculum included any special provision for the teaching of ecclesiastical history till the appointment of John James Tayler at Manchester in 1840; nor was there any attention paid to the history of doctrine.

It had been felt for some time that the sudden and early death (1723) of Jennings had created a serious void in the list of Dissenting institutions for theological training. The need existed for an Academy in the Midlands, at once liberal in tone and evangelical in spirit. There was a Presbyterian Academy in the Midlands, that of Ebenezer Latham, at Findern, and this at first was left to supply the vacancy; but in the opinion of Doddridge's London correspondents Latham, who practised also as doctor of medicine, was not an efficient tutor. Doddridge's detailed account of Jennings' plan of studies brought him overtures which led to his becoming Jennings' successor after an interval of six years. Isaac Watts declared that the reopening of the Academy might well be undertaken by one who had "so admirably described" it. The suggestion was followed up by the unanimous approval of a meeting of ministers at Lutterworth. At this time Doddridge, whose residence was at Market Harborough, had been for six years minister at Kibworth, on a stipend of £36, piled up to that enormous sum by help from eleemosynary funds,

since the Kibworth Independents were unable to reach the modest figure of £30. His Academy had hardly been begun (July, 1729), when he removed (December, 1729) to the more important congregation at Northampton, where for twenty-one years he discharged the duties of Pastor and Tutor.

To Doddridge's Academy some reference has already been made above, in the section on Early Nonconformity and Education. Here it may be well to pursue the topic in more detail. His first idea was to take only divinity students into his Academy. It was David Jennings, younger brother of John, who strongly advised him to admit lay pupils also. This he did in the fourth year of his enterprise. Almost immediately he was called upon by the ecclesiastical authorities to take out a licence in the bishop's court. He refused to do this, and carried the case to Westminster Hall. It went in his favour, but an appeal would probably have been decided against him on a technicality, had not George II intimated his displeasure at the revival of such prosecutions.

Perhaps it may be interesting to learn the cost of an education at Doddridge's Academy. The figures cannot be compared with modern estimates without an appreciable allowance for subsequent decrease in the value of money. Doddridge's charges were somewhat above the average. Every

student had to pay, on entrance, a guinea for his room, another towards the maintenance of the library, a third for the wear and tear of scientific apparatus. His tuition cost him four pounds a year, his board sixteen. He had to find his own candles, settle his laundry bill, and provide a pair of sheets. What he did while this pair was in washing, is not stated. The fixed charges, then, were: entry money, three guineas; annual dues, twenty pounds for four years. If he were a bursar on any of the denominational Funds, Presbyterian or Congregational, his board was reduced to fourteen pounds, and the library and laboratory charges were halved, bringing his entrance money to two guineas, and his annual dues to eighteen pounds. We may then gather this that Doddridge expected to make a profit of six pounds a year on ordinary students, four pounds on bursars. His actual gains were less, for he kept a generous table, being a hospitable entertainer of frequent visitors, often of high station. The prudent Orton was of opinion that his students lived too well.

A copy exists of the unpublished rules and regulations of Doddridge's Academy, with the signatures appended of students, who promised faithfully to obey them. They are very minute; and again citing Orton's candid criticism, the testimony is that they were largely a dead letter in practice. Doddridge's numerous engagements

threw the work of tuition somewhat out of gear as regards times. It now and then occurred (though the Tutor rose at five) that what should have been the Academy work of the morning did not come on till late in the day. It is right to specify these drawbacks; on the other hand, the atmosphere of the house must have been thoroughly good and wholesome. Its tone was high. Doddridge's personal influence with his pupils was individually felt. They all loved him. Few tutors had so little occasion to lament the failure of moral promise in their students. He kept them closely under his eye, and never allowed them to forget their vocation. David Jennings was, though a non-subscriber, a stickler for certain points of doctrine, and expelled from his London Academy students of whose theological turn he did not approve. It is not recorded that Doddridge ever did this; but if, as happened once or twice, he found reason to think the religious spirit was wanting, then he did not hesitate to tell such student that the Academy was no place for him.

In regard to methods of teaching, Doddridge, as might be expected, took John Jennings as his model. He avowedly made Jennings' lectures in philosophy and theology the basis of his own. For the choice of topics, the structural arrangement, the geometrical plan (axioms, problems, theorems, corollaries, and so forth), the style of treatment, he was indebted in the first instance

to Jennings. In using and adapting Jennings' outlines he introduced several new features.

Up to the time of Doddridge, the lectures on divinity, philosophy, science, in all Dissenting Academies had been delivered in Latin. In many cases Latin, except during certain privileged hours, was the current language of all academical business. Such customs, retained from the older universities, had outlived their usefulness. Doddridge began by abolishing what remained of them. He was the first of theological Tutors to lecture in English. It was a great innovation. It meant much more than a welcome relief from a tiresome linguistic strain. Perhaps we can hardly estimate how much it signified, both in the way of renouncing ancient prejudice and in opening new views of theological study, under the guidance of fresh text-books. Consequent on the dropping of Latin as the teaching medium would follow the comparative neglect of the older books of reference, venerable treatises of foreign divinity, framed in the ancient tongue. Lectures in English would naturally be illustrated from English sources, at once more easily and rapidly consulted, and more modern in their range of thought, in their reach of sentiment. Theology, released from the trammels of unvarying technical terms, could take on new forms of expression; a living language is the only right vehicle for living thoughts. I think I love the

Latin language as much as any man can. For many important purposes I prefer it to any other, and deeply regret its disuse as the common tongue of European learning. I fully recognize that in certain departments it is, as it has been called, the sacred speech of Christendom. These are departments in which it has been spontaneously used by men to whom it was the fit discovery of their thoughts, the natural utterance of their hearts. In theological terminology it does not shine at its best. To make it the vehicle of a native English theology is a strangely artificial process; it is to subject the thinking mind to an unnatural restraint. Richard Baxter produced a system of theology in a Latin quarto (1681); whatever else this *tour de force* may be, it is not Baxter.

Therefore, I greatly honour Doddridge as the author of that salutary revolution, which for the first time invited the learners in theology to think out its problems during their student years, in their own tongue. Looking at his theological lectures, I am struck with the vast wealth of illustration, poured upon all topics, from the living literature of his own time. True that his authorities are ancient now; cramped, crusted, and mouldy, we may deem some of them to be. They were fresh then; a new modern world of varied and animated thinking, presented for the scrutiny and the stimulus of young and eager

souls. It was from a stray reference to Hartley, in Doddridge's published lectures, that Priestley gained his introduction to the writer who formed his mind in principles of philosophic analysis.

This is not all. Doddridge was the founder of what may be called, though not in quite the modern sense, a science of comparative theology. What was the old method of teaching any given doctrine of divinity? The lecturer began by defining the view of his church, or his school, making it his own. This, he would say, is the right doctrine. Then came some account of other opinions on the topic. These, he would say, are the heresies and aberrations that prevail in outside circles. He would arrange them according to the degree of their approach to, or divergence from, the doctrine already propounded as the truth. His arguments would all be directed to prove this, to disprove those. Such is the manner of the vast majority of text-books. Doddridge took another plan. He began by laying before his pupils, with all the fairness of which he was master, the various views which had been entertained upon the point, and the arguments adduced in their favour. These he proceeded to compare, measuring them one against another, weighing their merits, trying them by Scripture, by reason, by each other, with the object, if possible, of eliciting the truth; which might at last be thought to coincide exactly with no one

of the systems thus brought into competitive examination. What the master attempted, the pupils were urged in like manner to endeavour for themselves; the Tutor's business being to see that they were in possession, as far as might be, of the materials for a judgment; among the most important of those materials being an intelligent knowledge and appreciation of the thoughts of others.

Another new feature of Doddridge's lecture-room was the insistence upon the employment of shorthand. Every student had to learn shorthand, and had to copy out every lecture in shorthand. The point was not that he was to try to take a lecture down while listening to it, an impossible feat. He listened to it, and thus took it in. He then transcribed it from the Tutor's manuscript (itself in shorthand), and so had it by him for reference and for preservation. Not only did he carry away a complete set of manuals of his studies, vastly superior in fullness of treatment to Jennings' breviate, but he possessed, to boot, a rich magazine of references to books, as a guide for his future reading. Should any unlucky layman, intent upon penetrating to his minister's sources, chance to pick up a volume of the series of note-books, his inquisitiveness would be stopped by the hieroglyphics.

Doddridge was one of the first to perceive the full advantages of shorthand to the student in the

saving of time and economy of writing material. The old Puritans had made a plentiful use of it for taking abstracts of sermons; they had few other applications for it, and though, of course, it found its way into earlier Academies, there was no systematic employment of it. Doddridge, as his basis, took Jeremy Rich's shorthand, invented or rather adapted in 1659. It may have been the best available to him in his schoolboy days, but it was a cumbrous and arbitrary system, much inferior to Byrom's (1720), which Wesley and Hartley adopted. Priestley, by the way, used Annet's. Doddridge made improvements on Rich, not so much in the direction of speed as in saving of space and increase of legibility. His shorthand found its way into other Academies as his pupils advanced to the dignity of Tutors. It is not yet obsolete. The days are not forgotten when it was recommended and taught by Dr. Martineau, who used it for all his lectures and sermons.

Doddridge made a practice of exercising his students in village preaching. As a system this was somewhat new. It was so pursued as to constitute Northampton a centre of missionary and evangelizing effort, quietly but effectively pursued, under the Tutor's inspection and with his active aid and co-operation.

A considerable proportion of his students found their first settlements in the Midland district; thus the productive value of the Academy was locally felt. By no means did he thus render service to the Independent denomination only. A letter (1750) from John Barker, of Hackney, thus expresses the obligation under which Doddridge laid the Dissenting cause generally: "Had not you supplied our Presbyterian churches for many years, what would have become of us? Nay, it is certain that what is called the Presbyterian interest in England has been supported by Independent Tutors." This statement is fully confirmed by inspection of the list of ministers in congregations of Presbyterian name, especially in the Midlands and the North. Many of the most trusted leaders of the old Liberal Dissent were men whose minds were moulded by Doddridge. Their character was not that of controversial preachers; their tone was evangelical, their influence suasive; their Liberalism was undemonstrative, but steady and sure. They did much to build a bridge of practical Christianity over which the transit from an older to a newer type of doctrinal ideas was effected with a minimum of agitation. For their sympathies were broad enough to keep them in touch with the generation that was passing away, and at the same time to give them the confidence of the younger generation.

Of such men, Job Orton (1717-1783) was a prominent example. Orton retired from pulpit

work with the ailments of a valetudinarian, at an age which (but for an early addiction to an opium habit) should have been his prime. Yet in his seclusion at Kidderminster he held an advisory correspondence with Dissenters of every class except, perhaps, the irregulars of Methodism, for whom he had no love. His favourite reading lay in the works of the elder Puritans, his tastes were tame, his ideas of ministerial deportment were, perhaps, timid and strait-laced. In religion he was for the old-fashioned Gospel, and all novelties were unpleasing to him. Yet his own orthodoxy was of a carefully attenuated sort. It is characteristic of his generous welcome for the conscientious convictions of others, that (as we shall see) he could write with unstinted admiration of Lindsey's sacrifices on behalf of principle, expressing nothing but good wishes for the success of a chapel opened to promote doctrines in many respects alien to his most cherished positions in philosophy and theology.

Among Doddridge's pupils some few were from the first intended for the Anglican ministry, and one, Thomas Gillespie, became the founder of a secession from the Scottish kirk in the interests of ecclesiastical freedom. An unusual number of his students became Tutors themselves; one was promoted to an Edinburgh chair. One of his pupils, never a tutor (yet a maker of tutors, being a Coward trustee), exercised a decisive

influence on theological progress. This was Hugh Farmer (1714-1787), the Independent. Farmer's preaching is curiously described by Kippis as having a kind of "swell" in it, which seemed the prelude to the enunciation of very high doctrine, but it never reached that point. Farmer's "Dissertation on Miracles" (1771), to which those on the Temptation (1761) and the Demoniacs (1775) are subsidiary, is an epoch-making book. Its aim is to vindicate the unshared sovranty of God. He disallows the agency in the physical universe of any invisible power save One, dismissing as superstition the alleged physical operations either of evil spirits at war with God, or of angelic beings his delegates. Those of his readers who were convinced by his premises were not slow to advance beyond his conclusions; soon denying the very existence of invisible beings who had no work to do in the visible world. In the long run his jealous reverence for the unbroken course of nature was more effective than his arguments for the production of "new phænomena," designed to reduce the paralysing impression of the conception of fixed law. Farmer's treatise at once became a text-book with the Rational Dissenters; its leading principles had an enduring effect in clearing up, to those who accepted them, the full meaning of the Unity of God, and the far-reaching significance of the undivided nature of his sway.

The successor to Doddridge's Academy was that at Daventry, of which, in its early days, Priestley has given us a most graphic and instructive account, drawn from the memories of his own experience. At Northampton Doddridge always kept an absolutely free hand. At Daventry the appointments were made and the management was regulated under the supervision of the Coward Trustees, a small body of Independent ministers and laymen. Still, the spirit of Doddridge remained the real regulating influence. The tutors were two, of whom Caleb Ashworth, the head, took on all questions a conservative position, while Samuel Clark, the junior, held the opposite side. And these two worked quite harmoniously together. Nay, they did what is, perhaps, a difficult thing for Tutors to do. They encouraged, in free intercourse with their pupils, the canvassing of the very points on which the Tutors differed; "a discipline," says Huxley, "which, admirable as it may be from a purely scientific point of view, would seem to be calculated to make acute rather than sound divines."

Now it is instructive to note that both these men were pupils of Doddridge, by him selected for tutorial office. Clark was his assistant. Ashworth was nominated, in Doddridge's will, as his own successor. These, then, were the chosen trustees of Doddridge's academic methods. It is clear that he made provision for a future of

liberal management and progressive teaching. So indeed it proved. The history of Daventry Academy culminated in the divinity tutorship of Thomas Belsham, who, by following Doddridge's comparative method of studying the problems of theology, was brought to the point of identifying himself (1789) with the rising movement of Unitarianism under Lindsey. Removing to Hackney College he had a pupil there in Charles Wellbeloved, the first divinity Tutor at Manchester College who advanced beyond Arian lines. It is worth remembering that as at Warrington Academy, in the person of Aikin, so at Manchester College, York, in the person of Wellbeloved, the lineage of Frankland and the lineage of Doddridge blend.

The principles on which Doddridge based his academic work were those which guided his whole interpretation of the function of English Dissent. To him, the establishment and maintenance of an Academy was not an end in itself; it was part of his larger purpose as a religious leader. Very early in his career as a tutor, Doddridge felt called upon to vindicate the cause of Dissent, and to define his own position towards it. The occasion was an "Enquiry into the Causes of the Decay of the Dissenting Interest," issued anonymously (1730) in the character of a candid friend among the Dissenting laity by Strickland Gough the younger. This son of a Presbyterian minister,

had himself been educated for the Presbyterian ministry, but had not got beyond a licence to preach. Gough's pamphlet was well written and able. His quarrel is chiefly with the ministers of Dissent. He brings against them the not very consistent charges that they humour the prejudices of their people, and that they "worship God for twenty minutes" and "dictate to men for sixty." In ignorance of their own true principles, they set their faces against free inquiry, which the Established clergy, in defiance of the terms of their subscription, do much to encourage. The pamphlet was the prelude to its author's conformity, Hoadly admitting him to holy orders. Doddridge published anonymously (1730) his "Free Thoughts" in reply. He agreed with many of Gough's observations, but called attention to a much more important class of causes, and was quite at issue with Gough as regards the remedy.

Calamy read both pamphlets, in ignorance apparently of their authorship. He deprecates the whole controversy. "If there were any real decays, this way of proceeding was rather likely to increase than abate them." Nevertheless, he does admit that "a real decay of serious religion, both in the Church and out of it, was very visible." Calamy's anxiety for the maintenance of the Dissenting cause was predominantly that of the politician. As a political force the Dissenters were a mainstay of the Hanoverian interest, a bulwark against the encroachments of popery and the pretensions of absolutism. To detract from "the considerableness of their body," by representing them as declining in numbers, was, to say the least, "grossly imprudent." He questioned whether there were any such decline on the whole, for if decrease was noticeable in some quarters, advance was manifest in others. This was Doddridge's opinion too. In his neighbourhood the number of Dissenters had been greatly augmented within twenty years. The interest of Doddridge in the Dissenting cause was not political. He refers, indeed, to the political influence of Dissent as that which gained consideration for it from those who had "no regard at all" for its true principles. His main point is that "there is generally more practical religion to be found" among Dissenters than in the Establishment. He makes the remarkable suggestion that "if the Established clergy and the Dissenting ministers . . . were mutually to exchange their strain of preaching and their manner of living but for one year, it would be the ruin of our cause." With Calamy, he is for maintaining a united phalanx of Nonconformity, not, however, as a political engine, but for the welfare of "practical religion."

Gough had noticed the lapse from Dissent of men of social position, polite culture, and lati-

tudinarian views; and had advised the attempt to cater for this class, and neglect the vulgar. Here Doddridge joins issue with him. He is firm in the conviction that the ministry of Dissent, while liberal in its temper, must be evangelical in aim; and must speak with an effective voice to the common people, who form the solid strength of Dissenting congregations. He maintains that a man of good taste may be a plain and moving preacher, and will then satisfy all those whose interest in his ministrations is a religious one. On the difficult question of a contrariety of sentiment, he holds that division into congregations of opposite principles is suicidal. "Bigotry," he observes, "may be attacked by sap more successfully than by storm"; and, again, there is such a thing as being "a bigot in defence of catholicism," or, as we say, catholicity. Religion and prudence must go hand in hand.

Warburton complimented Doddridge's pamphlet as "a masterpiece, both for the matter and composition." It may certainly be said to exhibit high qualities of ecclesiastical statesmanship. To the ideal it sets forth, Doddridge, throughout an influential career, was consistently true. It should be added that, while he was a Dissenter on principle, it was not on a principle of objection to an Establishment. He was a Dissenter simply for the sake of freedom to serve the cause of evangelical religion. Hence he claimed that Dissent should not be viewed or treated as schismatical; and he urged upon Archbishop Herring, that Dissent ought to be relieved of this stigma, by an authorised interchange of pulpits between the Established and the Tolerated clergy.

In contending, as he does, for the exercise of all possible forbearance and respect in relations with men of dogmatic temper, Doddridge gives the best proof of the essential catholicity of his own mind; for he had no sympathy with their attitude. He was the first, at any rate among divines, to use the terms "orthodox" and "orthodoxy" ("a certain equivocal word beginning with an O") as labels for a theological spirit which he was far from sharing. On entering the ministry he had qualified under the Toleration Act. To the phrases of the Westminster standards he "was resolved never to subscribe," either actually or virtually; and he sacrificed many tempting opportunities of promotion by adhering tenaciously to this resolve. Yet of those whom he styles "the rigidly orthodox," while he unfeignedly laments their "unhappy attachment to human phrases, and nicety in controversial points," he nevertheless admires their good qualities, and pardons an "excess of zeal," "artificially . . . infused," yet "innocently . . . retained," and "from a real principle of conscience to God." If he could "put a tolerably good sense on any of their favourite phrases," it

would surely, he reasons, argue a "perverseness of temper" to avoid such "merely because they admire" them. It is at least possible to lay aside phrases "offensive to them." "Our human forms are no more necessary than theirs."

Thus Doddridge made friends with Bradbury, the redoubtable champion of Dissenting subscription, and admitted Whitefield to his pulpit, to the disgust (as we have seen) of London supporters of his Academy. Thus, too, especially as a young man, and while he was forming his opinions, he used a playful caution in declining to be drawn out prematurely, and committed to a side. In an early letter (1724) to John Mason, he remarks: "You very expressly tell me that orthodoxy requires you to deny the salvability of the heathen; and then you desire me to send you an abstract of the best arguments I can meet with for the defence of the contrary opinion. What if such a dissertation should fall into the hands of some *durus pater* or *durior frater*? Then am I caught in the very act of Baxterianism; and by consequence am an Arminian, and therefore an Arian, and therefore, perhaps, a Deist. . . . My good sir, *haereticus esse nolo*." On the other hand, he recognized the evangelical character of Peirce, whose alleged heresies had given to Bradbury his opportunity of standing forth as the leader of Trinitarian orthodoxy. In the case of a member of his own congregation, admittedly of Arian

proclivities, he acknowledged him as "a real Christian" notwithstanding; and declared that he would lose "his place and even his life" rather than exclude such a man from communion. He wrote of Deists without severity, except as their principles or their conduct appeared to him tending to laxness of morals. "Every benevolent and useful man in society," he says, "I love and honour as such, whether he be or be not a Christian."

His daughter said of him, "The orthodoxy my father taught his children was charity." He says of himself, "I have lately . . . the character of a very orthodox divine; but to my great mortification, I hear from another quarter that my sermons are all Do! Do! Do! To speak my sentiments without reserve, I think the one too favourable and the other too severe." This was when he had got the decalogue painted on the wall of his chapel at Kibworth. His position was not very intelligible to Rational Dissenters, as the Arians then styled themselves. They thought he trimmed. Samuel Bourn, of Birmingham, did not hesitate to tell him so. They mistook his courageous liberality for a crypto-heterodoxy. They considered that his true place was with them. To his breadth of view, his perception of a common evangelical aim underlying differences of doctrinal expression and divergences of doctrinal vision, they were strangers. They very

much overrated his accord with their distinctive opinions.

In ecclesiastical polity Doddridge expresses himself (1723) as "moderately inclined" to the Congregational form. Four elders were appointed (1740) in his Northampton church. They were not elders in the Presbyterian sense, having no conduct of affairs. They relieved him of some of his pastoral work, and were, in short, a species of curates, two of them being, indeed, young ministers. So far as Church government went, he was a Congregational pure and simple, locating all ecclesiastical authority in the assembly of the individual Church. He felt, however, the difficulty of the purely Congregational position, in face of the obvious need of securing some good provision for filling the ranks of the ministry.

In the view of every evangelical Christian a minister is made a minister by Jesus Christ whose minister he is, and by him only. The differences of Church order arise with the question of vouching for a man's ministerial character and fixing his sphere. Theoretically, in Congregationalism a man is authenticated and declared to be a minister by the sole act of a congregation, choosing him as such. Theoretically, he is in consequence authorised as minister in and for that congregation alone. Practically, a congregation expects its minister to be regarded not merely as its own particular officer, like its secretary or its treasurer,

but as holding ministerial status in the general denomination, and as far as its communion extends. Hence the authentication of ministers is a matter for a wider consensus than that of a particular congregation.

Peirce of Exeter, who was a Congregational, nevertheless came over to what he termed Presbyterian ordination; a mistaken term, for he did not propose that ordination should be committed to a presbytery, a mixed body of clergy and lay deputies. He developed into a definite theory the practice pursued by the Baxterian clerical associations, and recognized in the terms of the Happy Union of 1691. He reserved it as the right and privilege of ministers to authenticate the standing of ministers; a right and privilege which any company of ministers might exercise by mutual agreement. He left to congregations the right and privilege of making their own selection out of the number of ministers thus approved. Such, in Peirce's view, was the only regular course, though he admitted that any ministry of proved usefulness was thereby shown to be valid, however irregular.

This theory was advanced by Peirce in 1715. The way for its acceptance had been opened by Calamy's treatise of 1704. It replaced the proper Presbyterian view among many so-called Presbyterians of the last century. In the judgment alike of Presbyterians and of Congregationals

proper, it placed in the hands of the ministerial class an irresponsible and somewhat dangerous power. There came a time when it was at any rate imagined that the exercise of this power placed arbitrary restrictions on doctrinal expansion; when it was thought that the line was drawn at Arianism by the "Presbyterian hierarchy"; a contradiction in terms, yet a common phrase, the meaning of "Presbyterian" being lost. The consequence was that ordination, if retained at all, was reduced to a purely congregational arrangement.

Doddridge, without adopting Peirce's high view of the rights of the ministry, nevertheless approved the practice to which it pointed. Disclaiming any notion of making this practice imperative, he outlined, in 1745, his idea of the wisest course to be pursued.

Persons intended for the ministry, should, before they begin to preach, be examined as to character and qualification, by three or four ministers. If fit, they are then licensed to act as candidates.

On being chosen as preacher to a congregation, a minister is not at once ordained; during the interim he fulfils all ministerial duties, short of administration of the sacraments. Arrangement for these is made with neighbouring pastors.

A minister is not ordained till he has been formally called to be pastor; of this call he

notifies neighbouring pastors, asking their concurrence in his ordination.

Prior to ordination, he exhibits, if required, his licence and credentials; and gives the ordainers "satisfaction as to his principles," the ordinary way being a written confession of his faith, drawn up by himself. This, in the opinion of Doddridge, avoids "the indolence of acquiescing in a general declaration of believing the Christian religion," and "the severity of demanding a subscription to any set of articles."

At the ordination, he recites this confession, as approved by his ordainers; and answers questions relating to his sense of the obligations of the pastoral office.

The actual ordination is by prayer and imposition of hands, and is followed by charge to minister and congregation.

When his pastoral relation has been thus ratified, it is understood that he has permanently dedicated himself to the ministerial character. In the practice of that age, he is now for the first time distinguished by the appellation of "Reverend Mr." though of this Doddridge says nothing.

Such is his plan for the institution of a minister. The removal of a minister rests with the congregation alone, in terms of the Salters' Hall agreement.

There is nothing new in the plan. It is avowedly a selection from existing usages, and Dod-

dridge presents it as a sort of harmony of general practice. So long as it prevailed, the old distinctions of a denominational style, Presbyterian and Congregational, were little more than nugatory. Where they had any real meaning they referred, as already hinted, to differences of internal management; the Independents maintaining among themselves the cohesion of autonomous church association, while the Presbyterians were rather in the position of subscribers to a lectureship, leaving matters of business in the hands of a self-elected body of trustees, or a lay committee of management. The denominational names were revived at a later date, and without much reference to the history of congregations, in the interest of that redistribution into doctrinal parties which Doddridge, we have seen, deprecated as a suicidal policy. Walter Wilson, the historian of London Dissent, expresses himself in 1808 as if the division had already issued in destruction. He writes like the shade of Doddridge, seeking in vain to find the old Liberal Dissent. "The Presbyterians have either deserted to the world, or sunk under the influence of a lukewarm ministry; and the Independents have gone over in a body to the Methodists." These, doubtless, were the very dangers against which the mind of Doddridge was forewarned. Hence it was that he dedicated the continuous aim of his faithful zeal to the work of realizing, as far as

possible, the happy dream of the Union of 1691.

In some respects Doddridge's public position of influence was unique. It has been said that he occupied a more distinguished place in the eyes of his countrymen than has been attained by any other Nonconformist divine. He did not seek any such prominence, and never came forward as a representative man. All the same, he responded to every call upon his time. His correspondence was enormous; he employed no amanuensis; and he made shorthand copies of all the letters he wrote. He speaks of answering letters incessantly for a fortnight, and still having 106 to deal with. He met on equal terms the leaders of English religion and many of the leaders of English society. On all hands his services to religion were acknowledged with genuine admiration and gratitude. His diploma in divinity (1736) came from the two universities at Aberdeen. The English universities did not thus honour themselves, but he was welcomed as a visitor, and consulted as a correspondent, by the highest representatives of learning, both at Oxford and Cambridge. The extent to which he was in confidential communication with Anglican clergymen of various schools is very remarkable. Wesley sought his advice in the formation of a library for the use of young preachers. Probably no man was more widely read in every department of religious literature. He furnished Wesley

with a very detailed list, a sort of *catalogue raisonné*, drawn up in a very catholic spirit. "You will not," he adds, "by any means imagine that I intend to recommend the particular notions of all the writers I here mention; which may, indeed, sufficiently appear from their absolute contrariety to each other in a multitude of instances. But I think that, in order to defend the truth, it is very proper that a young minister should know the chief strength of error." He specially includes works bearing on the critical study of the Scriptures. Evidently he thought that such would be useful reading for Methodists. "For, perhaps," says he, "when young people are accustomed to that attention of thought which sacred criticism requires . . . it may prevent those extravagant reveries which have filled the minds of so many, and brought so great dishonour on the work of God."

His instinct of philanthropy was as strongly marked as his spirit of evangelization. It will not be said of him as has been said, not very justly, of the Quakers that in the eighteenth century they turned from religious to philanthropic labours. He developed, as they also did, the philanthropic side of religion, and exhibited Christianity as a beneficent spring of endeavours for social amelioration, and for the relief of suffering. He showed this temper in individual cases; at the risk of being called a

Jesuit, when he took up the cause of an Irish Catholic. He clothed it in projects, successful in themselves, and influential as leading the way to kindred efforts. From his foster-father, Clark, of St. Albans, he took the idea of a charity school, for teaching and clothing poor boys and girls; his foundation of this kind at Northampton was the model for others elsewhere. At Northampton, too, he had a main hand in the establishment of a county infirmary. Bishop Maddox at Worcester followed suit, writing to Doddridge for plans and advice. Bishop Secker wrote from Cuddesdon to Doddridge, congratulating him on the success of the infirmary, expressing his sense of the advantage it would be to have one at Oxford, and the hope he entertained that the Radcliffe trustees when they had finished their library, might employ some part of the residuary funds in this excellent work. Long after Doddridge's death this was done.

Doddridge's philanthropy engaged itself also in the formation of the first project of foreign missions originated by Dissenters. It ranks as the first, for though it would be wrong to forget that the high theme of missions to the heathen had enlisted the thoughts and stirred the hearts of individual Nonconformists from the time of Baxter, yet there had been no suggestion of concerted action on the part of Dissenters until Doddridge's preface (February 1st, 1742) to a sermon

on the general revival of religious effort. In this he informed his brethren that at Northampton a regular society had been formed, both for holding religious exercises with a view to excite the missionary spirit, and for collecting contributions in aid of the work.

It must be owned that this whole project was in advance of the ideas of Doddridge's day. Missions to the heathen were regarded as quixotic, chimerical, almost out of place. The missionary spirit was as yet practically unfelt in dissenting circles. Doddridge, whose enthusiasm had been kindled by Zinzendorf, was here a pioneer, deserving all praise for his true perception of the need, and his prompt and wise endeavour. The distinctive thing about his presentation of the missionary idea was that he connected it with the healthy activity of church life. He did not leave it to take its chance as an extraneous luxury of superfluous enthusiasm, but put it in its place as an integral part of that enterprise which is at once the outcome and the stay of Christian zeal. His measure of immediate success amounted, on his own confession, to "a feeble essay." The interest slumbered after his time, to be awakened by louder appeals at a later date. Then his project was recollected, then his example fired the hearts and strengthened the hands of subsequent workers.

We must not forget that the comparative

shortness of his life (he died at forty-nine) conspired with the multiplicity of his engagements to fracture his efforts. True, that in part his was a career of achievements reached and registered. Still more, however, was it a record of great ideas arrested in their course. His family motto suited him well, *Dum vivimus, vivamus*. He illustrated it in an epigram, pronounced by Dr. Johnson to be one of the finest in the language:—

> Live, while you live, the epicure would say,
> And seize the pleasures of the passing day:
> Live, while you live, the sacred preacher cries,
> And give to God each moment as it flies.
> Lord, in my views let both united be,
> I live in pleasure while I live to Thee.

7 and 8 August, 1895.

THEOPHILUS LINDSEY
AND HIS CHAPEL

THEOPHILUS LINDSEY.—Born, 1723; Curate at Spital Square Chapel, 1746-51; Rector of Kirby Wiske, 1753-56; Vicar of Piddletown, 1756-63; Vicar of Catterick, 1763-73; Minister of Essex Street Chapel, 1774-93; Died, 1808.

VIII

THEOPHILUS LINDSEY AND HIS CHAPEL

IN the latter part of the last century there was living, in retirement at Kidderminster, a sage divine of the Doddridge school, in sentiment evangelical, in cast of thought puritanically discreet rather than severely orthodox, with none of Doddridge's buoyancy of heart or breadth of endeavour, but gifted by nature with a cautious sagacity, rendering him the oracle of the more steady-going section of Liberal Dissent. To prudent Job Orton, the opinions put forward by Priestley and his friends were daring novelties, alike distasteful and distressful for one whose spirit clung to the demure Nonconformity of a staid generation, moderate in all things. Yet when Lindsey, with whom he had corresponded, quitted the Establishment, to give effect to convictions with which Orton had no sympathy, the pious recluse hailed the new confessor as a "glorious character," was delighted to hear that his "chapel was so well filled," and declared to the editor of Calamy that, were he to publish an account of Ejected Ministers, he should be

"strongly tempted to insert Mr. Lindsey in the list," though he "brought him in by head and shoulders." Such was the impression, made by a supreme act of conscience, upon a man not easily moved to an enthusiasm. Our task is to trace the steps by which Lindsey was led to the surrender of his preferment, and to define the aims which actuated him in his subsequent career.

Let it not be imagined that the story of this "most excellent Theophilus" of the modern age will present anything in the nature of what is called "an intellectual treat." When Lord Cranworth went to receive the Great Seal, in succession to Lord Westbury, her Majesty is said to have welcomed him with the words, "You see, my Lord, how much better it is to be very good than to be very clever." A glance at the portrait of Lindsey, whether we take the front face with the clustering wig, or the profile silhouette, with the protruding underlip and the silk night-cap, is sufficient to moderate our expectations either of genius or of vivacity in the original. It is the visage of a mild man, of rather wooden exterior, who looks as if he had never been in a hurry. "Not stout but calm," so his plain-speaking wife described him, "contented with all things, and fit either to live or die." As a surface estimate of him this is admirable, and there lay beneath the surface a vein of true gold.

Lindsey was a Cheshire man, of Scottish

extract. His mother, a gentlewoman of no fortune, had been brought up in the household of a dowager Countess of Huntingdon; the Earl, her son, whose name was Theophilus, stood godfather to Robert Lindsey's youngest child. This peer is best known in history as the husband of Lady Huntingdon, foundress of the religious connexion which perpetuates her name. It is interesting to note, in passing, that not only was Lindsey on intimate terms with that remarkable woman while he remained in the Establishment, but much later, in her old age and his, she welcomed him at Trevecca, gave him her blessing, and expressed her hope of a meeting with this heretic in a better world. Her son Francis, successor to the earldom, was a libertine and an unbeliever; yet he too (as we shall see) showed his regard for Lindsey.

By other members of this family he was provided with an education, and with preferment in the church. His first school was at Rostherne, a name dear to Nonconformists as being the parish of Adam Martindale; his next at Leeds; his college was St. John's, Cambridge, where he came out wrangler, and ultimately obtained a fellowship.

As his university was Cambridge, he was not called upon to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles until his ordination. He then did so, as a matter of course, though some things in them he dis-

approved, and the requirement of so comprehensive a subscription from young men, as the condition of ordination, he deemed "a strange unnecessary entanglement." His theological position was orthodox, if a moderate Calvinism deserve that name. In the theology of the Articles he had been brought up, and he did not question that it was substantially the true Christian doctrine, "just as Christ left it at the first, and Calvin found it about 1500 years afterwards," according to the tart remark of Benjamin Hoadly.

Unquestionably his heart was thoroughly set on the work of the ministry. He took orders at the earliest possible dates, becoming curate-in-charge of the Wheler Chapel (now St. Mary's parish church) in Spital Square. Then for a time he mixed among great people. The Duke of Somerset made him his chaplain, and died in his arms. He gained the acquaintance of Butler, then bishop of Bristol, and furnished him with lives of Romish saints, probably from the Somerset library. The Duke's grandson, the little Lord Warkworth (afterwards Duke of Northumberland), was his pupil for two years in France, and on his return to England the Northumberland family gave him a Yorkshire living. He at once betook himself to parochial duty, though his patrons had intended him to go on with Warkworth's education as his private tutor

at Eton. Yet he certainly did not neglect his own studies, for it was while rector at Kirby Wiske that he became a subscriber to Taylor's Hebrew Concordance. It is in the subscription list to this monumental work that the names of Priestley and Lindsey are first brought into conjunction, the one a pinched Dissenting scholar, struggling on his way to an incorrupt theology in an obscure village of Suffolk, the other a comfortable Yorkshire clergyman, undisturbed by doubts, and devoting all his powers to the service of a Gospel ministry.

It was now that he became an intimate friend of Francis Blackburne, rector of Richmond, archdeacon of Cleveland, and prebendary of Bilton. His connection with Blackburne is an important fact in his life, but his first Yorkshire incumbency had a duration of only three years; and while contact with Blackburne must have been fruitful in stimulus to his mind, it is plain that he did not become imbued with Blackburne's characteristic ideas. It may be as well to say here, as the matter has been misconceived, that he had nothing whatever to do with Blackburne's attack (1752) upon the supposed non-Protestant tone of Butler's primary charge at Durham (1751). This occurred while Lindsey was abroad, and before he knew Blackburne. A year after the voiding of his fellowship, he resigned the rectory of Kirby Wiske to take the vicarage of Piddletown,

Dorsetshire, a valuable living in the patronage of the Earl of Huntingdon, who was anxious to provide for him.

Now it was in the first years of his Dorsetshire settlement that his mind underwent a theological revolution, the history of which is as obscure as its development was speedy and decisive. He has left us entirely in the dark as to any process of growth in his opinions. Apparently he passed very rapidly, and without intermediate stages, from the belief in the Trinity, which he brought with him out of Yorkshire in 1756, to the tenet of the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, which he had reached by 1758, and from which thereafter he never swerved. He speaks, indeed, of "many doubts" concerning the Trinity having sprung up in his mind "at different times and from various causes"; but he regarded these doubts neither with friendliness nor with apprehension. He felt sure the doctrine must be all right; and till he found himself thrown upon his own resources in the solitude of the Dorsetshire vicarage, he had not examined his ground. His examination was directed primarily, and almost exclusively, to the Scriptures. He enumerates no books of divinity, orthodox or heterodox, as having biased his judgment, though he tells us that he found confirmation of his results in statements of some of the early Fathers. The writings of Socinus, he distinctly tells us that he had not

seen. We may find a clue to a proximate agency of his conversion. When accounting for his continuance in the Church, he quotes an argument of John Wallis, the Oxford mathematician and divine. With characteristic honesty he tells us whence he got the quotation; not directly from Wallis, but from an anonymous tract of which he gives the title. The tract was written by Stephen Nye, and is included in the second volume of the collection of Unitarian Tracts, belonging to the period 1687-97. We may fairly draw the inference that this volume at any rate was in Lindsey's possession at Piddletown, and materially contributed to the process of his change.

His main conclusion was one which, as he shaped it, ceased to be a mere point of speculative theology, and bore directly upon the very life of the devotional sentiment. He reached the uncompromising position that religious worship must be rendered to the Father alone. Here is his originality. Almost without an effort he took a step that landed him in a position which others had approached by slow degrees and had hesitated to occupy. The liberal theology of his day drew its suggestion from Samuel Clarke's "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity" (1712). Its main character was a latent Arianism, only in comparatively rare instances achieving the distinctness of positive teaching. Two successive archbishops of York, Herring and Hutton, each of

them raised in turn to the see of Canterbury, held this type of opinion. The Countess of Northumberland writes to Lindsey in 1758 that Yorkshire is "in an uproar, as they say their former archbishop, the late metropolitan, Hutton, died an Arian. They own they do not know what that is, but are sure it is something that is not the right religion." To Arianism Lindsey was never drawn; hence he anticipated the movements of contemporary thought in a way which for a man of his uneager temperament is surprising. If we may trust his autobiographical retrospect, and it seems trustworthy, he was a confirmed believer in the pure humanity of our Lord a year before the publication of Lardner on the Logos; three years before the delivery of the famous sermons by John Seddon of Manchester; nine years before the publication of Paul Cardale's "True Doctrine"; and ten years before Priestley reached his "Socinian" stage. He was ten years older than Priestley; thus they arrived at the same point at the same age, thirty-five. It is true that Lardner had preached the same doctrine in 1747; and Caleb Fleming as early as 1740. Their utterances, addressed to tiny congregations in obscure London meeting-houses, could hardly have reached the ears of Lindsey, who had hitherto come into no close relations with any class of Nonconformists. There is every reason to believe that he had not then met with

the posthumous tract (1750) of Hopton Haynes. It is further to be observed that in his controversial writing Lindsey originated among Unitarian thinkers the denial that in Scripture the term God is in any sense applied to Christ. This exegesis, in which at first he stood alone, and in which Belsham, for example, never saw his way to follow him, marks a distinct cleavage of opinion, removing the last bridge between his position and that of the older theologies.

The primary effect of this complete recasting of his religious attitude was to lead him to contemplate withdrawal from the active ministry. He made some overtures for another situation, and received some assurance in accord with his wishes, probably from the Earl of Huntingdon. He found he could not bring himself to the surrender of the vocation of his life. He excuses himself in a touching picture of his lonely and isolated condition "having no intimate friend to consult or converse with." The "strangeness and singularity" of his proposed course staggered his imagination. He saw no precedent to guide him, and felt what Blackburne had expressed in a letter about this time, an obligation to his calling "prior to all engagements to church modes, and church nonsense in support of them." In an after review of his procedure he reproaches himself with having yielded to these second thoughts. "The first dictates of conscience, which are

generally the rightest, are to be attended to . . . the plain road of duty and uprightness will always be found," he says, " to lead to the truest good in the end."

How was he then to make an attempt to square his convictions with his practice ? Two modes of quieting conscience were in vogue with clergymen who felt the increasing pressure of liberal ideas. A considerable section found it impossible to repeat their subscriptions; thus they debarred themselves from future preferment. Warburton's " Case of Arian Subscription " (1721) had made a deep impression on Clarke and his disciples, who resolved never to subscribe again. This was Blackburne's position; he had long determined that he would not renew his subscription " to gain the wealth of the Indies, or the honour and power of a Popedom." A smaller number boldly laid hands on the Prayer Book; omitting passages of which they disapproved, or altering the phraseology. Clarke had led the way by introducing a modified doxology at the close of the metrical psalms; but Clarke, though he would have liked to have gone much further, and actually did revise the Prayer Book in manuscript, yet never ventured to tamper in practice with the text of the services, save by neglecting the Athanasian Creed. Such manipulation was only possible in some country churches, where the parishioners left their clergyman to do as he pleased, and the bishop was willing to shut his eyes to innovations.

Neither course commended itself to Lindsey. His main difficulty was not about subscription. Nor did he see how a mere refusal to subscribe again could satisfy the conscience, since each act of officiating was to him a virtual reaffirming of the subscription which gave the right to officiate. Hence he was ready to renew the subscription in form, when circumstances called for it. His great difficulty was with the Prayer Book. In this respect nothing could have put him completely at his ease, short of an entire recasting. Yet at institution to each of his livings he had taken the solemn engagement: " I do declare that I will conform to the liturgy of the Church of England as it is now by law established." This personal pledge he felt himself bound to keep.

A third course was possible to him, and to this he was guided by Nye's tract. The Unitarian Tracts, as already mentioned, were promoted but not written by Thomas Firmin. In part they are reprints of the pamphlets of Bidle, who taught Firmin his philanthropy as well as his faith. Now Bidle was a Socinian and an Independent, desirous of gathering his fellow believers into Separatist congregations under the title of " meer Christians." Some time after Bidle's death, Firmin came under the influence of Stephen Nye, a beneficed clergyman of Sabellian views, who

wrote the most important of the later tracts. Nye (as we have seen) weaned Firmin from the crude anthropomorphism which marred the theology of Bidle; suggested to him the use of the Unitarian name; and taught him not only to interpret the forms of the Prayer Book in a Sabellian sense, but to believe that this is the sense "intended by the Church." The invocations in the litany, for example, were to be taken as a threefold address to the Father, viewed under different aspects of His providence and grace. Lindsey adopted this esoteric construction of the liturgy from Nye's criticism of Wallis, and remained fairly satisfied with it for about ten years of quiescence. The subsequent return of his self-reproaches cost him five anxious years of painful conflict, issuing at length, after vain efforts for legislative relief, in the heroic initiative of a new departure.

About the time of his settling down to read Sabellianism into the formularies of the Establishment, he became engaged to Blackburne's stepdaughter, young Hannah Elsworth, whom he married after a betrothal of more than two years. "How often," says her old friend Mrs. Cappe, "have I heard it regretted that Mr. Lindsey had not married a person whose disposition and temper would have assimilated more completely with his own." She however goes on to say that Mrs. Lindsey had the very qualities

essential to her husband's work, qualities complementary to his, qualities of toughness and bluntness, which sometimes pushed and sometimes pulled him through. "She regarded very little what others might say or think." Hence, while Lindsey was by all beloved, his wife's capacity and virtues made her a very appreciable force, but failed to render her generally attractive. It is certain that she became an enthusiast for her husband's creed; and at every turn of their married life her shrewd intelligence and prompt, decisive energy were in readiness to second his aims and to guard his interests. To her really sterling character the best testimony is that of Priestley; though I am bound to admit that, when Priestley wrote of the assurance of his friend's eternal reunion with his wife in another world, a malignant critic remarked: "A very indifferent prospect for poor Lindsey." Alas, good lady, in whom the miracle of motherhood had not been wrought, what wonder if life's wine of duty carried for her some spice of gall.

They had been married a couple of years when the Duke of Northumberland, father of his pupil, was appointed to the Irish viceroyalty, and at once proposed to take Lindsey with him as chaplain. This meant a bishopric; but Lindsey declined the post. Given to the clergyman who had taken his place as tutor at Eton, it secured his promotion, first to Ossory, then to Elphin.

Why did he put away from himself a prospect of this kind? Clarke, we know, would have accepted a mitre, for the orthodoxy of bishops is not protected by subscription; they are the only non-subscribers among the clergy of the Establishment. Belsham sets it down to humility and lack of ambition. Yet surely bishops have been humble, and very unworldly men have felt a personal vocation for the episcopal office. The secret is that to Lindsey the cure of souls in a country parish was simply the ideal life, the life most rich in openings of usefulness and goodness; and it was the life he loved best. Blackburne had written to him five years before, contrasting their situations, and saying how gladly he, too, would exchange his public province (the archdeaconry) for mere parochial work, "if I had talents such as yours."

In the year following his rejection of the Irish chaplaincy, Lindsey exchanged his Dorsetshire vicarage for a Yorkshire one. It was said that this was Mrs. Lindsey's doing. The object, in any case, was to be nearer to Blackburne, her stepfather. Catterick was a much larger parish than Piddletown, though a living of smaller value. As there were three subordinate chapels in the parish, there was a good deal more work as well as less pay. A field was open for parochial organization, and of this Lindsey availed himself with vigour and zeal. In particular he began

(1764) what may properly be called a Sunday-school, as distinct from the conventional practice of Sunday afternoon catechizing, which he pursued on alternate Sundays. Every other Sunday afternoon he had a class of a hundred boys from the village school for Bible lessons, and every Sunday evening a class for young men and young women alternately; while his wife had Sunday evening classes for boys and girls. This was sixteen years before Raikes, who began in November 1780; and it was more modern in its conception than Raikes' plan, based as that was on the impartation of elementary instruction by paid teachers. What did his parishioners think of him? It is very curious, but he was so different from the country clergyman of the mill-wheel type, so much alive, so assiduous, and so human, that they could find but one appellation that seemed to fit him; accordingly they called him a Methodist.

Now occurred two events which, taken together, produced a crisis in Lindsey's life. The first was the resignation of William Robertson; the second was Priestley's removal to Yorkshire, and consequent introduction to Lindsey. With Priestley we do not here deal, but of William Robertson it seems proper to furnish a brief sketch. Lindsey has constantly referred to him as "the Father of Unitarian nonconformity"; and if this is, perhaps, a somewhat misleading

estimate of his position and claims, none the less does the powerful character of this brave and able man deserve a reverent study.

William Robertson, the Irish son of a Scottish father and a Yorkshire mother, was educated at Glasgow for the Presbyterian Church. Expelled from Glasgow University in his twentieth year as a ringleader of revolt against the Principal, he hurried up to London, and there succeeded in obtaining the appointment of a Royal Commission, which visited the University, rescinded the act of expulsion, established the right of the students to choose their own Rector, and restored the exhibitions admitting Glasgow men to Balliol College, Oxford.

His London errand introduced him to the Lord Chancellor, Sir Peter King (a renegade Dissenter), and to sundry Whig bishops. One of these, John Hoadly, brother of a famous man, took him off to Ireland, ordained him deacon and priest (not a sacrificing priest, according to Papal decree, though a sacrificing priest in another sense he proved himself to be), and provided him with half a dozen livings, yielding a total annual stipend of £200 a year. To double this income it was only necessary to compel graziers to pay tithe. The Irish House of Commons, sympathizing with the owners of black cattle, passed a strong resolution on the subject of clerical extortion. Dean Swift satirized the action of

the Commons; the graziers applauded it and stopped payment. Robertson, after vainly proposing a plan of tithe commutation, put a curate in charge of his country livings, and himself took a Dublin curacy. While there, he founded in conjunction with another curate a clerical widows' and orphans' fund for the Dublin diocese.

He had returned to the country and was fifty-four years of age, when chance threw in his way a book called "Free and Candid Considerations" (1749) compiled anonymously by John Jones of Alconbury. Jones was a strong advocate for Prayer Book revision, especially to meet the case of Arians. Robertson read Jones' book, and at once decided that it was impossible for him to subscribe the Articles again. No sooner had he come to this resolution, than fresh and valuable preferment was offered to him. He declined it in a very frank letter to his bishop (15 Jan. 1760). From this time he omitted the Athanasian Creed, and some other parts of the church service; finding that his ecclesiastical patrons were dissatisfied he resigned his livings. He had twenty-one children; yet he threw up all his preferments, save and except only an honorary private chaplaincy of merely casual value. This was in 1764.

In 1766 Robertson printed anonymously a singularly able little book, bearing the modest title of an "Attempt," which must have been

written two or three years previously. He describes himself as "a presbyter of the Church of England," says nothing of his resignation, but only of his refusal of further preferment, and expressly denies that he belongs either to the Arian or the Socinian party.

He propounds the plan of a comprehensive Church. Subscription is to be strictly limited to the Bible. The Prayer Book is to be so revised as to reduce it to an impartial echo of Scripture. This, he thinks, will be sufficient to reunite all Protestant Christians, and heresy will cease; for heresy is an artificial crime, it simply means that a man does not belong to the Establishment. Let us listen to his own plea: "Methinks I hear a voice come out of the crowd: Heyday, what an Utopian scheme is here. Shall we set the gates of the Church wide open to let in all sorts of heretics, Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians, Sabellians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Socinians, and all the motley crew which have been condemned by so many Councils, Popes, Fathers, and Acts of Convocation and Parliament? . . . Shall we open the gates to these people? I say, Yes. And for this reason; that as soon as we let them in, they lose their names, and become one with us by joining in the public worship, to which they can no longer have any objection; and, moreover, employ all their power in defending the Establishment which would so generously support them.

What their particular speculative opinions may be, as long as they remain quiet in the State, concerns not thee or me to know; no more than it does at present to know the private sentiments of every clergyman of the Established Church, who have, I believe, as different notions of religion as they have faces; and yet all is peace among them, by agreeing in the great practical duties, and by joining in the worship that is established by law." This is a fair specimen of Robertson's trenchant style. He quotes (from Voltaire) the caustic epigram: "The difference between the Church of Rome and the Church of England is this: that the former cannot err, and the latter is always in the right." A copy of the third issue of his book was presented by its author to his *alma mater*, the University of Glasgow. The Senate immediately made him D.D.

When the news of Robertson's resignation reached Lindsey (probably in 1768), it struck home to his conscience, as a mandate for his own exodus. Here was the precedent for which he had vainly sought ten years before. On the other hand, he now had friends to consult; and his main friend, Blackburne, was strongly averse to secession from the Church. Blackburne had lately brought out his contra-subscription treatise, bearing the quaint title of "The Confessional" (1766). His hope was to create a body of public opinion favourable to a parliamentary measure for clerical relief.

Blackburne unhesitatingly refused an invitation to settle with a congregation of Dissenters in London, though it would have doubled his income. All this would influence Lindsey and hold him back.

He was impelled forward by his associations with Priestley. The advice of Priestley coincided with Blackburne's: "Stay where you are; rather take liberties with your Prayer Book than give up your church, unless they drive you out." The position of Priestley, with its happy immunity from pledges, spoke to him in another sense, with the voice of an irresistible appeal. Returning one day from Wakefield, where he had met Priestley and Turner, he thus expressed the contrast which he felt between his situation and theirs: "They are at ease." His resolve was taken during recovery from a dangerous attack of rheumatic fever, brought on (as I conjecture) by his exertions in behalf of the clerical Petition for Relief (1772). Should the petition fail, he would resign his living. To this he definitely, though silently, made up his mind.

The petition, known as the Feathers Petition, from the tavern in the Strand where its promoters met, was indeed a forlorn hope. It proved a failure in every respect. As drafted by Blackburne, it proposed to free the clergy of the Establishment from any requirement "to acknowledge by subscription or declaration the truth of any

formulary of religious faith or doctrine whatsoever, beside Holy Scripture itself." Well might Burke satirise the idea of making legislative use of so intangible a commonplace of Protestant piety, taking as its formulary "the multifarious strange compound . . . called the Scriptures," and defining neither the principle of its interpretation, nor the scope of its authority. This language of the great orator was resented by Lindsey as the speech of a Jesuit, full of popish ideas; but it rudely expressed the politician's appreciation of an illusory settlement, which would settle nothing. The petitioners, according to the printed list of their names, numbered only 197, drawn from twenty-six counties, by far the larger number from the eastern counties, Essex alone contributing thirty-one names. None came from Cheshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire; only two from Lancashire. There was one president of a Cambridge college; but of church dignitaries, Blackburne himself was the single specimen. It is not too much to say, after a close scrutiny of the list, that, in theology most, if not all, were heterodox. Among them were a couple of quondam Arian Dissenters, who had conformed, and found their new shoes pinch worse than their old ones.

The House of Commons debated the petition from three o'clock till eleven on 6th February, 1772, and rejected it by 217 votes to 71. The

petitioners were satisfied with the debate, which they thought gave them a moral victory. The speech they especially admired was by Sir George Savile, whose theme was that "the Church of God can protect itself"; an admirable truth, but one which seems even more at variance with the principle of an Establishment than with that of a subscription. One important issue of the debate demands remembrance. In the course of it, Lord North "with his usual good humour observed that he saw no ground to complain of intolerance, in times when every one was permitted to go to heaven in his own way"; and added that if the Dissenters had made a similar application, for relief from their subscription to the Articles, he could see no reasonable objection to it. The hint was taken by two Dissenting divines, who listened to the debate from the gallery. A Bill for a modification of the Toleration Act was introduced that same year, and at once passed the Commons. After having been twice rejected by the Lords, it finally became law in 1779.

Baffled in his hopes of relief, with now no course left for him but to resign his living, Lindsey took his place in the Yorkshire coach, feeling that he was returning to Catterick only to sing his *Nunc dimittis* as a minister in the Church of England. There was a most winsome incident of this return. In the morning, before he started on his homeward journey, he bethought him of

his Sunday scholars. He had persuaded some of them to endure inoculation for the smallpox, and he wanted to persuade the rest. So he trotted down to the Tower, and there he got at the Mint a bag of new halfpence, prizes for the little folk, that none might flinch from the preventive measure. This childless man had a heart, whereby he understood something of the great God.

For yet another year he postponed his resignation, since the Feathers petitioners had agreed to apply again to Parliament; a purpose which was at length abandoned as hopeless. Meantime Lindsey devoted himself to a study of Calamy's lives of the Ejected Divines of 1662, and prepared his own *apologia*. In reading Calamy, he was particularly touched by a striking passage from the soliloquy of John Oldfield, of Carsington, a passage which has since been quoted with great effect by Mrs. Gaskell, in her novel of "North and South."

The first person to whom he definitely announced his intention of resigning was Mason, the poet; who thought it "visionary and absurd" to make a fuss about "the usage of forms, by which no one was injured." Blackburne, when he heard what was coming, grew vehement in his remonstrances. In losing Lindsey he felt, and said, that he was losing his right hand. His own theological liberalism did not run in the

Socinian direction; and though he dissevered himself, as far as he could, from the taint of Socinianism, by immediately publishing against it, yet he foresaw that the defection of Lindsey, avowedly on these lines, must be fatal to all chance of reviving the petition for relief. Not a single one of Lindsey's friends backed him up in his resolve, or seemed to credit its reality. Even Hollis was silent.

When he had actually taken the step, almost the first word of genuine appreciation came from Grey Cooper, the Whig politician, who thus wrote: "I have read your letter, which filled my heart with grief, and made my eyes glisten with tears. I have not a word to say, or an argument to offer, against your resolution to quit your preferment." His farewell sermon (Nov. 28, 1773) was delivered to a crowded congregation, and was broken by their sobs.

What now was to be his course? Mention has been made of the character of Francis, the Earl of Huntingdon. He was fond of posing his clerical guests with the awkward problem: "What became of the universe, when its great Creator hung lifeless upon a tree in Judea?" Lindsey had replied that the question did not concern him, as the doctrine ridiculed formed no part of his creed. "But," said Huntingdon, "it is part of the creed of the Church in which you officiate every week as a minister." Hearing of Lindsey's

resignation, he at once wrote to him, saying that while he cared nothing for theology, he nevertheless honoured integrity, and wished Lindsey to accept an appointment as his librarian; the salary would be handsome, and his time would be his own. Again, there was just now a vacancy at the Liverpool Octagon (by the resignation of Hezekiah Kirkpatrick), and Turner hoped that Lindsey might be induced to fill it. There was a vacancy, too, at the Norwich Octagon; Lindsey was pressed to settle there. By this time he had made up his mind to strike out a path for himself, to set the example of a new churchmanship. His only doubt was in regard to the proper locality for the experiment. He thought of London and he thought of Bristol, but decided for London. As he wrote to Turner: "My design . . . is to try to gather a church of Unitarian Christians out of the Established Church."

Stress is due to this definite and important statement, because the graphic pen of Mrs. Cappe, writing after Lindsey's death, chooses other terms to describe his project. She represents him as founding a chapel "on such a basis as should admit of the communion of Christians of whatever denomination." This language is rather apt to mislead. Lindsey held, it is true, that the forms of public worship he approved, being Scriptural, must be satisfactory to all true Christians. He believed that a purely Scriptural

liturgy might form a common bond between different churches; and hoped that in time men would see this, and come so far into agreement. He went no further than this in his ideas of Christian communion. In his first sermon at Essex Street he maintains that God never meant all Christians to be of one sentiment, but that there should be different sects of Christians and different churches. He wished to increase largely the number of Unitarians; but he certainly did not expect to convert everybody. Nor did he reckon his mission to be to the outside sects, from the Catholic to the Quaker. He left Priestley to deal with Dissenters. Of any mission to the unchurched, not a syllable does he let fall. His mission was to members of the Church of England, to whom he hoped to show a better way. "The peculiar reason," he says, "for forming a separate congregation, distinct from the National Church, is that we may be at liberty to worship God alone, after the command and example of our Saviour Christ." In Scottish phraseology his was essentially a Relief Church.

With this understanding, we may accept Mrs. Cappe's further description of his plan, as "a specimen of a reformed Church of England." He had renounced the phantom-project of an Establishment with an open door, which had been the ideal of Robertson, and the object of the Feathers Petition. A Unitarian secession had

become, in his opinion, the only practical course. Thus, while Firmin's idea had been to keep Unitarians in the Church, where they were to act as a leaven, Lindsey's idea was to draw them out of the Church, and his chapel was to be a magnet for that purpose. He wanted, as he says, to "awaken others to come out of Babylon," out of "her witchcraft and idolatries."

When he got to London, Lindsey was fifty years of age, and very poor. His father's property had been equally divided between himself and a spendthrift brother, but Lindsey had given the whole of his own share to his married sister. He had laid out his income on his parish. His wife's fortune yielded little more than £20 a year. To provide for immediate necessities he had sold most of his books; he now sold his plate. He took a lodging in Holborn, having a little closet off the bedroom, which did as coal-cellar, storeroom, and study. Sitting on one pile of books, he made another pile serve him as writing table. The man was happy; he had put himself in the right. When Joseph Johnson, his bookseller (son of an Everton Baptist) had found him an auction room in Essex Street, he was ready for the start of his Unitarian Chapel, opened 17th April, 1774.

Priestley ran up for the opening, Benjamin Franklin was there, with a lord, and a posse of beneficed clergy. Lindsey wore no surplice, but in other respects the model of the Established

worship was adhered to. On his way to London he had fallen in with a transcript of Clarke's proposed revision of the Prayer Book, in the possession of Disney, Blackburne's son-in-law. His friends suggested that he should adopt this as his own service-book, thus sheltering himself under the sanction of an historic name. While he took Clarke's revision as his basis, he made many further changes; retaining, however, the use of the Apostles' Creed, and beginning the litany with a threefold invocation. Priestley defended the creed usage in his plan (1783) for "formation of Unitarian churches," saying, "I used to have much objection to the recitation of the Apostles' Creed, or any creed, in public worship. But when I consider that the object of Christian assemblies is not merely devotion, but likewise general instruction, and that the great principles of Christianity, and especially the outlines of the Gospel history, cannot be too firmly impressed on the minds of all, I now think that the short time that is taken up in the recital of that creed, as corrected by Mr. Lindsey, is very well employed." A few years later, the creed was deemed in need of further corrections, not merely verbal. Lindsey dropped its use some little time before his resignation in 1793. Not many persons can recollect the recital of the Apostles' Creed as an integral part of the service in a Unitarian Chapel. It was maintained at Alcester during the whole

of the thirty years' ministry of Thomas Warren, ending in 1864, and memory retains the impression of the hearty way in which it was recited by the congregation.

Three years in the auction room secured the prospects of Lindsey's experiment. The premises were bought, and the present building with its modest dome was erected (opened 29 March, 1778). Having taken me to London for the Great Exhibition of 1851, my father asked me what next I would like to see; I told him I wanted to see Essex Street Chapel. So thither he took me, and afterwards took me to Westminster Abbey. "Well," said he, "what do you think of this?" "It's a fine building," answered I, "but it hasn't got a dome like Essex Street Chapel." When my father's friend, Dr. Russell, of Birmingham, heard of this, he remarked: "That boy'll come to a bad end; he's taken early piety in a morbid form."

It cannot be affirmed that the success of Lindsey's experiment was the success he had been sanguine enough to contemplate. A few persons of distinction joined him from the Establishment; but adhesions to his movement from this quarter were neither very numerous nor very permanent. The bulk of his support came from Dissenters. A remarkable and important secession of Cambridge divines threw into the Unitarian ranks such men as Jebb, Evanson, Tyrwhitt, Wakefield and

others. Unless we count household worship, none of these seceders except Disney became ministers of Unitarian congregations; nor did any of them attempt to form new causes, excepting the heroic and ill-fated Fyshe Palmer. Disney became Lindsey's colleague in 1783, after applications had been made in vain to Robertson, Jebb and Lambert. When Disney resigned in 1805 it was not by an Anglican convert that he was succeeded, but by Belsham, who came from the Independents. This appointment of Belsham was with Lindsey's full approval, and was fully justified by the event. At the same time it was yielding to the inevitable; it marked in a signal manner the reversal of Lindsey's hopes of an increasing stream of Anglican coadjutors; and by a section of his friends it was ill received, and treated as a new departure, at variance with the original purpose of his chapel.

Nor were the efforts to plant other Unitarian chapels, on the Essex Street model, attended with much continuous success. Under Lindsey's own auspices, chapels were opened at Highbury and at Plymouth Dock, but they were manned by Dissenters, and were soon closed. In 1791 the Essex Street Prayer Book was reprinted at Dunkirk, and used for a time in the English chapel supported by the merchants there. Of all the numerous ventures of this sort, that in Mosley Street, Manchester, transferred in 1839 to the

building in Upper Brook Street of Barry's design, (the first Dissenting chapel erected in Gothic architecture) is the sole, though long a distinguished, survival to our own times.

The abiding effect of the Lindsey movement was realized in the gradual transformation of the older type of Liberal Dissent; issuing in the practical separation of a distinct religious community, diminished in numbers, but imbued with a fresh force of vigorous conviction.

The process was not rapid. Belsham reports that in 1789, when he resigned his post at Daventry, he "knew but of two congregations (Essex Street, and New Meeting, Birmingham) the ministers of which were avowed Unitarians." By 1810 he was able to add some twenty to the list. From that date the pace was quickened, and by various causes; the passing away of the older generation of divines; the coming over of men in middle age, as the influence of their former leaders was withdrawn; the literary and controversial strength of the Unitarian cohort; the supply of the ministry from the college at York, where Wellbeloved, though a pupil of Belsham, did his best to teach a theology without bias, with the result, however, of sending out a succession of ardent Unitarians; the passing of the Trinity Act of 1813, which redeemed Unitarian opinion from outlawry, and fortified its advocates with a welcome sense of equal rights with other Dissenters.

Reverting to Belsham's remark about "avowed Unitarians" it is to be noted that he means Unitarians in the Lindsey definition of the term. Lindsey was the first to impress upon the Unitarian name a special stamp of meaning, to him of prime importance. It was Lindsey who taught Priestley to use the name Unitarian in place of Socinian. Do not suppose that Lindsey was one of those sensitive spirits to whom the name Socinian is a species of torture. On the contrary, he affirms for himself and his friends, that "though they would not willingly be called by the name of Socinus, or of anyone but of Christ himself, yet they refuse not the appellation, but think it honourable." Still, it would not have lent itself to the special purpose for which he wanted a denominational name.

He got the term Unitarian, no doubt, from the writers at the end of the seventeenth century, who introduced it into the English language. It was introduced at that time, as a term of catholic spirit and wide comprehensiveness, covering all those who, with whatever other differences, maintain the Unipersonality of the Divine Being. Sabellians, Arians, Socinians, all were equally entitled to a name which linked them in allegiance to a common tenet. Its hospitality was not limited to its Christian adherents; Israel and Islam (Wesley's "Unitarian fiend") were expressly recognized as belonging to the brotherhood

of the Unitarian name. Thus the function of the name was to define a common point of theological speculation. Those to whom it was applied were viewed as in accord on a matter of divine knowledge. God is a Being who may be known. It is a conclusion of reason, based on the data of His self-revelation, that in person, as well as in essence, God is strictly and simply One. Of the existence, or non-existence, of subordinate powers; of our respective duties to Him and to them: the doctrine primarily expressed by the Unitarian name is silent. This is the sense in which Unitarian is defined by the consensus of a catena of our accredited theologians; *e.g.*, by Lant Carpenter, by Aspland, by Yates, by Tayler, and by Martineau. Again, it is the sense in which the term is used by those who speak broadly of the Unitarian Church, an expression employed by William Taylor as early as 1810. It was a favourite expression with Henry Arthur Bright ("Lay of the Unitarian Church"). It was taken up in America by Sylvester Judd (1813-1853), and familiarized among us, by Dr. J. R. Beard (about 1857) and employed as a collective designation, to cover retrospectively the whole succession of antitrinitarian movements in the history of Christendom.

Lindsey, who adopted the term with little reference to its historical origin, gave it a new turn in accordance with his idea of worship,

already adverted to. "The Unitarian doctrine," says Lindsey, "is this: that religious worship is to be addressed only to the One True God, the Father." His common point is not one of theological speculation, but of religious practice. God is a Being who is to be worshipped; and there is but One Being who is to be worshipped. The unqualified condemnation of all worship of Christ, no better in Lindsey's view than a species of real even if unconscious idolatry, was a novel feature of the antitrinitarian protest in this country. Neither our Arians nor our Socinians had hitherto taken this ground. Bartholomew Legate furnishes an exception, and one may be found in Hopton Haynes; these, however, were not influential cases. Doubtless the earlier English Unitarians had set themselves to reduce the worship of Christ to what they deemed its proper proportions. Some of them had thought it best reserved for special phases of devotion; none had reckoned it wrong, when kept in its due place. Most had defended it as subordinate worship, rendered to the Son of God, to the glory of God the Father; some had rested it on express divine command. Emlyn's treatise in "Vindication of the Worship of Jesus Christ on Unitarian Principles" (1706), is a specimen of endeavours to rectify rather than to abolish a universal practice of Christendom. It was their adversaries who had deduced from antitrinitarian premises the

inference that Christ-worship was an impiety. Lindsey not only admitted the inference, but laid the greatest possible stress upon it.

Hence Lindsey but seldom speaks of the Divine Unipersonality. His constant phrase is the Divine Unity; and by this he always means, somewhat in disregard of the usual force of the term, that the Father is the solitary object of Christian worship. Thus he refuses to admit that Trinitarians hold the Divine Unity, that is, in his sense; for he does not mean either to deny them to be Christians, or to strike Christianity from the list of monotheistic religions. Similarly he refuses to Arians the use of the Unitarian name, in spite of their historic title to it, unless they join him in his restriction of worship to the Father only. How he contrived to include the Muhammadans, who deny that to God belongs the attribute of Fatherhood, I cannot say; Lindsey certainly classes them as Unitarians; but other writers of this type were very touchy on this topic, and disputed the evidence of the earlier recognition of the Unitarianism of the Moslem.

This restriction led to another, imposed upon the Unitarian book societies (with one exception). Their rules were prefaced by a preamble, intended formally to warn off Arians, and inviting the co-operation of those only who believed in the mere humanity of our Lord.

The justification, or the excuse, for this policy

was the purpose of consolidating the movement. Against this advantage must be set the alienation of friends of an inclusive spirit, and the grievance experienced by Unitarians of an older type; who felt very much as some later Unitarians felt, when the founders of the Milton Club excluded anti-trinitarians from membership.

Lindsey's construction of the name marks the beginning of the modern Unitarian religious body ("the Unitarian connexion," as some style it) in contradistinction to the older efforts of Unitarian speculation. In that body it is still the popular sense; and popular on account of its practical bearing. It is capable of being made mandatory, at least on its negative side; the jussives of religion, as distinct from its advices, being, indeed, chiefly negative. None but an unreflecting person would dream, for example, of attempting to utilise the formulary, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." That this is in the Law, and is, in fact, the highest thought the Law contains, simply shows that the Law bears witness to things beyond its sphere; since religious emotion is not elicited at the call of an imperative injunction. Whereas, "Thou shalt not say in my hearing any prayer to the Virgin Mary" is quite within the scope and competence of practical religious regulation.

Reduction of worship to a strict Patrolatry was then with Lindsey made central and distinguishing. Few of any creed will dispute that a divided

homage is incompatible with a right attitude of the heart towards God. So far Lindsey's position was impregnable; his principle was sound and salutary. In applying this principle he allowed nothing for the different experiences of men in regard to what impedes, and what assists, a whole-hearted devotion to God. Belsham seems to have discovered that a good Unitarian of the Lindsey type, and of Lindsey's own making, might yet turn to Christ quite naturally, as a man turns to his friend. The Duke of Grafton, agreeing with Belsham that Jesus would himself resent the tribute of "that divine worship" which is "due only to the Almighty Father," nevertheless held that "Jesus Christ, in his present state, can hear and help us." This Lindsey had categorically denied. Belsham, however, makes the remarkable admission that he "would be far from presuming to limit the extent of" Christ's "knowledge or his power, in his present exalted state." He thus allows that there may be supplication, without worship, in the theological sense. What would he have made of an address of this kind? "Come, Friend and Saviour of the race, who didst shed thy blood on the cross, to reconcile man to man, and earth to Heaven. . . . Compassionate Saviour! We welcome thee to our world. We welcome thee to our hearts. We bless thee for the Divine Goodness thou hast brought from Heaven; for the Souls thou hast

warmed with love to man, and lifted up in love to God; for the efforts of Divine Philanthropy which thou hast inspired; and for that hope of a pure Celestial Life, through which thy disciples triumph over death. Benevolent Saviour! Inspirer of goodness! We offer thee this tribute of affectionate and reverential gratitude on earth; and we hope to know, to love, to resemble, and to approach thee, more nearly and more worthily in Heaven."

Now, I do not know whether these sentences of Channing, the first drawn from the last of his pamphlets, the rest from one of his posthumous sermons, would gain from Belsham the indulgence extended without difficulty to a coroneted convert. There is little doubt that Lindsey would deem them wholly inadmissible, being unintelligible save as apostrophe, and a dangerous abuse of that figure. In this estimate he would be followed by all who take Unitarian to mean what he made it to mean; and who, consequently, by a Unitarian Chapel understand a chapel in whose services there is no legitimate room for personal address to Christ, or for sympathy with the attitude of mind which prompts it.

In full accord with the special emphasis which he laid upon his chapel for Unitarian worship, Lindsey did not propose to make it a chapel for Unitarian preaching. On the contrary, he pledged himself never to treat on controverted

points of theology in his sermons from the Essex Street pulpit. It is true that he broke this pledge, at least on one occasion, in order to expound his foundation principle. As a rule he observed it very closely, and, I think, without an effort. He claims in his farewell sermon (1793) to have "never knowingly deviated" from the principle "never to arraign or condemn other churches or Christian societies for their different worship or opinions, who have a right to judge for themselves as much as you have." Didactic exposition was always more to his taste than polemical debate. People who went to hear him out of curiosity were sometimes astonished to find nothing in the sermon except pure religious teaching and high morale. This was his idea of the function of the pulpit; for polemics the fit agency was the press. Even in his publications for the good of his cause, he took, where possible, the line of history; and when, because no one else would, he set himself to reply to Robert Robinson's polemic, he wrote anonymously, in order to reduce the personal element in the controversy to its lowest terms. His reply had the rare merit of converting his adversary.

His "Historical View" (1783) of Unitarianism since the Reformation, though swelled by tedious argumentative digressions, is not only a book of good research for its time, but has the honour of being the first in its kind. Later writers

would have done well had they taken the trouble to follow up its method of investigation, in place of satisfying themselves with merely quoting from its pages.

His apologetic and other writings have that command which earnestness, pains, singleness of purpose, and genuine conviction will always give; but they are not striking. His style lacks vital force, for his mind lacks imagination and humour. His matter, often excellent, is never rich. His doctrines are diligently culled from Scripture, interpreted as though Scripture were a product of the eighteenth century. He speaks of Isaiah as an "illustrious prophet," and thinks of him as the Rev. Dr. Isaiah, in a bob-wig, with a bland manner, and a curious habit of being merely "figurative," whenever he might otherwise seem to dissent from Mr. Lindsey. Substitute apostle for prophet, and the same account will equally serve to delineate his vision of the author of the Pauline epistles. Lindsey's conspicuous piety is serene, but unimpassioned. With good reason he insists on telling you that his Christ is indeed a human being; and that he still lives. Never did a heresiarch show less fertility in religious conception, or keep himself at a safer distance from enthusiasm.

On the other hand, his mind was open, to the last, for the reception of further suggestions in his own line of thought. Priestley's rejection

(1787) of the narratives of the birth of our Lord as unhistoric, staggered, and even shocked him at first; yet before long he found himself in harmony with Priestley. In his last publication (1802) he treats the question of the supernatural in a way which, in Belsham's opinion, "destroys the very existence of miracles, and subverts the argument founded upon them." He had adopted the view of his favourite author, Abraham Tucker, and was prepared to admit that "those operations called miraculous are as much the result of general laws as the most ordinary events." Lindsey, in short, was concerned with the historical facts, and valued them as such. Belsham was intent on making good use of them as theological credentials.

I mention these indications, not that I think Lindsey's intellectual calibre was such as to give special weight to his conclusions on particular points, but because, among those unversed in the writings of our Unitarian fathers, there is an impression that their minds were somewhat rigidly fixed in a uniform system of ideas; and that they had paid no attention to problems which have since been much under debate. On the contrary, the more I study them, the fuller do I find the evidence of the extent to which they carried their independent researches, and of the fearlessness which informed their judgments. Whether we take the trouble to know them or not, the men who made the Unitarian movement are worth

knowing. Whether we endorse their creed or not, their opinions will reward scrutiny. Whether we wish well to their cause or not, there is much to be learned from the story of their aims, their achievements, their failures.

Among all those who assisted in the Unitarian rebirth of the last century, we may set Lindsey first, as in time, so likewise in prestige. This is not to claim for him the penetrating genius of Priestley, or to match him with the robust power of Belsham. There is none whose life, from first to last, conveys a finer lesson. Lindsey, as a writer, was a model of sober diligence in and for his generation. He will be neglected to-day by all but the few who have leisure and curiosity, and are led into sympathy with the past by a desire to understand the present. Lindsey, as an example, is for all time; a fresh, nervous protest against the supineness of conformity, the peril of tampering with conscience, the unworthiness of half measures in religious conviction; a protest all the more signal and decisive from its deliberation, its unobtrusiveness, its self-denial, its characteristic union of high resolve with modest service, and with patient strength.

7 *March*, 1895.

THOMAS BELSHAM
HIS PLACE IN THE UNITARIAN MOVEMENT

THOMA BELSHAM.—Born, 1750; Assistants Tutor at Daventry, 1771-78; Minister at Worcester, 1778-81; Minister and Divinity Tutor at Daventry, 1781-89; Divinity Tutor at Hackney, 1789-96; Minister at Hackney, 1794-1805; Minister at Essex Street Chapel, 1805-29; Retired from active duty, 1825; Died 1829.

IX

THOMAS BELSHAM, HIS PLACE IN THE UNITARIAN MOVEMENT

JUST as the year 1779 was begun, a country minister, but lately ordained, paid a brief visit to London. Ministers on their travels have nearly as much curiosity as other people. The visitor, accepting the invitation of a friend, went to evening service at a chapel erected in the previous year, and rather in the fashion, having the combined attractions of heresy and novelty. One of its strongest supporters had been drawn to the place by the eager report of a lady's maid, that "a gentleman was going to open a room to preach a new religion." "A gentleman told his friend at Tunbridge Wells it was the only 'genteel' place in town." Now the Worcester divine, in the course of his studies, had read something of Dr. Priestley, and had gone so far as to entertain the idea of the bare possibility of a Socinian being a good man. In this opinion he felt himself confirmed, as he listened to the quiet strain of the evening preacher's grave and earnest discourse. There was no theology to vex him, for the topic, "a good conscience," is common to most theo-

logies. So the listener reasoned, it is just because these men neglect theology that they remain content with views "so grossly erroneous" as theirs. He left the building, with heightened respect it is true, yet touched all the more deeply with "a very sincere concern" for the pioneers of the new movement. Recording these impressions, after the lapse of a generation, he adds this striking confession, "Little did he then suspect, that further and more diligent and impartial inquiry would induce him to embrace a system from which his mind, at that time, shrank with horror. And, had it been foretold to him that, in the course of years and the revolution of events, he should himself become the disciple, the friend, the successor, and the biographer of the person who was then speaking . . . he would have regarded it as an event almost without the wide circle of possibilities, and as incredible as the incidents of an Arabian tale."

It can hardly be needful to explain that, on that memorable January night, the preacher was Theophilus Lindsey and the hearer was Thomas Belsham. I wish we could see them, as they then faced each other. Lindsey we can indeed see, perfectly well. His picture exhibits him to us to-day, exactly as he looked to Belsham. The only portrait of Belsham we have, thirty years later in date, by no means suggests a man whose chief recreation was horsemanship; nor does it in any

way enable us to conjecture back the fresh image of his vigorous prime. An irreverent jester once proposed to relabel it "Cardinal Hippopotamus." A mischievous sceptic put the question, "Is it possible *that* man really believed in the resurrection of *that* body?" There are men who are not much to look at; and there are men who are too much to look at. Oliver Heywood is one of these (his latest biographer calls him "the Great Oliver"); so is Matthew Henry. The picture of Belsham afflicts one with the spectacle of an exaggerated bulk. Let us pass from the effigy, and try to discover the man.

The father of Thomas Belsham, an Independent minister and the author of some Latin poems, was, it is believed, the original hero of a story which has been retailed of later and less poetical divines. Preaching as a candidate for a Scottish charge, where the leading elders were a laird and a physician, James Belsham, who professed himself a moderate Calvinist, dined with the physician and supped with the laird. "Sir," said the physician at dinner, "I like your moderation, but God forgie your Calvinism." "Man," exclaimed the laird, after a hearty supper, "your Calvinism's vera weel, but de'il tak your moderation." Belsham's mother was the daughter of a brewer, the granddaughter of a knight, the great-granddaughter of an earl; we will go no further. This earl, we may observe, was not merely a statesman

of distinction, but is said to have been the first peer of the realm who collected a great library—collected and paid for it; there have been peers who have collected libraries by a simpler process. From his mother, Belsham received, at the outset of life, a characteristic injunction, neither to take his politics from Junius, nor his theology from Priestley. One of Belsham's sisters was married to an Irish dean; hence his visits to Ireland; hence, too, perhaps, the easy tone he took in his relations with ecclesiastical dignitaries.

Till he went to Daventry Academy in his seventeenth year, his theology was purely that of the Assembly's catechism. He soon became a Clarkean, and remained unshaken in this persuasion until he was seven-and-thirty. That is to say, he ascribed to our Lord every divine attribute, saving only self-existence. Whether this is orthodox or not has been disputed. Clarke maintained that it was. Belsham never did. He thought it Biblical, and therefore true. He was a Trinitarian on these terms. Nevertheless, he had the distinct conviction that he was beginning life, strongly evangelical in religion, but in theology a Nonconformist.

Not reckoning the episode of a three years' ministry at Worcester, of the usual Independent type, Belsham was connected with Daventry Academy as student and tutor, for a period of twenty years. He never liked the locality,

which he describes as a "mean and dirty place." Could he have had his way, the Academy would have been transferred to Worcester, to Northampton, or to Warwick. To the Daventry ideal of theological education he remained constant through life. The genius of Daventry, inherited from Jennings and Doddridge, was inherently eclectic. Truth was sought by a method of comparative theology. The teacher placed competing systems before his class; the learners were to be not mere pupils but students. The aids of friendly debate between teachers and learners were not disdained; we have seen that, in Priestley's time, the teachers themselves took different sides on fundamental questions.

In the last year of his studentship, Belsham had supplied the place of a classical tutor. On the completion of his course, he was appointed Tutor, not in classics as he desired, but in mathematics, logic, and metaphysics; and in this post he remained for seven years. Meanwhile he had plenty of overtures from congregations. He had made up his mind on two points: not to be a competing candidate; nor to listen to any but a unanimous call. Only the precarious nature of an assistant tutorship drew him at length from Daventry; he returned to it in his thirty-second year, as to the work of his life. For eight years he combined the headship of the Academy with the pastorate of the congregation. On his settle-

ment, his friend Radcliffe Scholefield sent him a recipe for polishing tables, accompanying it with a lament over the fatal fact that there was no formula by which he could, "with the same ease and certainty," polish the minds of his pupils.

As Divinity Tutor, Belsham innovated, in an important respect, upon established methods. Doddridge's lectures had hitherto been the text-book; lectures which built up a system by confronting, comparing and Biblically testing rival views. Belsham took Doddridge's order of topics, but in regard to some of those most controverted, he made his treatment directly Biblical. A strong reason with him for adopting this treatment was the failure of the text-book method to counteract the current of Unitarianism. Under each head he collected the passages of Scripture bearing, or supposed to bear, upon it. On every passage he furnished a catena of interpretations and comments, so selected as fairly to exhibit the various schools of thought, in direct contact with that which all assumed as their foundation. His own critique concluded the survey. Four years' pursuit of this method had consequences which disturbed him. Though still a Clarkean, he could no longer, with Clarke, consider himself to be a Trinitarian. He wrote frankly to the Academy Trustees, and they were satisfied with his position. Two years later he was alarmed by the progress of Socinian views among his best pupils. To settle

their minds, he had nothing better to offer than a reconsideration of the Biblical data. With each annual revision of his lectures, the anti-Socinian proof passages kept diminishing in number; yet he could appeal with justified confidence to the residuary texts, which had stood the test of scrutiny. Before the close of 1788 the residuum had been reduced to zero in this purifying process. Belsham's eyes were almost suddenly opened. He had taken what he thought the only sound and certain course for staying the Unitarian movement; he found himself cornered by the Unitarian argument. Nay more, the very doctrine from which, up to the last moment, he had recoiled, now dropped into his mind like the keystone of an arch, giving permanent stability and consistence alike to his theology and his religion.

He did not hesitate to resign his post (25th January, 1789), and the resignation was accepted by the four Trustees, three of whom, it may be interesting to know, were also Trustees of Dr. Williams' foundations. It has been said that the terms of the Trust left no option. On the contrary, it was admitted that a Unitarian might fulfil every condition of the Trust with literal fidelity, but then the Founder's purpose would be ignored. There were some who blamed Belsham for not doing this. One of the Trustees writes thus for the rest, in words which Belsham endorses:—"Rigid interpretations are the acts of

weak minds, but a regard to general intention marks the mind that wishes to act right." The strangest part of the whole business was the action of his Daventry flock, showing that congregations are not always as unsympathetic as ministers sometimes think them. At the outset, while avowing that he had "not the least fault to find with" them personally, he had affirmed that their "temper and spirit" were "enough to strike any minister with terror." Later, he described them as "chiefly of the lower classes of people," and for the most part "steady Trinitarians," adding that they were nevertheless "very affectionate." They proved the truth of this last remark, when, knowing that their minister had resigned the Academy as a Unitarian, they still wished him to remain their pastor.

Twice, while he was at Daventry, had an effort been made (1785 and 1786) to transfer Belsham to Warrington. The Academy there had been closed (1783), but not dissolved, and its friends were sanguine of Belsham's power to revive it. He had fancied for a moment (1785) that this might lead to an amalgamation of the two institutions; but, though he wavered a little, it is clear that the Warrington overtures were not to his mind; nor did he estimate the Warrington tradition at the rate to which its admirers are accustomed. As late as 1814 he contrasts "the theological discussions of Daventry" with "Warrington cold morality, and theological ignorance and indifference." This, doubtless, refers to Warrington's declining days, for he speaks with veneration of Aikin (who had been his first schoolmaster), and to Dr. John Taylor he pays (1809) a noble tribute: "He thought much himself, and he taught others to think; and though he did not advance so far as others have since done, yet the most enlightened of modern divines would probably not have known so much, or understood the Scriptures so well, if Dr. Taylor had not gone before them to clear the road."

No sooner was his resignation made known than he received an invitation, through Dr. Price, to become resident Tutor in the New College at Hackney. At first he declined; pressure from Lindsey and Priestley produced his acceptance. Here he had a hard task in hand. Hackney College was a Liberty Hall. Its alumni met the disciplinary regulations of the committee with "resolutions to resist their tyranny, couched in terms as energetic as if all liberty, civil and religious, were endangered." One Sunday a leading spirit suggested that it would be a good thing "to have a republican supper, and invite Paine." This was before the "Age of Reason" (1794), and was a tribute to the "Rights of Man" (1791). Paine "was much pleased," and there was "the most glorious republican party that the walls of the College ever contained." Paine told

them of "a club at Sheffield of 1,500 republicans, chiefly manufacturers"; they thought it "the bud of a revolution." One of these promising politicians, in the gaiety of his heart, inflicted a cruel mischief on his country. The Birmingham riots of 1791 found their excuse, and perhaps their proximate cause, in an inflammatory handbill, circulated a few days before the outbreak. This spark upon powder was the work of a student from Hackney College.

Belsham's appointment was welcomed by the students, and his influence was not without a sedative effect; but still he was no head of the College, until he received fresh powers, four years after his appointment; and then it was too late. Further, the admirers of Paine's republicanism followed Paine into Deism. Belsham found that his "studious" and "virtuous" pupils had lost faith in Christianity; and "this," he writes, "is an evil to which no remedy can be applied; actions may be restrained, but thoughts must be left free." Owing to the double difficulty, the institution was closed in 1796. Next year Belsham was again invited to a divinity chair, as the successor of Barnes in Manchester College. He declined, doubting the permanence of Manchester College, and feeling sure that he could not give satisfaction to the Lancashire Arians. Though he entered into no direct connection with Manchester College, he had some share in forming the

mind of one who was long at its head; Charles Wellbeloved was for two years his pupil at Hackney.

Disappointed in the hope of a colleagueship with Priestley at Hackney, in 1792, he was elected Priestley's successor two years later. Of his eleven years' ministry at the Gravel Pit, he says, "It is not in imagination to conceive a connection . . . more happy. What freedom of speech, what encouragement . . . what kind affection!" Strong motives were needed to draw him away to Essex Street. His settlement there in 1805 marks the close of an era in the Unitarian movement. His twenty years of active service at Essex Street, closing synchronously with the foundation of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, constitute a period of transition.

It will be remembered that when Lindsey resigned Catterick (1773), he put aside opportunities of Nonconformist service in favour of a project of his own, namely, "to try to gather a Church of Unitarian Christians out of the Established Church." He hoped for a considerable Unitarian secession from this quarter, and for a sufficient number of seceding clergy to minister to the movement. The motive for the secession was to maintain a purified worship, with a revised Prayer Book, containing a version of the Apostles' Creed. He did not wish "ever to

treat of controversial matters" from the pulpit. The worship must be Unitarian; the preaching might well be limited to the common ground of Christian religion. Lindsey from the first had wanted a colleague at Essex Street, and was in despair of a coadjutor, when at length, after nine years' solitary labour, the timely secession of Disney gave him a colleague, and ultimately a successor. Even Disney can hardly be said to have kept firmly on Lindsey's lines. During the last three years of his ministry the Prayer Book in use was of his own composition, and bore no relation to the Anglican service. On his resignation "every possible inquiry was made after some seceding clergyman" as his successor, "but to no purpose."

Some modification of Lindsey's scheme was therefore imperative. That Lindsey worked hard to secure the appointment of Belsham, as Disney's successor, is proof that he himself saw this, more clearly than some others did. The Prayer Book of Anglican pattern, minus the creed, was brought back (Belsham says, "at the express desire of the Duke of Grafton"), but there was no endeavour to avoid doctrinal preaching, always a feature, though not a predominant feature, of Belsham's ministrations. Far more significant was the tacit surrender of the aim to lead an Anglican exodus, and the frank acceptance of the call to a progressive work within the confines of Dissent.

We are so accustomed to think of Belsham as above all things a Unitarian, that we ignore the limits within which alone he thought it right to describe himself as such. In 1791 he had drawn the preamble of the Unitarian Society, in terms meant, as he explained, to have the effect of shutting out Arians. Ignoring this intention, Richard Price, not being formally excluded, joined the society. To Price, as to Lindsey originally, Unitarianism was a term of religion; it meant the worship of the Father only. Belsham argued that there was no security for this worship, apart from the acknowledgment of the simple humanity of Christ. A consistent Arian, he maintained, ought to worship Christ. Hence, if he could have done so, he would have restricted the application of the term Unitarian to the holders of a purely humanitarian Christology. Accordingly he proposed to attach it simply to individuals, and to propagandist societies, not to ecclesiastical bodies. This policy he pursued with great tenacity in both directions; drawing a sharp line of distinction between temporary associations to advocate a defined theology, and permanent religious institutions to be kept open for progress.

"Some months ago," writes a correspondent (February, 1814) of the *Monthly Repository* "happening to be in London, and passing along Essex Street, it delighted me to see 'Unitarian

Chapel' inscribed on the new portico of that house, dear to the mind of every friend of truth from having been consecrated to the worship of One God by Theophilus Lindsey. But, Sir, proportioned to my gratification on this occasion, was my concern and surprise the other day, in passing the same spot, to perceive that the original, honourable, and characteristic inscription had been erased, and the words 'Essex Street Chapel' substituted in its stead."

Though no answer is recorded, we can easily supply the true one. In the interim had occurred the passing of the Trinity Act (July 22nd, 1813); of which the point was this, that while in title it seemed a mere Relief Act for Unitarians, both in form and in effect it was a Relief Act for Dissenters generally. Every Anglican was still bound by law to be a Trinitarian, but the whole of Dissent was now freed from this statutory obligation. It was now possible and proper, so thought Belsham, for Unitarians to act as an integral part of Protestant Dissent. It was their business and duty to prove themselves an influential ingredient in that larger whole.

Four months after the passing of the Act, he had written thus (28th November, 1813) to Robert Aspland:—"I think you have borne a little hard upon Dr. Enfield, Dr. Priestley, and others of that standing, who, labouring under all manner of abuse from their orthodox opponents,

took to themselves the name of 'Rational Christians' or 'Rational Dissenters,' as a counterbalance to that of 'orthodox,' 'evangelical,' &c., assumed by their opponents. Indeed, I never quarrel with any party for giving themselves a good name, as they are sure to be sufficiently plied by their adversaries with epithets of evil repute."

Long before the passing of the Trinity Act, he had objected to the establishing (1806) of the Unitarian Fund, a society for missionary purposes. This has been ascribed to his "almost constitutional distaste to popular movements." To the last "his feelings were against them," though his judgment came to be "for them." The truth is, he was afraid that a great cause would get into the hands of shallow men, and so lose its influence. On this point he was converted. By 1812 he admits that the Unitarian Fund society "holds the foremost rank," that it has "demonstrated the fallacy of the commonly received opinion, that Unitarianism is not a religion for the common people," and that "after the success which has attended the efforts of this Society, no person who is a real friend to the cause can consistently be hostile to its principle." Through this "hearty sanction of popular plans," while himself identified with "the aristocracy of Unitarianism," he exercised, as has been well said, a "harmonizing influence," which brought the

advocates of opposite methods to a mutual understanding and respect.

He was not converted to Aspland's plan of a Unitarian Academy (1812) with a two years' course of instruction to cover all branches, yet he did not withhold a generous pecuniary aid.

Needless to say that Belsham was blind to the advantages of denominational organization. "I was brought up an Independent," he says, "and I am unwilling to bow to any authority beyond the limit of my own congregation." Writing to Aspland (14th November, 1818) he thus expresses himself, "If I wished the Unitarians to become a powerful political sect, I should be a warm friend to that grand scheme of federal union, of which I heard so much in Lancashire. But as a friend to truth and liberty, which I think much impeded by such associations, I must dissent from them. Nor can I approve of any plans for separating Unitarians from their fellow Christians, more than is absolutely necessary. We are the *salt* of the earth. But a lump of salt, lying by itself, will never fertilize the ground. It must be mixed and blended with the earth, in order to manure the soil and produce a copious harvest." The simile is shrewd. Unhappily, there were already signs, unmarked by Belsham, that the soil, mistaking its place, was on the eve of invading the salt-boxes. The protracted struggle, which began in 1817, and never took breath till the achievement

of the Dissenters' Chapels Act in 1844, drew Unitarians closer together; on the other hand, it broke them off from the main body of Dissent. Hence it seems to me that Belsham's policy, equally with that of Lindsey, was frustrated by events. Both schemes were Utopian. The first failed, because Anglicans declined to follow suit. The second was wrecked by active hostility of Dissenters, roused against the internal disorder, by whatever name designated, which threatened to benefit them.

It was in accord with this policy that Belsham consistently refused to countenance the formation (1819) of the Unitarian Association, for protecting the civil rights of Unitarians. He wrote strongly against it, on the ground that the civil rights of Unitarians were simply those of all Dissenters, and anything which should seem to detach them from the main body was suicidal. "I demur," he writes (29th January, 1819) to Lant Carpenter, "to the prudence and propriety of the Unitarians separating themselves from the rest of the Nonconformists, and establishing themselves as a distinct sect. This sectarian spirit, however it may tend to strengthen a party, appears to me to be unfriendly to the spirit of religion and the investigation of truth. Every sect must have its shibboleth. You must be tender to the errors of those who belong to your party, however gross or important, lest you

weaken your interest. Whereas, religion is wholly a personal thing; and the investigation of truth requires unlimited freedom from restraint. . . . I sometimes suspect that the cause was advancing more steadily when it advanced more silently, and that many are bawlers for a speculative system, who are strangers to the religion of the heart."

Yet it is perhaps not surprising that Belsham's posthumous fame should be mainly that of a controversialist. His powers and his prowess were great, and the motive for their exercise was no personal impulse, but the feeling that he stood for the vigilant defence of a sacred charge. He took up the cause of Priestley in exile, with none of Priestley's genius, but with far more caution, far more deliberateness, far more pungency, far more present effect. More successful than Priestley in drawing Arians into the arena, he perhaps bore himself towards them as too keen an antagonist, at least they thought so. His grandiose style possessed the kind of dignity which suited the taste of the age, and admirably fitted his purpose. He controverted bishops with a weight and point which could not be ignored, addressing them as from a secure elevation, and with exasperating blandness. In a biography otherwise excellent, he has clothed Lindsey in purple, when perhaps fine linen would have been more appropriate to the man; but the sentiment of veneration was rightly directed. The epigram

which closed his account with Horsley, long rankled in episcopal breasts. Referring to the controversy with Priestley, he remarked that "both the contending parties retired from the field equally well satisfied with the result of the conflict; Dr. Priestley with his victory, and Dr. Horsley with his mitre."

In theological system, Belsham made no advance on the position he reached at Daventry. His "Calm Inquiry" (1811) is substantially a digest and recast of his lectures of 1789. His items of doctrine were few, and strongly held; they formed the basis of his practical religion. Yet while he felt this ground to be always firm beneath his feet, he was nevertheless an inquirer and a critic to the last. It has been said of him that "he had no conception of dangerous truths and useful errors." In Biblical criticism his strides were alarming to conservative Unitarians. In 1807 he called attention to the composite character of the Pentateuch. Four years previously, Priestley had opened his "Notes on the Bible" with the words: "I see no reason to entertain a doubt of Moses being the writer of the first five books of the Old Testament." Priestley proceeds to treat the account of creation as of divine authority, though he thinks there were other creations subsequent to the deluge, which will account, among other things, for the special fauna and flora of America. In fact, the Unit-

arians stuck fast in Genesis till 1821; it was Belsham who pulled them out. In a famous sermon at Warrington that year (19th August) he declared and proved that the Hebrew cosmogony is irreconcilable with the teachings of modern science. The *Monthly Repository* teemed with the indignant reproaches of writers, who deemed it an impiety to imagine that, after the lucid narrations of Moses, there was anything to be learned respecting the original constitution of the globe.

To Belsham, as responsible editor, we owe a revised, or, as he entitled it, an improved version (1808) of the New Testament. The admirable introduction, and most of the notes, are his. The text is not his, being mainly the translation by Archbishop Newcome. Belsham would have left Newcome's version to speak for itself, but was overruled by a committee, which insisted on revising Newcome. With this version it used to be common to reproach Unitarians; it has its weak points, and is avowedly tentative; but even after the work of the revisers of 1881 it has its value. Its endeavour to exhibit typographically distinct strata in the Gospels, if a crude initial effort, was nevertheless a suggestive beginning.

In a letter of 1819, addressed to John Kenrick, he shows that he did not let his mind sleep in regard to New Testament problems. "I love German criticism," he says, "as much as I dislike German theology. . . . I think the origin of the four evangelists is a very great difficulty. If the four histories existed in their present form in the time of Justin Martyr, it is most unaccountable that he should never quote them by name. . . . I suspect that the number was never fixed to four till Irenæus made the notable discovery that there must be four Gospels, and no more, because there are four winds. . . . Still, however, the main part of the respective Gospels must have been written by the authors to whom they are attributed, otherwise, how could the whole Christian world be so unanimous in ascribing them to those authors? But before they were universally known and acknowledged, I am inclined to believe that those who were in possession of early copies made additions of narratives, which they believed to be authentic."

Belsham himself appeared as a translator and expositor in his edition (1822), of the Pauline Epistles. In the main he follows Dr. John Taylor, but with an important development of principle. "An expositor," he says, "will not feel himself bound to warp and strain a text from its plain and obvious meaning because that meaning is erroneous, and to adopt some unusual and far-fetched interpretation in order to reconcile it to the truth, because, at all events, the proposition must be justified; but he will endeavour to find out the true meaning of the author, according to

the established and approved rules of interpretation, leaving the whole responsibility, whether for the sense, the truth, or the reasoning of the passage, upon the author himself, without any pain for the result." That is to say, in his view, inspiration related only to the essentials of Christianity; the Apostle's mode of advocating them was his own.

Thinking thus freely himself, Belsham was not the man to advocate restraints on thinking, even when the conclusions reached were most abhorrent to his own mind. He lived in an age when Richard Carlile was fined £1,500, and imprisoned for three years, for publishing the works of Paine. Even Unitarians wrote in their magazine approving the sentence. In the course of a noble reply, Belsham observes that in dealing with those who bring charges against Christianity, "the proper, though not altogether the easiest method would be, to inquire how far the charges are just; to separate the gold from the dross, Christianity from its corruptions, what is defensible from what is indefensible, and thus to show that true Christianity is a gem of unspeakable value; that it contains nothing unreasonable, nothing mean, nothing contemptible; but that it is a doctrine of great moral importance, which every good man must at least wish to be true. Had Paine's 'Age of Reason' been treated in this manner, I am fully convinced that it would not have done a

tenth part of the mischief, of which it is now said to have been productive."

I have not dealt with Belsham's philosophy; and perhaps he was not a philosopher. For he never could see the validity of the distinction between the views of Priestley and those of Price. "The simple question between Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price, was," says Belsham, "whether the principle of perception was separable or inseparable from certain modifications of attraction and repulsion. Dr. Priestley maintained that they were inseparable, and Dr. Price that they were never separated. Just as in the case of the two Churches of Rome and England, one claims to be infallible, and the other maintains that it never errs. But, for this difference, Dr. Price is applauded as an immaterialist, and Dr. Priestley is vilified as a materialist. I certainly go as far as Dr. Price, and I do not go quite so far as Dr. Priestley. Because my philosophic friend regarded attraction and repulsion as divine energies, which appeared to me to verge upon pantheism. . . . So that in truth I cannot say to which of the two appellations I am entitled; whether I am a poor, despised, degraded materialist, who believe that perception, attraction, and repulsion are inseparable, or a sublime and exalted immaterialist, who believe that, though not inseparable, they are, in fact, never separated." On the question of the determination of the will, Belsham

had no doubt whatever that he was with Priestley and against Price. There are few expositions of determinism more forcible and lucid than will be found in his "Elements" (1801) of philosophy, mental and moral.

Strong elements of pathos are to be found in his story; on these I will not dwell. A year after his settlement at Essex Street, he was already in his feelings an old man, though not yet fifty-seven. The abiding impression that his days were few, simply made him more intent on tasks which he hoped to finish, and did, in fact, accomplish. As the ablest of his critics has said: "He had little originality; he had less imagination; but he had unfailing diligence." In his last years, spent as "an invalid and a cripple," he was still at work. The key to his life may be found in these words which he wrote on New Year's Day, 1799, "While I live, I am desirous of being useful. . . . If I can do little myself, I will endeavour to rejoice if others are more active, more able, and more successful. I am not serving a party; I am not seeking mine own honour and emolument; my object, my sole ambition, is to promote the knowledge of Christ, and his genuine Gospel."

One word about Belsham in the most important light of all. Williams' life of him has never had a voice raised in its favour. It is a volume, or rather a morass, of seven hundred and ninety-one pages, without chapters, or index, or table of

contents; with nothing to guide you but the year-dates heading the pages, and the years are not always consecutive. It is ill-arranged, defective, inaccurate, diffuse. Yet it has its place among my favourite books. Its value lies in this, that it permits a very close approach to the inner life of a man of deep religious experience. The redeeming element of the book is to be found in the passages from Belsham's private diary, at all stages of his career; and this diary is his confessional. Here are his prayers, his sighs, his doubts, his hopes, his despondences, his frank addresses to God in sunshine and in gloom. The phases of his theology have their connecting-link in the unbroken constancy of his faith in God. Superficially he was not an emotional man, but his preaching and his work were the outcome of a sensitive soul, living continually in the divine presence. When the end came (he died unmarried on 11 November, 1829) they laid him beside Lindsey, with this inscription, expressing at once his most cherished feeling and his paramount aim: "The friend, associate, and successor of Priestley and Lindsey; with them he devoted his life and talents to revive and diffuse the knowledge of the true religion of Jesus."

We look back, that we may look forward. We scan the past that we may gain lessons for use in the present, as we strive to build up the future. Belsham thought that in the eighteenth century

the prospects of liberal religion looked brighter than in the early part of the nineteenth. We have to try to understand how it was that great ideals were disappointed; for then we may consecrate ourselves to the cause of truth with more intelligent aim. Betterness is not in times, but in men. Other times will come; but merely to place hopes in better times is to be blind to the patent and pressing opportunities of our own living age. The world of to-day needs our work and needs our presentation of the Gospel. Our prayer must be that God may so clear our eyes that we may see our way; and so strengthen our hearts that we pursue it with the simplicity of devotion, the force of purpose, the breadth of spirit, which we venerate in the best of our forerunners.

5 *October*, 1898.

RICHARD WRIGHT AND MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

RICHARD WRIGHT.—Born, 1764; Minister at Wisbech, 1794-1810; Travelling Missionary, 1806-22; Minister at Trowbridge, 1822-27; Minister at Kirkstead, 1827-36; Died 1836.

X

RICHARD WRIGHT AND MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

WHEN the apprentice was discovered picking dead flies out of the currants, his master assured him that he was not born to be a shopkeeper, and that he had better study for the ministry. Richard Wright, whose memory seems worthy to be revived, though early initiated in the mysteries of shopkeeping, was evidently not to the manner born; and if we take "study" in a broad, general, and very practical sense, and not with any technical limitation of the term, we may truly say that he studied, and studied hard, for the ministry which he fulfilled and refreshed.

Richard, son of Richard, first saw the light in a labourer's cottage at Blakeney, a seafaring place, once, indeed, a seaport of some moment for commerce with Germany, lying on the north coast of Norfolk, between Wells and Cromer, but nearer to the former. His natal day was 7th February, 1764; and though it has little or no bearing on his story, it may be said in passing that 1764 was a year of mark in the literary annals both of this country and of France and

Italy. In 1764 Voltaire produced his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, an epitome of his glittering genius; Rousseau his *Emile*—with all its eccentricities, the foundation of modern ideas of education; Reid his "Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense," thereby founding that system of natural realism long known as the Scottish philosophy, though directed against Hume; Goldsmith his "History of England," the book in which the story of our country was first made interesting to the young; Walpole his "Castle of Otranto," pioneer of the romantic school; while Beccaria, author of the pregnant phrase, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," put forth his epoch-making treatise on "Crimes and Punishments." In ecclesiastical annals, 1764 was the year in which William Robertson, the "Father of Unitarian nonconformity," as Lindsey called him, resigned his Irish preferments, and Lindsey himself set on foot his Sunday-school at Catterick.

When Richard was five years old, an enterprising speculator, known as "the ingenious Mr. Cobb," projected a company to revive the Blakeney fisheries, and so restore to the little place something of its ancient importance. Had this succeeded, Richard might have found an opening for business life in his native place; but the scheme came to nothing, and Blakeney's good harbour sees little trade.

Richard's parents were originally of the Anglican persuasion, and his mother, Anne Wright (1732-1810) was a woman of superior class, strong mind, and fair education, claiming a cousinship with Sir John Fenn (well known as the first editor of the Paston Letters), and devoting herself to the training and teaching of her six children, of whom Richard was the eldest son. The reader may determine whether it was proof of continued activity of mind, or of senile decay, that she became a Unitarian at the age of seventy. Richard, however, was sent to school by a relative, a prosperous farmer, whose name does not appear; neither does the place of Richard's schooling. Blakeney had certainly lost the educational advantages which it possessed in the thirteenth century, when John Baconthorpe, Doctor Resolutus and Princeps Averroistarum, began his studies in the Carmelite monastery, whose ruined arches yet remain. Nor could his schooling have been long, for this relative, from whom the family had expectations, died when Richard was twelve—the age up to which, according to *Emile*, the child should be taught nothing—and by this time the family was out of favour; for they had dropped into Dissent, forsaking the ancient parish church whose lofty tower forms a mariner's landmark on the Norfolk coast-line. Having toiled as a farmer's boy, and done duty as a page, Richard went on trial to an

Anglican shopkeeper at Holt, who did business on Sundays; and was thereafter apprenticed to a Dissenting blacksmith—presumably at the inland village of Guestwick, for it was there that, on attaining the age of sixteen, he was admitted a member of the Independent Church. This was a society dating from 1652. It had enjoyed, without undue hilarity, the services of some distinguished ministers, including one of the Ejected Nonconformists. Its last pastor had been the father of William Godwin, succeeding whom John Sykes had lately begun his pastorate of forty-eight years' duration. The ministry was Calvinistic, of the genuine unadulterated type, "not what is now called moderate Calvinism," as Richard remarks. Sykes had no moderation. "Still," says Richard, "I thank God that I was once a Calvinist, that I have known by experience what Calvinism is. It was one important step in my progress. However erroneous, its peculiar doctrines are perverted truths, and some precious metal may be extracted from the baser materials." Richard's defection from Calvinism had an interesting origin.

The lad was not without ambition. "Panting to emerge from the lowly vale where I was placed" (as he afterwards expressed it), he bethought him of what he could do which would render him "of some value in society." With this longing for distinction he conjoined what may

be not unworthily described as a love of souls. Without any outward suggestion or authorisation, the young church member, when the labour at the anvil was over for the day, began week evening preaching in the neighbouring villages. Now, to hold Calvinism is one thing; to make it the basis of evangelical appeal is quite another. No doubt, the proffer of salvation is easy, even should a conceivable non-election stand in the way of its acceptance. If the present of gold spectacles to the blind inmates of a workhouse should seem the indication of a world-wide generosity, there might still be some little inconsistency in accompanying the gift with the assurance that it could be of no use to those most in need of vision. It may perhaps have been noticed that predestination is usually preached to persons whose calling and election is, by themselves at any rate, regarded as already pretty secure. However that may be, it seems that the youthful missioner's village appeals insensibly acquired a slight Arminian taint. The church-meeting had him up, heard him preach, bade him abide their sanction; and, as he persevered, cast him off. They had not ratified the exercise of his gifts; and while the symptoms of heresy were but slender, the defiance of church authority was sufficient ground for excommunicating him on both counts. By this sentence Richard, like his pastor's predecessor, was ejected into freedom, in more respects than one. The

Wesleyan Methodists got wind of his zeal and his leanings, and gave him preaching opportunities, though he never joined their Society. His master, "judging that he would make a better preacher than a smith," handed him back his indentures in all kindness. His first call to a regular ministry was from Norwich, where an eccentric gentleman—surgeon, ornithologist, and gospeller—named John Hunt, had recently built a General Baptist chapel. This conjunction did not last long; neither did the congregation. Hunt, it may be suspected, was not an easy person to get on with.

An opening came to Wright in connection with another Baptist flock. There were Baptists in Norwich of every variant type. From the leading Particular Baptist church in 1778, the minister, Samuel Fisher, had been dismissed for unsoundness in a non-doctrinal matter. He took with him a following, and attached himself to the cause of his friend, John Johnson, a native of Eccles, who had developed peculiar views, and had founded a distinct Baptist body. From the perusal of certain of Johnson's pamphlets one rises in some perplexity as to what precisely the good man was driving at. His Calvinism was modified, but not exactly mellowed. Adam's guilt was not a heritable property, yet Adam's brood needed as strong remedies as if it were. In handling the doctrine of the Trinity Johnson

managed to confound the persons; hence the Johnsonians were known also as the Sabellian Baptists. It was not, indeed, quite unusual to find Sabellians among Baptists, but Johnson insisted on making a distinctive feature of this view, and so took his place as a heresiarch For Fisher, on these lines, a chapel was erected. Its minister in my Norwich days was Henry Trevor, an upholsterer, for in Norfolk it was not then unknown for a Baptist pastor to be in business; one working village pastor was a butcher—like the priests of the old Law.

Wright became a coadjutor to Fisher. In Norwich he found books, and without other aid he gained enough of Greek and Hebrew to enable him to enter with intelligence into the Biblical criticism of that day, which was mainly of a textual character. Johnson, who was now over seventy, had charge of congregations as far apart as Liverpool and Wisbech; Wright gave occasional assistance at both these places. His intercourse with Johnson, whom he found "to a high degree bigoted and dogmatic," led him to study "first principles." Eventually a curious arrangement was made, by which Fisher and Wright were associated, each to take six months at Norwich and six at Wisbech alternately. The Wisbech flock soon exhibited a preference for Wright. Fisher, with reluctance, confined himself to Norwich, leaving Wright at Wisbech in sole charge.

Here, then, at the age of thirty, began Wright's career as a missionary of Unitarianism. He had first to complete his own conversion. From the Sabellian position, with some hazy remains of Calvinism, he advanced to Humanitarian doctrine, without passing through the Arian stage. His views becoming known, the Johnsonian Baptists did as the Guestwick Independents had done before—they excommunicated him. His own congregation, "most of them," he says, "very illiberal and bigoted," nevertheless felt they were in the hands of an honest man, retained his services, and were accordingly cut off from the body.

Acquaintance with their old Minute-book assures us that, in the days before Wright they had not been in all respects a happy family. Extracts in full would be undesirable. Unfortunately, the ladies had voices in the church-meeting, and their remarks to one another were both critical and caustic. It is recorded of two married ladies, that one took upon herself to reproach the other for an apparel too gaudy to be consonant either with Baptist principles or with her own advancing years; the aggrieved one retorted by pictorially and pointedly designating her censor a "goggle-eyed"—puppy's mother, in a word. Standing in a mouldy graveyard in rear of the little edifice in Deadman's Lane, it has been possible to gaze on the contiguous tombstones of these outspoken heroines.

With the arrival of Wright, the Minute-book becomes much less graphic. The course he took for the religious instruction of his people is worth noting. They had been in the habit, he says, "of laying an undue stress on their own opinions, and of thinking that those who differed from them were not Christians, and could not be saved." So he began by teaching them "the value of piety, integrity, virtue, and goodness, with whatever opinions associated." He was in no hurry to bring forward "doctrines new to them," till he could make clear their practical value. Expository preaching, and weekly meetings for the study of the Scriptures, with free conference thereon, proved of eminent utility. "It was absolutely necessary," he observes, "to be blind and deaf to many uncharitable and censorious remarks." "By forbearance and kindness those who opposed me were sometimes softened, and continued friends." Yet were there "many severe conflicts of opinion, many hard struggles against what was called innovation"; and there were those who affirmed that Wright's self-control simply made him the more dangerous; for, aided by the Devil, that wily serpent, "Unitarians had the art of commanding their temper, and using soft words, that they might the better deceive." While some left, and "though there was a time when the congregation would have been glad had I voluntarily left them, their attach-

ment to me afterwards became stronger than it had ever been."

His preaching was not confined to Wisbech, and he had several calls to other charges, with better pay. He had made up his mind not to leave Wisbech "till I thought the Unitarian cause firmly established there." For ten years he eked out a very narrow income by school-keeping—a resource then more open than now to the Dissenting ministry. One of his scholars became famous. This was William Ellis, whose name will ever be associated with the Christian civilization of Madagascar. In his early boyhood the future agent of the London Missionary Society was under Wright's influence both in school and chapel; all the schooling he got, and indeed that was but little, he received from Wright; his father, also William Ellis, was a strong Unitarian and always remained so.

It was during this period of pastoral assiduity, tempered by school-keeping, that Wright made the acquaintance of William Vidler (1758-1816) who, like Wright had been successively Anglican, Independent and Baptist, and was now the successor of Elhanan Winchester in the Universalist (but not Unitarian) ministry in London. Winchester's Universalism meant a remedial Hell. Hence the familiar tale that Robert Robinson met him with the exclamation "So you're the man to preach that God Almighty will burn all the

old tobacco-pipes white!" Vidler had started in 1797 the *Universalists' Miscellany*. To this monthly publication Wright contributed a series of letters and these, when collected, formed the first of his many publications.

Next year Wright visited Vidler in London. Their meeting must have been a sight for saints. Wright was a very little man and nobody could call him handsome. Vidler, his senior by nearly six years, had a fine physiognomy surmounting a corporal bulk of wellnigh elephantine proportions. There is a pulpit of straitened dimensions into which, according to the legend, he had contrived to squeeze himself when cool. Swelled by the fervour of preaching, he found it impossible to get out, and thought it safer to remain for the afternoon service; so they brought him his midday repast as he sat *in cathedra*. There were contrasts of opinion as well as of girth, stature and comeliness between the two enthusiasts. Hence they met with some shyness, attempting as Wright says, "in as delicate a way as possible to feel out each other's views." Ultimately, but not till 1802, Vidler's repugnance to so-called Socinianism was replaced, under Wright's influence by a hearty embrace of the Unitarian position.

In the absence of an exact chronology at this point, the date is uncertain at which Wright was enabled to free himself from the labour of keeping school, but by 1804 he was in the full-swing of

missionary enterprise. Already had he cultivated relations with General Baptists of Lutton, Lincolnshire, resulting in the accession of this congregation, avowedly Universalist, to the Unitarian cause, and further to the incorporation of his own flock at Wisbech with the General Baptist Assembly. Next he co-operated with John Platts (1777-1837) in the establishment of a Unitarian congregation at Boston. Thereafter he visited most parts of Lincolnshire; at Lincoln on his initiative a Unitarian congregation was formed. Invited by Vidler, he visited Battle, where Vidler had gathered a Universalist flock. Thence he extended his travels to most parts of Sussex and Kent. An appeal from Thorne took him to Yorkshire on a similar errand.

His efforts had now begun to attract some attention in London. The project of a Missionary Fund was started by David Eaton (1771-1829) a native of Brechin, who had been the leader of a little knot of General Baptists at York, and was now settled as a theological bookseller in Holborn (he is not to be confused with Daniel Isaac Eaton, also a London bookseller, and publisher of Tom Paine's works, who died in 1814). It is to be noted that the five persons who met in August, 1805, to frame the plan of a Unitarian Fund, all were or had been in the Baptist connexion. Of these the most distinguished was Robert Aspland (1782-1845) who in the previous month had

entered on his forty years' ministry at Hackney. The plan was not much welcomed at the outset. It was met by a loudly expressed dread of "uneducated preachers." Only nine persons attended the meeting establishing the Fund (11 February, 1806). Among them was Daniel Whittle Harvey (1786-1863) then a lad of twenty, afterwards projector of the *Sunday Times*, and the first (1840) Commissioner of the London City Police; he was the last survivor of the band.

The year of grace 1806 is memorable also for the establishment by Aspland of the *Monthly Repository*, that invaluable storehouse of Unitarian history and biography. He had bought up Vidler's magazine and enlarged its plan. Furthermore, it was in 1806 that the expulsion of Joseph Cooke from the Wesleyan body led to the formation of a new group of congregations in Lancashire. In 1806 Wright composed and published "An Apology for Dr. Michael Servetus," based on a work of 1724, and distinguished chiefly by warm reflections, in which Calvin was not exhibited in a flattering light.

The Unitarian Fund was started with Aspland as secretary and Wright as travelling missionary. By the end of the year nearly a couple of hundred subscribers had been enlisted on its roll. The first annual sermon in its behalf was preached by a doctor of divinity of Harvard, Joshua Toulmin (1740-1815) another Baptist by the way. Bel-

sham, at that time by far the most influential of English Unitarians, held aloof from popular propaganda, though six years later he handsomely owned that the Unitarian Fund was "the Society which at present holds the foremost rank," adding that "after the success which has attended the efforts of this Society, no person who is a real friend to the cause can consistently be hostile to its principle."

Thus was Richard Wright encouraged in the career which, with unwearied industry, he pursued for nearly two decades till, in the course of his journeyings he had traversed the whole land, from Aberdeen to Marazion, from Milford Haven to Yarmouth. His reports of his journeys form a sort of itinerary of Great Britain, and are crowded with interesting details. In 1804 Wright was forty years of age, well seasoned for his work by a preparation of experience which he had turned to the best account. Being of great muscular strength he could sustain the fatigue of his long tramps—trudging as he did on foot twenty, thirty or even forty miles in a day—and still be fit for preaching in the evening. Frugal and temperate, he was spare in diet, simple in his requirements, content at night with a rough shakedown, and allowing himself this one luxury, an abundant use of the good old "churchwarden." In the use of this sedative he certainly excelled. Even Aspland who, like Dr. Parr, would give out

a long hymn and enjoy the refreshment of a pipe before sermon, admitted that his friend's devotion to the weed surpassed his own. This habit he turned to good account in many an inn-parlour and by many a cottage fire, enlivening a serene good-fellowship with an apt theological discussion.

Equipped with an equal knowledge of Holy Scripture and of human nature, he was master of a native force of logical argument, pressed closely enough, but always applied with level good humour. His pulpit style was clear and unpretending. In personal intercourse—for which he utilized the most casual occasions, never obtruding himself, yet never missing an opportunity—his strongest powers of influence came out. His writing was plain and strong, full of cool, clear-cut reasoning, with ardent purpose behind it, but no superficial display of emotion. This made his polemical publications telling and efficient. Handy in size, direct in statement, they just hit the needs of his time and his public. They bred in his readers the habit of thinking. Never was there a man with less of the mystic about him, while few had more of the determination of the educator than Richard Wright. Here is his table of fourteen hints for the missionary; texts on which he dilates in his memoirs. They will be found to be valuable points, capable of further expansion.

1. He should count the cost before he engages in the work.
2. His mind should be furnished and prepared for the work.
3. Should be always ready to preach.
4. Be careful to use proper subjects.
5. The style should be suited to the hearers.
6. Preaching in the open air and other places.
7. A missionary must avoid having anything to do with differences in congregations.
8. Modes of making the preaching known.
9. Much to be done besides preaching.
10. Tracts should be distributed.
11. A missionary must endure much hardship.
12. He must be punctual to his engagements.
13. He must devote himself entirely to the work.
14. He should cultivate an habitual sense of the presence of God.

For five years, during which he had travelled on an average some two thousand miles each year, Wright still retained as missionary the charge of Wisbech. At the end of 1810 he was prevailed upon to devote himself wholly to the larger field, on the modest salary of a hundred guineas including expenses, which was more than he had asked for. Manchester had something to do with this move in 1810. In that year the preaching of an evangelical Arianism at Cross Street

ceased with the death of Thomas Barnes (1747-1810). The introduction of a positive type of Unitarianism by his successor, John Grundy (1782-1843) was hailed, or deplored, in many quarters as marking a new departure. After 1810, the Lancashire Arianism either melted away very rapidly, or drifted off to other denominational conditions.

It was in 1810 that George Harris (1794-1859) then a London apprentice of sixteen, destined afterwards to devote himself to the spread of Unitarianism in Scotland with an eloquence which has never been excelled, first set eyes upon Richard Wright. The occasion was the Unitarian Fund annual dinner, a few months after Wright's first visit to Scotland. Thus writes George to his father, Abraham Harris, minister at Maidstone:—

"Mr. Wright, you know, is a short man. When he rose, there was a universal cry of 'On the chair, on the chair!' He got on the chair. Another cry of 'Mr. Wright on the table!' So he mounted the table, when we gave him three rounds of applause. I think he made the best speech. He is quite an enthusiast. He said that, in his opinion, if there was not an Unitarian south of the Tweed, there would be enough, north of it, to Unitarianise the world."

We are dealing with the character and example of an individual, not that he had no coadjutors, or that his zeal did not prove contagious. Others

gave their help, good men too, though scarcely to be reckoned his equals in blend of pith and tact. Their names we have not space to mention, but the brief history of an institution in aid must be touched upon. The condition of his denomination in 1811 had suggested to Robert Aspland the desirability of creating an agency "for the training up of popular rather than learned ministers." On 6 June of that year the plan of such an institution was agreed upon, the following being its main features. It was to bear the name of "The Unitarian Academy," and this "not for the purpose of pledging either its students or supporters to any particular system of faith, but because it expressed the leading opinion of those who interested themselves in its formation, and their expectation of its results. They used the term Unitarian in its broadest sense, including under it all Christians that agreed in the sole worship of One God, the Father, whatever might be their views on minor topics." Hereupon the critics divided themselves into two groups, whereof one objected to "a sectarian brand," while the other looked askance at "the broad definition."

Students were to be eligible between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, and to be under the care of a Principal Tutor, who should board and lodge them. The period of study was to be two years; with power of extension vested in the

Committee. They did subsequently extend it, by providing for two classes of students, those of four years and those of two. Subsequently also a few lay students were admitted, at £100 a year. It was expected that within two years the students might, in addition to acquiring "a fair portion of general knowledge," learn to read "the Scriptures in their original tongues," and be exercised in "the best methods of communicating religious instruction." Belsham, who had at heart the revival of the old Hackney College, broken up in 1796, was opposed to the scheme. He suggested a reverse plan, a normal course of "four, five, or even six years," with power to the Committee to reduce in particular cases. For a two years' Academy he thought Wright would be a competent head. From the first, however, the projectors of the institution had relied upon Aspland as its Principal and Theological Tutor; and Aspland, now in his thirtieth year, removing to Durham House, opened the Unitarian Academy at Hackney on 20th October, 1812. There was to have been also a Classical Tutor, but John Bickerton Dewhurst, designed for that post, died before the opening day. Thomas Biggin Broadbent was Classical Tutor from 1814 to 1816. Jeremiah Joyce, of the "Scientific Dialogues," was Mathematical Tutor in 1814 and 1815; he was succeeded by Dr. John Morell, who conducted both these departments from 1817, and was him-

self succeeded for a short time by William Johnson Fox.

It is well to know that Belsham, having an anonymous donation of £100 to dispose of at his own discretion, kept it a couple of years, while he looked about him, and then sent it to the Unitarian Academy, with two years' interest, as the best use he could make of the money. The students seem to have worked hard. From the Daybook of the Academy for 1813 I find that they invariably began the duties of the day at half-past six, grinding at Latin till breakfast time. I find such entries as "studied Hebrew"; "composed a little of our themes." Occasionally I find the entry, "worked one hour in the garden"; and, in spite of the early start next day, I find "went to bed about 12." One of them writes that Aspland was fertile in expedients for filling up their leisure time, of which, he adds, "he seemed to think we had far more than was really the case." The Tutor's point of view is not always that of the student.

This Academy lasted for five sessions only, since, in 1818, Aspland's state of health made it impossible for him to continue it with his other engagements, and there was no one found to take his place. In those five sessions, twelve theological students were enrolled; three soon gave up; the nine who entered the ministry all rendered good service. The first to pass away was

Benjamin Goodier, the young evangelist to whom the Oldham congregation owes its existence. He died in 1818. The last survivor was Thomas Cooper, employed by the founder of the Hibbert Trust in the difficult task of Christianising his slaves; he lived till 1880, a cheery little man, and still a good speaker, at the age of eighty-eight. During the same period, Carmarthen enrolled seven Unitarian students, while Manchester College, York, enrolled twenty divinity students, of whom thirteen entered the ministry—the greatest name among them being that of John James Tayler. The last survivor of these was Richard Shawcross, who had conformed; he died in 1886, at the age of eighty-four.

The missionary movement in Manchester College, York, was somewhat later than this period. It began in 1823 on the initiative of John Relly Beard, and enlisted the zealous co-operation of James Martineau; who, long afterwards, bore signal testimony to the value of these early "missionary excursions," adding that "those who were most deeply engaged in them were certainly the most assiduous and thorough students in their College work." Wright's memoirs were published in 1824, and in the preliminary list of subscribers, will be found the names just mentioned, along with those of eleven other students of the same College.

Of the dozen entrants at the Unitarian Academy

the one who made most history, though hardly the kind of history he had intended to make, was John Smethurst (1793-1859), of Moretonhampstead. In the autumn of 1821 Smethurst went on a Unitarian mission to the North of Ireland. At Killeleagh, Co. Down, the Presbyterian minister was the redoubtable Henry Cooke. In his flock the most prominent member was the United Irishman, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, who had spent some time (not entirely in study) at the Warrington Academy, and was a Unitarian. On Rowan's invitation Smethurst lectured in the school-house at Killeleagh. This invasion of his parish had the consequence of arousing Cooke to begin the fierce campaign which, after eight years' hard struggle with Henry Montgomery, issued in the elimination of the liberal element from the older Presbyterianism, and the formation of the Remonstrant Synod. Doubtless, had this occasion not presented itself, Cooke would have found some other; yet to those who knew Smethurst in later years as the gentlest of men, the model of a quiet country pastor beloved by all around, the blameless authority on Anglo-Saxon and on trout fishing, "the Walton of the moor," as they called him, it seemed a strange irony of fate that he should have been the one to pit against each other the giant powers of the two great orators of Ulster, and so to fasten on Irish Presbyterianism the bondage of the Westminster Confession.

In this excursus we are not really deserting Richard Wright, for the students of the Unitarian Academy were, almost to a man, brought into missionary and then into ministerial work by his personal influence or that of his reputation. Several had been his companions in travel and comrades in toil. Now, however, we must advert to an event, if I may so call it, which, like Smethurst's mission, also bore consequences little expected.

Wright had two brothers settled in Liverpool, both of them ardent propagators of their brother's faith, though not with their brother's power. John Wright, the younger of the two, had opened a room in Marble Street, and advertised a course of lectures. It so happened that the Mayor of Liverpool was also named John Wright. He cast an indignant eye upon his namesake's advertisement, and dispatched an informer to Marble Street. On Tuesday, 1st April, 1817, John Wright opened his course of lectures by reading (though this was not known at the time) one of his brother Richard's "Evangelical Discourses"—such was the title of the book—published six years previously. To his amazement he found himself brought up on a double charge. The magistrates summarily convicted him of the offence of preaching in an unlicensed place, though the room had, in fact, been licensed twenty years before, but not in favour of Wright.

They further, on the advice of Statham, the Town Clerk, committed him for trial at Lancaster on the charge of blasphemy, in denying the Trinity and the Atonement. This raised the question whether Unitarians, who in 1813 had been relieved of the statutory penalties attaching to these denials, could still, as the Town Clerk believed, be proceeded against at common law. The Committee of the Unitarian Fund was appealed to for aid in the defence. When they met, Aspland, their Secretary, was absent, and on the advice of their solicitor, John Wilks, they decided against interference. The prosecution, as a matter of fact, was soon dropped, for Aspland called the attention of Lord Holland to it, and Holland made some strong remarks in the House of Lords. Wilks, who was Secretary to the "Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Freedom," had been consulted as solicitor by local worthies, anxious to find means of wresting from Unitarians the chapel in which they worshipped at Wolverhampton. Accordingly, the Wolverhampton Chapel case was first brought before the Superior Courts in the following July (1817). The common law doctrine, started by Statham, was without hesitation taken up by Wilks, and played a considerable part in the early stages of the case. During many years the Wolverhampton case proceeded from court to court, and as it seemed likely to go against the Unitarians, and orthodoxy had

been further inflamed by a speech by George Harris in 1824, the more important Hewley suit was begun in 1830. The final and adverse decision in both suits was not reached till 1842. Then followed the remedial legislation effected by the Dissenters' Chapels Act of 1844. Again we may say that, had the actual occasion not presented itself, in all probability another would have been found; but it is curious to trace the long history which ended in the Dissenters' Chapels Act to the reading of one of Richard Wright's old sermons by a namesake of Liverpool's Mayor.

There can be no disputing the fact that this long history exercised a detrimental influence on the progress of the Unitarian cause in this country. Not merely was there, in some quarters, a temptation to make as little show as possible of Unitarian opinion, and to raise as much legal capital as might be accumulated out of a real or fancied Presbyterian ancestry. There was the hard fact, everywhere present, that the efforts of Unitarians had to be very sedulously directed toward purely defensive measures. There was further the peril of creating, the futility of improving, properties which might at any moment be snatched away at the bidding of legal doctrine, however opposed to common sense or to public interest. That, notwithstanding all this, much was actually done, is a tribute to the high spirit

and the steadfast loyalty of the men of that generation. Still, looking back to the middle of last century, it must be admitted that Unitarians emerged from a great struggle, with a sense of triumph at last, due to energies well spent, but already somewhat exhausted.

After the closure of the Unitarian Academy Richard Wright had been called to London by the Unitarian Fund to superintend the organization of local preachers. This he did without remitting his missionary travels, continued until he was well on in his fifty-ninth year. Then, in September, 1822, he re-entered the regular ministry, as pastor of a Baptist congregation at Trowbridge. He brought this congregation into union with the General Baptist body. He did more. Before leaving, he provided a successor in the person of Samuel Martin (1801-1877), his pupil, whom he had met at Nantwich, who, after a time of similar work in Cheshire, had succeeded Wright as travelling missionary in Cornwall, and whose fifty years' ministry in Trowbridge was a shining example of the effective power of the simplicity of godliness.

Finally in 1827 Wright returned to Lincolnshire, ministering to a little congregation at Kirkstead, a spot made famous as the scene of the initial labours of John Taylor, the Hebraist. Not in the ancient shrine, that jewel of Early English architecture, with its canopied Puritan

pulpit of 1620, where Taylor preached, did Wright minister. This had been filched from Nonconformists near the close of the previous century, and since disused. A plain building, of then very recent date, had risen in its vicinity. It appears to have been without a minister for five years until Wright's appointment. In this retired spot the nine remaining years of his busy life were employed. Tranquilly he passed the allotted span. On 16th September, 1836, in his seventy-third year, the summons came. Friday afternoon he spent at his writing-desk. Scarcely had Saturday morning arrived and he was gone.

The history of missions all over the world, look where we may, assures us that it is the individual that tells; first by achievement, then by suggestion. No apology then is needed for a revival of the ancient story which forms the topic of this address, a story which may well strike home with the potent force of a stimulating example. Excellent are the words of Robert Brook Aspland, to be found in his Memoir of Robert Aspland his father: "How invaluable would the labours of such a man as Richard Wright now prove! But not of every day's growth is his ardour of feeling, combined with sobriety of judgment; his controversial skill, combined with piety; his freedom of speech and thought, combined with moderation and wisdom."

8 *October*, 1908.

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