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TRANSACTIONS
OF THE
CONGREGATIONAL
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. IX.

1924-1926.

EDITED BY
ALBERT PEEL, M.A., Litt.D.

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EDITORIAL

WE hope all our members have started out on a campaign to increase the membership and the usefulness of the Society. We ought to have at least ten times as many members as we have at present, as probably all will agree when they see the following figures :

Life Members	6
Honorary Members	6
Subscribing Libraries and Colleges	18
Ordinary Members	115
Total		145

There are about 3,000 Congregational ministers, and perhaps 300,000 members of Congregational Churches. Can we not make our Society worthy of the name Congregational ?

The Balance Sheet for 1923 is as follows :

<i>Receipts.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Expenditure.</i>	£	s.	d.
Balance from 1922 ..	44	9	7	Printing <i>Transactions</i>	20	15	0
Subscriptions (including 1 Life Member)	44	7	0	Postages	2	0	6
Sale of <i>Transactions</i>	4	17	8	Friends' Hist. Soc. (4 years' sub.) ..	1	0	0
				Hire of Room for Meeting	1	1	0
				Printing Notices ..	8	0	
				Balance in Hand ..	68	9	9
	<hr/>				<hr/>		
	93	14	3		93	14	3
	<hr/>				<hr/>		

When it is remembered that our six Life Members have paid sixty guineas this balance cannot give us much satisfaction. We ought to make it a rule to employ the subscriptions of Life Members, not for the *Transactions*, but for publishing special works—a collected edition of the writings of Browne, Barrowe, Greenwood, and Penry should be our aim. Now that we are to issue two

numbers of the *Transactions* each year, our printing bill will be double that of the 1923 Balance Sheet, and we shall soon dissipate our balance if the number of members is not considerably increased. We do not believe, however, that there are only about a hundred people in the country keen on Congregational history: all that is needed is publicity, and our numbers will soon represent the denomination more adequately.

* * * *

Dr. Powicke has rendered another service to Nonconformist history by his article on Thomas Hall (in the *Rylands Library Bulletin*, January, 1924, and separately). Thomas Hall, B.D., 1610-1665, was a Presbyterian minister and teacher at King's Norton, and Dr. Powicke has discovered an authentic biography of him among the Baxter MSS. in the Dr. Williams's Library. Hall, like Baxter, suffered from chronic ill-health, and he was also a keen controversialist. His biographer is not without a sense of humour, as two references will show. Hall had such a bad time with his housekeeper that he often used to say "Felix cui uxor, felicior cui bona, felicissimus cui nulla." After 1662 "devotion [was] like to a three-halfe-penny ordinary where a man must swimme thro' a great mass of brothe before he can come at a little chip of meat, and y^t many times mixt wth poysson." Hall's chief interest to us at present lies in the fact that by his will he gave his books partly "to the Library at Birmingham as a monument of my best respects to y^t Towne and the ministers there, wth the rest of the adjacent ministers," and the rest "for a Library at Kingsnorton for the use of the Minister of Kingsnorton, Mosely and Withall, etc., and of the two Schoolmasters there."

Dr. Powicke prints the list of 150 books for Birmingham, but the instructions of the will were not carried out, and the volumes remained with the others at King's Norton until 1892, when the whole Library, about 600 volumes in all, was transferred to the Birmingham Public Library.

It was described by Mr. W. Salt Brassington, F.S.A., in a paper entitled "An old Birmingham Lecturer: The Rev. Thomas Hall, B.D.," published in 1887 in the *Birmingham and Midland Institute's Proceedings* (Archæological Section), but the Library deserves a more thorough examination than it has yet received. We have lately had an opportunity of glancing at it, and it is to be hoped that ere long some student will make a systematic catalogue.

Dr. Powicke has for many years been at work on the life and writing of Richard Baxter, and we believe he considers the resulting biography to be his *magnum opus*. We are looking forward to its appearance in print at an early date.

* * * *

We rejoice to know that students are at work in different parts

of the country preparing denominational county histories. Much good work has been done on these lines in the last half-century, but many counties still await historians. The Rev. Francis Wrigley has recently given us a useful history of the Yorkshire Congregational Union, and the Rev. A. G. Matthews has a history of Staffordshire Congregationalism ready for the press. We hope to see the day when our shelves will contain the histories of Congregationalism in every county in the land.

* * * *

The Autumnal Meeting of the Society was held, appropriately enough, in the Doddridge Memorial Church, Northampton. Dr. Nightingale presided, and there was an excellent attendance. A characteristic address on Doddridge was given by Sir Ryland D. Adkins, an address which we hoped to print in the present issue. It was delivered extempore, however, and Sir Ryland has been unable to prepare it for publication. We are glad that the other address, Mr. H. N. Dixon's "Gleanings from the Castle Hill Church Book," marked as it is by the writer's careful scholarship and sound judgment, finds a place in our pages. Members are reminded that the next meeting of the Society will be held on Thursday, May 15th, at the Memorial Hall, at 3 p.m., when the Rev. H. Wheeler Robinson, M.A., Principal of Regent's Park Baptist College, will speak on "The Value of Denominational History." We hope that the alteration of day from Wednesday to Thursday (caused by the appearance of "Assembly (if necessary)" on the May Meeting programme on Wednesday afternoon) will not prevent a large number of members from attending the meeting. Friends will be welcomed.

* * * *

Our plans for the *Transactions* in the future include a regular issue, appearing in April and September each year. With the present number is included title-page and index for Vol. VIII. Mr. Crippen has handed over a large number of articles he has prepared for publication, and these, together with articles accepted by him from contributors, will be used as opportunity permits. Herewith we include the first part of the paper on "Nonconformity in Hull," read by Mr. A. E. Trout at the Society's Meeting in Hull, in October, 1922.

* * * *

It is a pleasing feature of our denominational life at the present time that our Young People's Department keeps denominational history well to the fore in the Young People's Examination. Not long ago "The Pilgrim Fathers" was the subject for study; last year it was "John Milton"; this year it is "Oliver Cromwell." It looks as if one day we may have a generation that knows some-

thing about Congregational history! Incidentally, a book for young Congregationalists that can be very strongly recommended is the Rev. N. Micklem's *God's Freemen*.

* * * *

The Memorial to Robert Browne was unveiled in the St. Giles' Churchyard, Northampton, on Thursday, April 24th. A dignified and impressive service, attended by a large congregation, was held, first in St. Giles' Church, and then at the Memorial. The Memorial is like a cenotaph, stands eight feet high, and bears the following inscription :

To the Memory of

ROBERT BROWNE,

A Founder of the Brownists, or Independents,
Rector of Thorpe Achurch, 1591-1631,
Who was buried in this Churchyard, 8th Oct., 1633.
A tribute to a life wherein, among many things
obscure, one thing shone brightly, that Christ was
by him exalted as Head above all.

Erected by Congregationalists in connection with
the visit to Northampton, October, 1923, of the
Congregational Union of England and Wales.

Various Congregational ministers took part in the ceremony, and also the vicar of St. Giles'. Addresses were delivered by Sir Ryland Adkins and by the Rev. Arthur Pringle, the Chairman-elect of the Congregational Union, who also performed the unveiling ceremony.

The total cost of the memorial has been £105 of which £54 has been received or promised. Members of the Society desiring to contribute may send donations to Mr. H. N. Dixon, M.A., F.L.S., 17, St. Matthew's Parade, Northampton.

* * * *

The fact that the Index to volume VIII. has had to be made by an Editor not responsible for the volume has, we fear, caused at least one mistake. In preparing the Index we attributed all unsigned articles to Mr. Crippen, but we have since discovered that the article on the correspondence of Harley and Tallents was by the Rev. A. S. Langley. Will members please make the correction on their indexes at once, and so save themselves future inconvenience.

Gleanings from the Castle Hill Church Book, Northampton¹

IN a moment of weakness I consented to read a paper at this meeting. Had I known then that the members of this Society would be having the privilege of hearing an address on Doddridge himself from one so well qualified in so many directions and by so many circumstances to occupy this platform this afternoon, I should certainly have thought anything further superfluous. As it is, I hope my paper will be recognized as in quite a different category. In fact, it is to be understood as labelled "not for competition."

I have nothing new to unfold—at least, nothing of historic value. Practically all that is of such value in this old book has already been published in the *History of the Church of Doddridge*. But it is quite probable that that is a work not known to many of the delegates here; and it may be that the interest that is being aroused, we hope, in Doddridge's life, through these meetings being held in the place where he lived, wrote, and preached, may make you willing to go with me a-gleaning, for a few minutes, in this church book, so much of which was written by his own hand, and all of it concerned with the church to which he ministered, and over which, as many of the entries show, he yearned as a shepherd over his flock.

This old book, bound and re-bound, its edges worn and trimmed, its pages here and there defaced or lost, its ink faded, dates from 1694. On its first page we have the clear evidence of the pre-existence of a Church, already, at that date; for the heading runs:—

Acts & Memoirs
of Y^e p^ticular Church of Christ in Northampton of which Mr.
Samuell Blower was Pastor.

¹Read at a meeting of the Congregational Historical Society, October, 1923.

6 Gleanings from the Castle Hill Church Book

In Y^e year 1694.

This Church did upon Y^e departure [of] Y^e Reverend Mr. Blower their for[mer Pastour] give their Unanimous Call to Thom[as] Shepard to succeed him in Y^e pastora[l] Office who thereupon accepting Y^e Call did actually succeed him in [Y^e] office aforesaid.*

Then follows the Covenant ; and appended to it the names of the 164 members who subscribed to it. It is notable that a considerable proportion of them were not residents in Northampton, but in the villages around, as far as Olney and Towcester, though some of them are scarcely to be recognized in the quaint garb of their seventeenth century spelling. Duston, for instance, is Dusson ; Wootton, Wosson ; Collingtree is spelled Collingtrough ; Olney, Oulney ; Dallington is Dalliton ; Kingsthorpe is Kingstrup, an interesting variant, agreeing with the old pronunciation, and, no doubt, indeed, the phonetic spelling of the name. Those who knew the fifth Earl Spencer, the Red Earl, as he was called, will recall that he always spoke of Althorp as Althrup.

The names of the members themselves were not actually signed in the book, for they are mostly, if not all, written in the same hand, that of Thomas Shepard.

There are some familiar names among them, at least to residents in Northampton, for it is a very noteworthy thing how the local surnames familiar to us here and now, but many of them scarcely known in other parts of the country, are to be found in these lists of 200 and 250 years ago—such names as Tebbut, Latimer, Mellowes, Wodom, Dunkley, Buswell, Hollowell or Hallowell, Sandell, Earl, Emery, Dadford, Wilby, Cockeril, Saul.

Richard Pendred is one of the earliest names on the list, and against it Doddridge's later hand has written : "died June 10th, 1736 ; the oldest member of Y^e Church when I came, w^h. was 1729."

Malory Weston has against his name : "from 1736" (*i.e.*, from the death of Richard Pendred) "Y^e Father of Y^e Church. Died May 3, 1748."

A familiar name is Joseph Bunyan, of Abington. The Bunyan names run down the pages of this book at frequent

* N.B.—The words in square brackets are conjectural emendations, the originals being lost.

intervals for many years, and Henry Bunyan was one of the leaders of the church in Doddridge's time. We have, I believe, no information as to their connexion with John Bunyan of Bedford, but it is probable, from the proximity of the homes, and the name being an uncommon one, that they were related.

There is one rather interesting deduction to be made from this list of names. The use of scriptural, or "canting" names among the Puritans has been a favourite gibe of writers from Sir Walter Scott downwards. Praise-God Barebones is a well-known historical character; but it is perhaps not so well known that the story went that Praise-God had two brothers, one named "Christ came into the world to save Barebones," and the other, "If Christ had not died thou hadst been damned Barebones." If boys were then at all like the present generation, there is little doubt of the abbreviation by which the latter was known to his playmates!

Such names there were, no doubt, but it does not seem that they were in any way prevalent. If they had been at any time and anywhere at all frequent, one might surely look to find them among a body of Nonconformist Independents, who in 1694 signed this Church Covenant, and who may be supposed to have been then for the most part in middle age; that is to say, they would be born and baptized just about the time when the Cromwell Independent party was in the ascendant. So far, however, from finding such names, there is in the whole list scarcely a single one of them. Actually the first names on the list read: Matthew, Wm., Mary, John, Thomas, John, Richard, Francis, Richard, Wm., Samuel. The few biblical names there are are such as have always been common in Christian homes, and manifest no eccentricity; such as Hester, Susanna, Martha, Judith, Hanna; and even these form only a small proportion. Christiana occurs once or twice; may we find here an echo of *The Pilgrim's Progress*?

Charity occurs once, and Patience; Magdalen, Priscilla, and Balthazar once; and in later times, under Doddridge, one Malachy Blake. Malachy, one fears, did not live up to his name as one of the sons of the prophets, for Doddridge has written against him: "Removed, 1747." Later on, too, among those received into the church in Mr. Tingey's time, March, 1715, we find Tubal Cain York, of Kislingboro (Kislingbury). Was he, one wonders, the son of the village blacksmith?

Most of these covenanting members remained in communion

8 Gleanings from the Castle Hill Church Book

with the Church until their deaths, but a few were lost in other ways, some quite commendably, as when John Blundle was dismissed to Mr. Watts of London (*i.e.*, Dr. Watts); others less happily, as Ann Ashby, who was "rent offe to Y^e Quakers."

Under Rev. John Hunt, pastor from 1698 to 1709, there was almost a schism. Hunt was a strong controversialist, and a pugnacious adversary. He had much tenderness for those of his flock who walked in the orthodox way; none at all for those who lapsed from it, whether as supra-lapsarians or sub-lapsarians, Calvinists or Arminians, Pædo-baptists or adult Baptists. Mr. Moore, of College Lane Baptist Church, must have been a thorn in his side, for about 1710 we have quite a few entries like this:—

"Mary Yates. Gone offe to Mr. More.

"Judith Davis. Rent from Y^e Church and gone to Mr. More.

"Sarah Spicer. Rent offe to Mr. More."

The names are entered on the right hand pages of the book, the left hand pages being reserved for resolutions of the Church and similar matters. Those of importance in the Church life have been printed in our Church history; but one or two of lesser importance may be referred to.

On October 6th, 1695, an entry was made (P. 4) which was afterwards scored out; great pains being taken to obliterate every word of the writing as far as possible. Needless to say, one's curiosity was the more provoked. Was some Antinomian or supra-lapsarian heretical pronouncement of the Church there indited, to be subsequently revoked and ordered to be expunged root and stock? Or had some audacious intruder of the ungodly, still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, obtained access to the Church book and written there some ribald charge against Rev. Thos. Shepard or his Ruling Elders? I have succeeded in deciphering it at last, after taking as much pains as if recovering an early Christian palimpsest, but with much less valuable results. The entry ran thus:—

"It was agreed Y^e Brother Owen should look after Y^e Meeting House; Y his work should be to sweep it weekly and open and shutt it every Lord's Day, for which six pence should be his weekly allowance at present."

Gleanings from the Castle Hill Church Book 9

No very terrible blot on the good name of the Church, after all. Was it expunged as savouring too much of the secular and worldly? Or as too trivial a matter to be allowed a place among Church Covenants and such high matters? Or was it perhaps for a quite different reason? For after five or six years' service, John Owen apparently demanded a rise in wages—chapel keepers have been known on occasion to do so even in later years—and on April 4th, 1701, as the next entry shows: "It was A Greed Y^e John Owen should have 10 Shill. for Looking after the meeting every quarter." We may then surmise that the said John Owen stipulated that the original entry with its poor sixpence a week should be blotted out from remembrance for ever. Mr. Hunt, however, for I think it is his hand, took a mild revenge on this seventeenth century Oliver Twist by writing "agreed" in two very distinct words, with a capital G for greed, so that the entry as it stands reads like a standing witness to the greed of John Owen!

An entry in the early pages (p. 10) of the book greatly puzzles me. Perhaps some one more learned in these matters will be able to enlighten me upon it.

1694. December 11. I married Mr. Buswell's Son and Daughter of Kettring in o^r Meeting House.

T. Shepard.

Now were marriages celebrated in a Dissenting Meeting House at that time? Meeting Houses were licensed for preaching under the Indulgence, and I believe for baptisms, but were they licensed for marriages?

Anyhow, this is the only entry of a marriage in the whole book.

But the entry has a further puzzle. The Meeting House was built in 1695; how could a marriage be celebrated in it on December 11, 1694? We do not know in what building the services were held at this time, prior to the building of the Meeting House; whether in Robert Marley's house, licensed for the purpose, or whether in some cottage, as Mr. Arnold suggests in his history, fitted up for worship. In either case I should scarcely have thought it would be called the Meeting House. The entry certainly remains to me a riddle.

The original body of Church members, gathered together from different preaching houses under Rev. Samuel Blower, evidently included Presbyterians, as well as Independents, for Ruling Elders, a Presbyterian institution, had the governing

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of the Church in its early years. In John Hunt's time, however, in 1707, the following resolution was passed by the Church :—

“ May 7th, 1707.

“ It was agreed upon by Y^e whole church assembled at a publick Church-meeting for weighty reasons for Y^e time to come Y^e Y^e Church shall be governed without ruling Elders. . . .”

As the whole Church agreed upon it, it appears to have been a change that commended itself to all; but it seems to indicate that the Independent section of the Church had increased as against the Presbyterian element.

The Church was not, however, under Mr. Hunt, free from dissentient elements, nor, apparently, could they always see eye to eye with their pastor. An entry (p. 24) on September 28th, 1699, in John Hunt's hand, runs :—

“ It was then agreed upon by this Society Y^t it should be [left] to Mr. Hunt our Pastor to determine whom [it] shall be lawful for us to [hear] preach; and Y^t it shall be judged an offence to Y^e church to act in Y^e case contrary to his determination.”

Under which is written, as a comment, in Doddridge's hand, the following quotation :—“ Those Ministers who will rule by Love and Meekness need no Laws or Canons to rule by other than those of the Holy Scriptures. P. Henry's Life, p. 121.”

The entries in the Church Book are by no means confined to the spiritual concerns of the Church. It contains records of business transactions, such as the following :—

“ 1699.

Feb. 1. Agreed on then by the Church that Mr. Dust and Mr. Sanders should have Y^e use of Y^e Meeting garden for the space of twelwe years paying 10 shill. a year. As witness our hands. . . .”

And again :—

“ Mar. 31, 1706.

“ Whereas Mr. Hunt our Pastor [to keep] the Church safe and easey hath [paid] the sune of one hundred and forty Pounds as a debt which the church owed for the Meeting House, we whose names are underwritten do solemnly promise that if ev[er] the said Mr. Hunt shall any way susta[in] any damage in the S^d. Meeting House we will (as in duty we should)

Gleanings from the Castle Hill Church Book 11

bare each others Burdens by paying our parte with the rest of our Brethren who have bound themselves in that case, according to the ability God shall give us."

Nine names follow, including Joseph Bunyan, Malory Weston, and John Owen (who seems to have had a hand in most doings at this period, as well as sweeping out the Meeting House).

It is a matter of some little interest in connexion with the Church polity to note the relative position in early times of the Deacons and Elders.

Deacons had been chosen as early as 1694, while the Church was still governed by Ruling Elders; but there is little to indicate the position they held or the duties they fulfilled. We should, however, not be surprised if it should be a rather subordinate position. When, however, in 1707 the office of Ruling Elder was abolished, one would suppose that the deacons would to some extent take their place, even if without exercising their full powers; they were, at any rate, the only body apart from the minister to take the management of Church affairs. And when in Doddridge's time the Church chose three of its members to be Elders, we are naturally inclined, judging by our own practice, to suppose that their duties would be of an administrative nature, to carry out the decisions of the deacons rather than to initiate procedure or to take the management of Church affairs. This is, however, by no means the case. They begin at once to hold a prominent position. They hold a series of meetings among themselves, "aided" (as Doddridge writes) "by Mr. Samuel Hayworth, a member or elder" (he seems uncertain which) "of the Church at Rowell, but by Divine Providence resident amongst us"; and they drew up a careful scheme for the maintaining of discipline in the Church, "with the concurrence," as Doddridge goes on, "of the pastor," and then, by an afterthought he interlines it "and the deacons." They drew up a letter to the Church, and decided to hold "a church meeting extraordinary 'to consider of Y^e motion made by Y^e Elders and Deacons in their said Letter'" (Doddridge recollected the Deacons that time, but they are named *after* the Elders); and the subsequent sentences leave all the conduct of the matter in the hands of the Elders, the deacons not being mentioned.

The elaborate letter is headed "The Elders and Deacons of Y^e Church, &c.," and is signed by four Elders and six Deacons. And for some time on all the important acts of the

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Church are determined by the Elders, and the deacons are rarely mentioned. When Richard Wilson, in 1771, was chosen as an Elder, Mr. Samuel Mellowes and Mr. Thos. Smith were chosen to be his assistants; a proceeding which surely seems to magnify the office. And in 1776 they were called to take upon them the Office of full Elders.

After Doddridge's time, however, there are many entries of the election of deacons, but little said about the elders. And in Rev. John Horsey's time, in a rather elaborate minute (about 1829), setting forth the general practice and constitution of the Church, the authority of Pastor and deacons is acknowledged, without mention of elders.

From the Rev. Thos. Tingey's time in February, 1708 (old style) the entries of the new members—hitherto the name only—become rather fuller, and we are informed that they were received by way of Covenant and prayer, or some similar entry. Later on in the book such an entry as this is at first sight rather startling:—"Elizabeth Lattimer was admitted as usual." It needs, however, to be read in connexion with previous entries. At first they read somewhat like this:—

"Y^e experiences of Ruth Welford, Jane Oldham, &c., were read and accepted by Y^e church, and being read Y^e church meeting before they were all received by way of covenant and by prayer."

Or, "Sept. Y^e 3rd, 1710. Mr. James Hackleton having given Y^e church satisfaction of Y^e grace of God in him was received into Y^e Communion of this church." These formulas repeated over and over again were felt to be rather unnecessary, and the entries become abbreviated to:

"Lewis Rye admitted into Communion by way of Cov. and prayer," and later: "Rebecca Rappit was admitted into Communion after Y^e usual manner."

From this it is a slight step only to the form above referred to: "Elizabeth Lewin was admitted as usual."

Into some of these entries there creeps occasionally a more personal note. Thus:—

"March: 2: 1709-10. Stephen Bennet spake his experience *viva voce* to Y^e satisfaction of Y^e Church, and was received by way of cov. & by prayer. 1714: rent from Y^e church refusing Y^e trial of his gifts for publick ministrations."

What does this mean? Was Stephen Bennet a timid soul who could not bring himself to take part in the public exercises of the meetings? If that was it, how did he manage to give his testimony *viva voce* upon admission? And, if so, it would surely be a harsh punishment for so venial a fault. Does it not rather mean that Stephen Bennet left the Church in a huff because the Church refused the trial of his gifts for public ministration? "Rent off," not "Cut off," seems to imply this. I fear we have needlessly expended our sympathy; rather that "*viva voce*" reveals him one of those who feel themselves to have the gift of prophesying, and who had a conviction that he was called upon to exercise this gift in the public ministrations of the Church, a conviction, alas, which the Church—no doubt after adequate experience of these gifts—unluckily did not share. Let us waste no more pity on Stephen Bennet.

In January, 1710, was received Jane Mellowes; under whose name Doddridge has written: "Dead, 1745; continued with them 33 years; an unspeakable loss." And a little later—"Mar. 31, 1715, Samuel Mellowes"; with Doddridge's comment—"Died Oct. 20, 1740. An unspeakable loss."

One would like to picture these two as a saintly married couple, going in and out of the church and ministering to the necessities of the saints through their long life of union. But Samuel is described as of "Kislingboro," and Jane as of Harleston, not of Kislingbury. This, however, was five years earlier. Perhaps the couple had moved from Kislingbury to Harleston before 1715.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that Harleston is always correctly spelled so, without the final e, which so many people, including our local authorities, are in the habit of tacking on to it at the present time.

When Mr. William Worcester died on January 24, 1731-2, Doddridge writes feelingly: "A severe blow to the Church; may God Sanctify & repair the Loss."

Of Mr. Thos. Oliver, received in 1732, Job Orton (I believe it is his hand) writes: "This dear and excellent youth died April 12, 1734."

On June 1, 1749, were admitted, as Doddridge writes, two members, "Roger Corby of Moulton, and My dear daughter Mary Doddridge."

There are twenty pages or more of entries in Doddridge's firm, clear, regular hand; then, in 1750, the few entries are

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more irregular and less distinct ; then five entries in a different ink and somewhat different, less regular style ; and on May 2, 1751, the names of three members admitted constitute the final entries by him, just before the final voyage to his death at Lisbon.

The following entry (p. 66) of Doddridge's shows how seriously the Church took such a matter as the election of an Elder, in those days.

“ At a Church Meeting Feb. 2, 1748/9.

After several Hours spent in Prayer for Divine Direction in the Vestry in the Morning & some further Time in the Afternoon the Church chose Mr. John Harns to the Office of an Elder & desired the Rev. Mr. Robertson & Mr. Rudsell to assist him & the other Elders.”

At a certain period, about 1765-1770, in Wm. Hextal's pastorate, there are many entries of “ Baptisms in private.” Thus : “ Baptized in private October the sixth Arshin the son of William Arshin a Dragoon in the Inishilling Regiment —born October the second in St. Giles' Parish, Northampton.”

“ Baptized in private May 28th 1769 George the son of — Latimer born May 21th.”

The circumstances of the parentage might in some of the cases account for the privacy of the ceremony, but not as a rule. Perhaps it was that public baptism did not find favour in Mr. Hextal's sight.

Discipline had become lax in Doddridge's time, and he found it necessary to introduce a more stringent examination into a certain number of cases. A long letter (p. 61) from the Elders and Deacons to their Brethren of the Church deals with the difficulty at length, and requests the Church to take it into consideration and deal with “ such irregularities in the Behaviour of members as have given Scandal & Offence.” They recommended that such offenders should be solemnly admonished by the Church, “ and where the offence has been great and publick should be separated from our Communion till God shall give them Repentance to the Acknowledgment of their Sin, after which it is our undoubted duty, on a suitable time of trial with proper Declarations of their Repentance to admit them again in the spirit of Love and rejoicing in their Recovery.”

Accordingly, a Church Meeting was held on Thursday, April 16, 1741, in which “ after solemn Prayer the Elders mentioned the cases of a number of Persons,” each case set out

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fully by Doddridge. The first was John Bassett, a case of "drunkenness and profane swearing, and a proud contempt of the admonitions wh. had been given him." John Bassett was, by the unanimous vote of the Church, cut off from its Communion.

Mr. Barnes and John and Sarah Sharman, who, "having had a difference for Sometime, had absented themselves from Communion, but on a Reconciliation Y^e Church declared its readiness to restore them all."

"John Cole was charged (pp. 63, 64) w. having failed, whereby many of his Creditors had received much Detriment, a conduct w. the church could not but severely condemn considering the Circumstances of High Imprudence w. which it was attended, nevertheless considering the many Afflictions that have attended his Family, the Church tenderly judged it proper to forbear at present any Severer Censure against him. Nevertheless as they were then informed that he seems not to be humbled as he ought for the irregularities of his Behaviour & has censured this Society in a very uncharitable and indecent Manner, it was unanimously agreed that he should be admonished by the Elders in the Name of Y^e Church, & Exhorted to give the Church those evidences of his Humiliation w. are necessary in order to his being restored to Communion, & on refusing wh. we shall think it our Duty to animadvert farther upon him."

And later :—

"At a Church Meeting May 1, 1741.

"As it was reported to Y^e Church by Y^e Elders that Samuel Howe and John Cole instead of humbling themselves under Y^e Solemn Admonition they had received continued to behave in a very haughty & indecent Manner it was judged proper to cut them off from Y^e church as corrupt and dishonourable Members, and they were accordingly cut off. . . ."

There were no Sunday Schools in those days, no Boys' Brigades, Girl Guides, or Y.P. Institutes. Yet the young people were not quite neglected. There are two pages devoted to them by Doddridge, January 16, 1741/2. He gives a list of books received from the Coward Trustees, mostly for young people : viz., forty first and forty second Catechisms, forty Songs for Children ; one Book of Catechism for myself ; twenty Assemblies' Catechism (does this indicate that there were still some Presbyterian families in the community ?).

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Then follows a list of the young people to whom they were given. Was it as prizes for good behaviour in divine service? Or were they distributed more generally, rather as incentives to good behaviour in the future than rewards for it in the past? The long lists would rather indicate the latter. Some notes as to the ages of the children are occasionally interspersed. Among those who had the first Catechism we read: Eliz. Marley (ten); Sarah Marley (four); Eliz. Johnston (seven); Anne Treslove (six); John Roebottom (six). Twenty-seven in all, and later lists of five and two.

The second Catechism went, I suppose, to older ones, twenty-six.

Watts' *Divine Songs* comes next, and George, Kitty and John Bunyan no doubt learned their "How doth the little busy bee" and "Let dogs delight to bark and bite" out of them. One hopes they had the illustrated edition, for though the wood-cuts leave something to be desired as pictorial art, still they *were* pictures, and probably the only ones that these children possessed, at any rate for Sunday use; and I fancy poor little four-year-old Sarah Marley, with her first Catechism, must have felt a wee bit jealous of Kitty Bunyan and Sarah Bugles with their *Divine and Moral Songs*. Twenty-eight of these.

Anne Kilpin, Sarah Saul, and a dozen names follow as recipients of the Sermon on One thing needful. Poor Anne Kilpin and Sarah Saul! But stay! compensation awaits them; for on the next page are two lines:—Sixpences and Shillings; and among the recipients of Shillings figure most at least of those who had been served with the Sermon on One thing needful. No shilling, however, or even sixpence, for poor little four-year-old Sarah Marley with her first Catechism!

Then there were "Bibles of my own" given away, and lists of the recipients; these, however, were not all children and young people, for Mrs. Plumpton and Mrs. Brian received a larger Bible each, in company with Amaretta Allison.

The evolution of the *name* for the place of worship through its various stages is rather interesting. It was first termed the Meeting House. I have already quoted an entry in 1694, "I married Mr. Buswell's Son, &c., in O Meeting House." Meeting House soon became abbreviated to Meeting, a somewhat unfortunate and confusing usage, which the Friends have adopted.

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At other times it was designated by its site alone. Thus in 1741 : "The Church of Christ assembling on Castle Hill."

Meeting place is used at an unmentioned date in an entry in Doddrige's hand. "The Meeting Place was settled on the following Persons."

Meeting House or Meeting seems to have been the usual designation until a very late time. When the name of Chapel came into use is not shown; probably only when in 1837 it was registered for the solemnization of Marriages, and the certificate terms it "the Building named Castle Hill Chapel." Only four years earlier Rev. John Bennett, in accepting the call to the pastorate, addressed his letter to "The Church of Christ assembling in the Castle Hill Meeting House, Northampton," so that this appellation was used until quite modern times. However, Chapel it became in 1837, and Chapel it remained until very recent years, when the modern, and, as it seems to me, very unfortunate fashion set in of calling it a Church; a fashion which I venture to hope may pass away, as fashions do, and the quite suitable name of Chapel be restored. I have no word to say against our borrowing from our friends of the Church of England any terms or uses or forms of service that are appropriate or helpful or an improvement on our own, and these are many; but I ask why, in the name of reason and common-sense, should we want to ape the Church of England by abandoning that one outstanding usage which was far superior to theirs, in order to adopt their most degrading and confusing use of the consecrated name of Church, the *ecclesia*, the community of believers, the visible body of Christ, for a temporary, material building, whether of precious stones and marble, or of bricks and mortar, or of corrugated iron?

The confusion of mind that its use or misuse produces in the uneducated classes—not to say the educated or half-educated—is constantly being manifested; as when a pupil of my own in describing a parish church near here said: "She had beautiful painted windows"; and justified it by saying that the clergyman then preparing him for confirmation had told him: "We always speak of the Church as she."

If anyone would argue that the name of Chapel implies a slight or an indignity—the only argument I have ever heard in favour of the change—I would ask him to pay a visit to St. George's Chapel at Windsor, or King's College Chapel

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at Cambridge, or the Capello Palatino at Palermo, and *then* say whether there is any indignity in calling *any* of our buildings by the same name as these.

A rather interesting page is Doddridge's Register of the "Briefs published at our Town since my Settlement here," with the sums of money collected.

Briefs in those days were a common method of raising money by public subscription for the needs of local communities under special stress of calamity or distress. They were very frequently employed to recoup losses from a fire, and, in fact, they formed a rough and ready anticipation of fire insurances. A Brief was properly a royal warrant, authorizing collections to be made in places of worship, though there were also episcopal Briefs and others more local, issued under the authority of Justices of the Peace. A list of Briefs at Stapleford Abbots in Essex refers to the Brief on 9 Aug., 1676, "for Northampton toune being burned by Fire," and one of the largest sums raised there for a purely local appeal, viz., £3 16s. 0d., was collected.

Doddridge's list of Briefs on the first page (unfortunately, the succeeding page or pages are lost) enumerates fifty-four, opening with "Protestants at Copenhagen, Apr. 26, 1730. . . . £1 16s. 0d."

Many of the names of the places referred to are followed by a capital F, indicating, I suppose, Fire.

Some of the cases appealed for, as was natural, aroused much greater interest than others, but in only one case besides the one mentioned was as much as a pound collected, and in many cases nothing at all. They came with rather appalling frequency (fifty-four in less than ten years, an average of about six a year), for a church that had to support its minister and meet all its other expenses from voluntary offerings; and a church, too, few of whom, in Doddridge's own words, "made any great Figure in life."

Aberbrothock, for example, one would not expect to make great appeal to a community none of whom, probably, had ever heard of the place, and it is scarcely to be surprised at that Aberbrothock got nothing from Castle Hill. The sum total, however, raised by some of these Briefs throughout the country was often no inconsiderable amount; thus, collections for the French refugees between 1681 and 1694 amounted to £93,000; for the rebuilding of St. Mary's on the wall, Colchester, after the siege, £1,595 was collected. But the expenses of collecting

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this last amount were heavy. The cost of obtaining the Brief was about £150, and of collecting, £400; and this great expense of collection, together with the burden caused by their frequency, led to the abolition of Briefs in 1828. In another part of the book we find the receipts given by the official collector, and one can readily see that the fees received by the collectors might easily swallow up a great part of the returns; especially if they often took this form:—

Sept. Y ^e 30th 1738	Recd. of Mr. Doddridge (not Rev., be it noted)	Y ^e under written Briefs	£	s.	d.
	Stoney Stratford	0	0	0
	Puttenham	0	0	0
			0	0	0

BRIAN HODGSON Coll.

The list only goes down to April, 1739, whereas there are several *receipts* much later, down to 1744; one containing the curious entry "Medway Dredgers"; whatever their sufferings were, however, the Medway Dredgers got nothing from Castle Hill.

And so I bring to an end my gleanings from the records of this old book. A poor harvesting, you may say. Superficially, perhaps, it must seem so. What does it yield? Little more than a few lists of names, baldly inscribed resolutions of the Church and bare records of its meetings; stereotyped entries of members received, dismissed, and deceased.

But how much more does it yield to those who can read between the lines, and scan the history with the eye of the imagination, and realize how, underneath these bare records, there lie unrecorded histories of spiritual struggles and spiritual victories; how any one of these entries "Received into the church by covenant and prayer" may mean a life rescued, a soul redeemed, a new pilgrim escaped from the City of Destruction, his feet set firmly on the path to the Celestial City, with the Covenant of the Church for his way-book, and the prayers of the Church for his encouragement and cheer?

With what grief and mourning and sometimes tears were those frequent words, "dead, deceased, died," appended to the names of the faithful? How eloquent are some of its briefest entries, and how eloquent, often, its silences!

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Behind that bare list, alone, of 164 names with which the book commences, what romance of spiritual life and conflict lies! They signed that covenant at risk of obloquy, of persecution, of violence. It meant the severing of many ties, the loss of many friends, the taking up of new burdens and heavy responsibilities. Law and custom, established authority, peace, safety, all united to hold them back, and bid them walk in the well-trodden highways of religious life; but they heard a higher call, and they followed it, and in following it they established a new Church, which for nearly 250 years has sought to hand down their traditions and follow in their ways, and in following them, often failing, often stumbling, sometimes falling, to follow, too, in the footsteps of Him Who was their Leader, the great Head of the Church, the author and finisher of their faith and ours.

H. N. DIXON.

The Independents of 1652

ON the 20th March, 1653-4, Cromwell, with the consent of his Council, issued an Ordinance ⁽¹⁾, which established in London Commissioners for the "Approbation of Publique Preachers," and on August 28th of the same year an Ordinance ⁽²⁾ which set up Lay Commissioners in every county of England and Wales (to be assisted by a nominated number of Divines) "to eject, after trial, all ignorant, scandalous, insufficient or negligent clergymen and schoolmasters." Thus came into operation the well-known system of "Triers."

But Cromwell's action was not unprepared. It carried out (substantially) what had been debated and aimed at by the "Rump," which he dissolved in April, 1653, and by the Little Parliament, which "laid down its life" in the following December. ⁽³⁾

In fact, the question of inducting and ejecting ministers had engaged the attention of the Commons from time to time ever since the disestablishment of Episcopacy. ⁽⁴⁾ At length ⁽⁵⁾, on 10th February, 1651-2, it "appointed a committee to receive proposals from certain divines or others for the better Propagation of the Gospel." These had done their work by the 18th, when their proposals were submitted. The committee, however, kept them to itself till a year later. Then, on 11th February, 1652-3, it embodied them in a report to the House. ⁽⁶⁾ They were, it seems, subscribed by the following names ⁽⁷⁾ :—

I. EDW. WHALLEY	P. ADONIRAM BYFIELD
I. *JOHN OWEN	I. JOHN GOODWYN
I. *PHILIP NYE	I. JOHN PRICE

⁽¹⁾ *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, II., 855-858.

⁽²⁾ *Ibid.*, 968-990.

⁽³⁾ W. A. Shaw, *English Church under the Commonwealth*, II., 246, 283-4.

⁽⁴⁾ *Ibid.*, II., 80-83n.; 279-284.

⁽⁵⁾ *Ibid.*, II., 245.

⁽⁶⁾ *Ibid.*, II., 80.

⁽⁷⁾ I=Independents. P=Presbyterian. Those marked * were among the Triers appointed by Cromwell's Ordinance of August, 1654. It is noticeable that the List includes four of the Regicides—Whalley, his son-in-law Goffe, Okey and Harrison.

I. *WM. STRONG		AUG. PLUMSTED
I. *WM. CARTER	I.	MATT. BARKER
FRANCIS WHITE		RICH. LEE
I. *SID. SIMPSON	I.	T. HARRISON
I. *WM. GREENHILL	I.	EDW. WINSLOW
I. WM. BRIDGE		JOHN STONE
GEO. MARSHALL		JOHN BAKEWELL, Junior
I. JOHN OKEY		RICH. CARELL
JOHN DURY		JENKIN LLOYD
I. *WILL. GOFF		NATHANIEL ANDREWS
RA. BUTTEN		

Now in 1652 there was printed (at London, for Robert Ibbetson) a pamphlet with the following title:—

THE HUMBLE
PROPOSALS
of

Mr. Owen, Mr. Tho. Goodwin, Mr. Nye
Mr. Sympson, and other Ministers, who
presented the Petition to the Parliament, and
other Persons, Feb. 11, under debate by a Com-
mittee this 31 of March 1652 ⁽⁸⁾, for the fur-
therance and Propagation of the Gospel
in this Nation.

Wherein they having had equall respects to all
Persons fearing God, though of differing Judgments,
doe hope also that they will tend to union and peace
with

Additionall Propositions humbly tendred to
the Committee for propagating the Gospel, as, easie
and speedy means for supply of all Parishes in England
with able, godly, and Orthodox Ministers ;

For

Setling of right constituted Churches ⁽⁹⁾, and for prevent-
ing persons of corrupt Judgments from publishing dangerous
Errours, and Blaspemies in Assemblies and Meetings,
by other godly Persons ⁽⁹⁾, Ministers
and others.

⁽⁸⁾ The sense seems to be "Ministers . . . and other persons" presented a Petition for the Proposals under debate. . . .

⁽⁹⁾ i.e., "Setling . . . by other godly Persons . . . so as to prevent persons of corrupt. . . ."

PROPOSALS. ⁽¹⁰⁾

1. That Persons of Godlinesse and Gifts, in the Universities and elsewhere, though not Ordained, may be admitted to preach the Gospell, being approved when they are called thereunto.

2. That no Person shall be admitted to Trial and Approbation, unlesse he bring a Testimoniall of his Piety, and soundnesse in the Faith, under the hands of six godly Ministers and Christians, gathered together for that end and purpose, unto whom he is personally knowne; of which number two at the least to be Ministers.

3. That a certaine number of Persons, Ministers, and others of eminency, and known ability and godlinesse, be appointed to sit in every County, to examine, judge, and approve all such persons, as being to preach the Gospel, have received Testimony as above, and in case there shall not be found a competent number of such persons in the same County, that others of one or more neighbour Counties be adjoynd to them.

4. That care be taken for the removing the residue of the Ministers who are Ignorant, Scandalous, Non-resident, or disturbers of the publick peace; and of all School-masters who shall be found Popish, scandalous, or dis-affected to the Government of the Common-wealth.

5. That to this end a number of Persons, Ministers and others of eminent piety, zeale, faithfulnessse, ability and prudence, be appointed by Authority of Parliament to goe through the Nation, to enquire after, examine, judge of, and eject all such persons as shall be found unfit for the Ministry, or teaching of Schooles, being such as above described.

6. That for the expediting this work, these persons may be assigned in severall Companies, or Committees, to the six Circuits of the Nation, ⁽¹¹⁾ to reside in each of the Counties for such a convenient space of time as shall be requisite, untill the worke be done; and calling to their Assistance in their respective Circuits, such godly and able Ministers, and others, in each of the Counties where they shall reside, to assist them in this worke, as they shall thinke fit.

7. That these Persons so sent and commissioned, may be empower'd, before they shall depart out of each County, to returne, and to represent, unto the Parliament the Names of fit and sufficient persons, Ministers, and others to be appointed and approved of, such as shall be called to preach the Gospel in such Counties, and, in the mean time, the Persons so commissioned as aforesaid, shall

⁽¹⁰⁾ These are printed after the original Propositions, but, of course, they ought to stand first here.

⁽¹¹⁾ Apparently the six Justiciary Circuits.

have power while they reside in each County, to examine, judge, and approve of such persons, as having a Call to preach the Gospel in such Counties, shall upon such Testimoniall as aforesaid, offer themselves to such examination .

8. That it be proposed, that the Parliament be pleased to take some speedy and effectuall course, either by impowering the persons in the severall Counties to be appointed for Triall and Approbation of such persons as shall be called to preach the Gospel there, or in such other way as they shall think fit, for the uniting and dividing of Parishes in the severall Counties and Cities within this Common-wealth, in reference to the Preaching of the Gospel there—saving the Civill rights and priviledges of each Parish.

9. That all Ministers so sent forth and established, be enjoyned and required to attend the solemne Worship of God in Prayer, Reading, and Preaching the Word, Catechizing, and Expounding the Scriptures, as occasion shall require, visiting the sicke, and instructing from house to house, residing amongst the people to whom they are sent, and using all care and diligence by all wayes and meanes to win soules unto Christ.

10. That it is desired that no persons be required to receive the Sacrament, further than their Light shall lead them unto. Nor no person sent forth to preach, and already placed, or which shall be placed in any Parish within this Nation, be compelled to administer the Sacrament to any but such as he shall approve of, as fit for the same.

11. That a Law may be provided, that all persons whatsoever within this Nation be required to attend the publike Preaching of the Gospel every Lord's day, in places commonly called Churches, except such persons as through scruple of Conscience do abstain from those assemblies.

12. That whereas divers persons are unsatisfied to come to the publike places of hearing the Word, upon this Account, that those places were Dedicated and consecrated: That the Parliament will be pleased to declare that such places are made use of, and continued, only for the better conveniency of persons meeting for the publike Worship of God, and upon no other consideration.

13. That all persons dissenting from the Doctrine and Way of Worship owned by the State, or consenting thereunto and yet not having advantage or opportunity of some of the publike meeting-places commonly called Churches, be required to meet (if they have any constant meetings) in places publicly known, and to give notice to some Magistrate of such their place of ordinary meetings.

14. That this Honourable Committee be desired to propose to the Parliament, That such who do not receive but oppose, those principles of Christian Religion without acknowledgement whereof the Scriptures do clearly and plainly affirm that Salvation is not

to be obtained, as those formerly complained of by the Ministers ; may not be suffered to preach or promulgate anything in opposition unto such Principles.

15. And further, That the Parliament be humbly desired to take some speedy and effectual course for the utter suppressing of that abominable Cheat of judiciall Astrology⁽¹²⁾ whereby the minds of multitudes are corrupted, and turned aside from depending upon the Providence of God, to put their trust in the lyes of Men, and delusions of Satan.

THE ADDITIONAL PROPOSITIONS.

I. For supply of all Parishes in England with able, godly and orthodox Ministers, it is humbly propounded :

1. That the Sheriffe of each County, do speedily give account to this, or some other Committee, of every respective Parish within the said county that hath no Minister, and what maintenance each of the said vacant Parishes have belonging to them.

2. That each of the said Sheriffes doe also certifie to the Committee the Names of such Ministers as have no Livings, that reside in each County, and that so many of them as shall be found able, godly, and Orthodox, be placed in such vacant Parishes as by the said Committee shall be thought fit.

3. That for the further supply of those Parishes who shall yet want Ministers, the Propositions from Mr. *Owen*, and the rest of those Reverend Ministers be proceeded in.

II. For settling of right Constituted Churches, it is humbly propounded :

1. That all present Churches that are gathered, and others so soon as they shall be gathered, do signifie to the Committee of the Universities, or elsewhere, whom they have chosen, or shall choose for their Pastor ; and that such, and only such, be declared right Constituted Churches, whose Pastor shall be approved by the said Committee to be able, godly, and orthodox.

2. That when any of the said Pastors dye, or leave them to take up some other call or employment, they choose and present another Pastor within six months, and to have one settled with them within twelve months, by approbation from the said Committee, or to dissolve or disperse themselves into other Churches.

3. That the Committee for the Universities, or where shall be appointed, keep a catalogue of all right Constituted Churches in all parts of England, and the Pastor's Names.

⁽¹²⁾ A reference to Arthur Dee (1579-1651) and Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1645)—especially the latter—in the D.N.B. will throw light on this point.

III. For preventing persons of corrupt judgements, from publishing dangerous Errors and Blasphemies in Assemblies and meetings, it is humbly propounded :

1. That every Pastor of each right Constituted Church, give under his hand a testimony to every individual member in fellowship with him, that shall be approved by the Church to be orthodox, and himselfe judged to be able to speake in Assemblies and meetings.

2. That none presume under a penalty to speake in any Assembly, or meetings, but Ministers of the Word, Members of Churches, with such approbation as aforesaid, or which shall freely be permitted by those whose proper place it is to speake in the said Assemblies and meetings, except onely upon liberty granted to propound, or desire their opinions, and acquiesse without replies, or disturbance by disputes, except it be meetings purposely for disputes.

3. That where Assemblies or meetings of people be kept up, some person or persons, undertake to speak and mannage the same, who are either Ministers of the Word, have emission from some right Constituted Church, or Certificate from two or more, able, godly, and orthodox Ministers of their sufficiency to speake, and soundnesse in the faith, except Masters to their families, or Schoolmasters to their Schollers, or others, to such as by their callings fall under their Government and charge.

Several observations on these Proposals may be made :—

(a.) Comparing them with those quoted by Shaw, ⁽¹³⁾; their identity is evident—though the numbering makes it clear that between 6 and 10 (which is 9 in Shaw) one proposal has been omitted by the Committee, or added by the Petitioners since first subscribed.

(b.) Shaw says ⁽¹⁴⁾ that in adopting the proposals the Committee omitted several, which, nevertheless, the House resolved to have before it, *viz.*, 13, 14, 15, and the character of these suggests that the Committee was inclined to be less definite, or scrupulous, in its treatment of dissenters from the established doctrine and way of worship, or of “ detached ” persons, or of the unorthodox and superstitious.

(c.) The additional Propositions (after the first three, which are meant to supplement and round off the Proposals) have a special reference to the said omissions ; and reveal an acute

⁽¹³⁾ *Ibid.*, I.-IV.=II. 286 ; V.-VI.=II. 246 ; X.-XIII.=II. 82-3.

⁽¹⁴⁾ *Ibid.*, II., 83.

anxiety to provide that "gathered Churches" (*i.e.*, Churches standing outside the Church scheme) shall be rightly constituted, and, also, protected from such uncontrolled "assemblies" as might by their licentious opinions or disputes or management expose them to scandal.

(*d.*) Whether or no the twenty-seven who subscribed the Proposals also subscribed the Propositions is not certain, but it is probable; and it is noteworthy that most of the subscribers were Independents, or, at any rate, closely allied to them for the purpose in hand.

(*e.*) The general effect, therefore, is to give us the measure of the limits within which the leaders of Independency (¹⁵) in 1652 were prepared to practise the principles of toleration—which were not very generous; and the extent of their reliance on the State—which was pretty thorough-going.

(*f.*) Though the Rump was dissolved (April, 1653) before it could find time to consider all the Proposals (¹⁶), and the Little Parliament found itself unable to do more than pass a resolution declaring for Liberty to all "who fear God," and for the suppression of all blasphemers, damnable heretics or licentious persons (¹⁷), the subsequent Cromwellian Ordinances prove how closely, on the whole, the schemes of the Independents was adopted, and so their prevailing influence in the Cromwellian Church-State. The chief difference lies in the direction of greater doctrinal freedom. Subscription to the thirty-nine Articles is "to cease and be void." And nothing is put in their place. There is no iteration of the word "Orthodox" as in the Proposals and Propositions. The nominee is to bring a written testimonial, signed by three "persons of known godliness and integrity," of whom one at least must be "a Preacher of good standing"; but the testimonial is to his "holy and good conversation." Doctrine is not mentioned—either theological or ecclesiastical. Cromwell's mark is plain.

(¹⁵) Not including John Goodwin, who was much more tolerant and consistent. The Pamphlet shows that "John" in Dr. Shaw's list is a mistake. It was "Thomas."

(¹⁶) *Ibid.*, II., 84.

(¹⁷) *Ibid.*, II., 85.

(g.) Thirty-eight commissioners for approbation were named in the Ordinance, and eight of them occur among the twenty-seven—all Independents. Others, like Hugh Peters, Peter Sterry and even John Tombes, were Independents of a very positive type. And some of the laymen were not less so.

But, if proof were needed of Independent predominance, we have it in the fact that the assertion of the Proposals that ordination is not a necessary preliminary to approbation for preaching or the pastoral office, is implicitly repeated in the Ordinance by its express direction to the Triers not to regard their work as having to do with ordination or “a solemn and sacred setting apart to the Ministry.”

(h.) If the historians of Independency—Vaughan, Waddington, Hanbury, Dexter, Dale, etc.—say little or nothing about the matter, their silence may be due to the accident that the above recited Pamphlet and the light thrown upon it by Dr. Shaw’s list of names have escaped their notice.

F. J. POWICKE.

Nonconformity in Hull

Let strangers walk around	The orders of Thy house,
The City where we dwell,	The worship of Thy court,
Compass and view Thine Holy	The cheerful songs, the
ground,	solemn vows,
And mark the building well ;	And make a fair report.
	I. WATTS, <i>Ps.</i> 48.

THE Parish Church has so remained through all vicissitudes and changes of religious opinion. With few exceptions these "national churches," as we may call them, have been kept in use as places of worship since their foundation.

Not so, however, has it been with the meeting-places of Dissenting Christians. Possessing no State-backing, they have fluctuated in their fortunes, generally, though not always, in an upward direction. This has necessitated the abandonment of small places from time to time, the alteration or extension of existing premises, the erection of larger buildings or the removal of the cause into newer districts, and the story of these places is highly interesting, sometimes gladdening the heart, sometimes saddening it. Within the precincts of this city are many buildings, once places of worship and now printing establishments, law offices, masonic lodges, warehouses, or workshops. Others have passed for ever from our ken.

Dissent or Nonconformity represents those people who could not, from conviction, conform to the opinion of those worshipping in, or controlling the fortunes of, the State Church. At first many of them still endeavoured to remain in communion with the Establishment—as, *e.g.*, the early English Presbyterians of the "Old Dissent" and the Methodists of the "New"—but necessity eventually drove them outside. Hence it is that the history of Nonconformity is one long record of worship in dwelling-house, meeting-room, meeting-house, chapel and Nonconformist church, and of struggles for religious liberty against the "powers that be."

Prior to 1640 and until a much later period the town of Hull was enclosed by walls which ran roughly round the inside edge of the present "town docks" and the south side of the town, supported across the river by the Garrison buildings. Within the walls were many narrow streets, lanes and passages, and

even gardens, though not a single one of these latter exists to-day within the "Old Town."

The proximity of Hull to Scrooby and Gainsborough, down the Trent, and to Killingholme Creek, upon the Humber, from whence the Pilgrim Fathers set out to Holland on their first journey; the fact that Hull was the port from which Ezekiel Rogers, the Rowley vicar, and his parishioners sailed in 1638, to found the new Rowley in Massachusetts; the great trade carried on between Hull and the Protestant Low Countries—without a doubt Hull was the port through which *most* of the books and pamphlets of the exiles were brought into England—these are some of the incidents that suggest there must have been in Hull a good leaven of Puritan and Nonconformist thought. There is, however, direct contemporary evidence that Nonconformity was gaining a hold upon the town.

The Rev. A. Marvell, father of Hull's noble patriot M.P., was famous as a Calvinist preacher at Holy Trinity Church and the Charterhouse between 1624 and 1640. He was a broadminded man, and the more advanced spirits of the town looked to him for advice and guidance. He complained that some of them held "separate meetings not according to Law," and advised them to meet in small parties rather than large companies considering the times.

Prior to his death—in 1640¹—the Anabaptists and others (presumably the Independents) were invited to come and talk matters over with him—with but small results. Sir Henry Vane, M.P. for Hull in 1640, was an Independent and possibly attended some of these early meetings.

In 1641 the Rev. William Styles, a pronounced Puritan and Presbyterian, followed Rev. A. Marvell in 1641 as Lecturer at Holy Trinity and Master of the Charterhouse, and in 1644 he was appointed Vicar of Hesse-cum-Hull.

He was in turn followed (as Lecturer, not as Vicar) by Rev. John Shawe, M.A., a worthy divine who "had but lately come to Hull as a place of visible rest and quiet after many and troublesome pilgrimages," in response to "a pressing call to the work of the ministry at the low church in Hull" (in 1644). Yet he found no quiet here but, as elsewhere, great turmoil.²

¹ He was drowned in 1640 whilst crossing the Humber one stormy day in an open boat.

² In 1653, J. Shaw was made Master of the Charterhouse.

Here we may point out, briefly, the dividing line between the two main Puritan parties. The Independents held that a church was simply one congregation of professing Christians under the ruling of its own officers. The Presbyterians considered that a number of congregations should be grouped together under a "classic" or classical presbytery, and they desired to remain within a State Establishment.

Until the Restoration, the Hull Presbyterians were enabled to remain within the "fold," but not so the Independents, who followed the injunction "Come out from among them and be ye separate."

Leaving, for the moment, the Presbyterians we will follow the fortunes of the Independents.

One of the most zealous promoters of Congregational principles and worship in the town was the Rev. John Canne,³ who had been driven, as a Separatist, to Holland, where he was chosen pastor of the Brownist congregation previously under the ministry of Henry Ainsworth. In 1634 Mr. Canne had published a pamphlet *On the Necessitie of Separation*, proving that the Apostolic Churches were Congregational in principle.

It would seem that when he returned from Holland in 1640 he brought with him the great Philip Nye who had been over there for some time.

At any rate, though they may not have returned together, it is certain that they were friends⁴ and that Mr. Nye came to Hull about this time.

On May 22, 1643, a small band of persons formed themselves into an Independent Church.

"The first Constitution of this Church was in Seaven members who first entered into a Church-state by confession of faith and solemne Covenant with God and one another in the presence of that church whereof Mr. Nye was pastor upon the 22nd day of the 5th Month being a day of Solemne fasting and prayer in the year 1643."

³ In the handbook issued in connexion with the Congregational Union's visit to Hull in 1922, Canne is said to have been *successor* to Richard Luddington, instead of *predecessor*.

⁴ Their names, with that of Hugh Peters, were forged in 1659, in connexion with the *Parliamentary Intelligence*, published in their name. Another proof of his connection with Philip Nye is that their names, again with that of Hugh Peters, were forged in 1659 in the "Parliamentary Intelligence" published in their name.

Nonconformity in Hull

Here we have a direct statement⁵ of a church formed in the presence of a *then existing* church of which "Mr. Nye was pastor."

Mr. Nye must even then have left (or he must have been on the point of leaving) the town, as the record states "was" pastor not "is," for on June 12th, 1643 he was chosen (as representative of Kimbolton) one of the assessors of the Assembly of Divines.

He was also appointed in the same year a Commissioner, with Sir Henry Vane and others, to procure the assistance of the Scots on the side of the Parliament, and he arrived in Scotland August 9th, 1643. He was accused by the Presbyterian Edwards of having preached "toleration," "particularly at Hull."

We find another local reference to Mr. Nye in a letter (dated July 13th, 1643) from the town magistrates to Peregrine Pelham, M.P. for Hull (then in London), which expresses discontent at the appointment of Sir Matthew Boynton over the East Riding, for it is "feared that he and Mr. Nye whom you wrote of in your letter may so comply together about interrupting that forme of Church Government already established and thereby factions, if not fractions, occasioned."

Who were the members of this little church, established in 1643 amidst the terrors of that worst form of strife, civil war? Seven in number at the outset, they included the Rev. Robert Luddington, vicar of Sculcoates, Stephen Blyth,

⁵ Hull holds, I think, an unique position in possessing this early record, which is still extant in the first minute book and register of the congregation which later became the Dagger Lane Chapel Society. Every page of this book I have scrutinized with care, having had it on one occasion in my possession for some weeks, and viewing it on other occasions by kind permission of the present possessors, the pastor and church-members of the Spring Bank Presbyterian Church.

The earlier names from 1643 to 1669 are apparently transferred from another book, for an entry says the book was "begunne in the year 1669."

For 200 years this large book was in constant use, and the church to which it belonged and its descendants form an unbroken chain from 1643 to the present day.

What a story the book can unfold! Who hid it and where when informers were as plentiful as blackberries in September, when the church-members were hauled before the magistrates, to be fined—and often imprisoned?

It speaks to us of life and death, of ministers good and bad, of growth under Gospel showers and sunshine, of faults and failings, and of the triumph of righteousness.

George Kitching, John Pecket, Walter Andrew, Hugh Wilson and Ralph Casse. In the first year five others were added, and the next year eleven more. It is possible that this little meeting was the one of which during the siege of Hull John Shawe speaks in his "Memoirs." "Sometimes many well-affected persons were met in a chamber to repeat sermons and pray; as soon as ever they were departed and gone down the stairs (and not till then) came a red-hot bullet through the place where they met. . . ."

The Hull garrison, in common with most of the Parliamentary Army of this time, was strongly Independent; Canne, their preacher, was also Chaplain to the Governor.

The Proceedings of Council of State, December 2nd, 1650 orders^a Lt.-Col. Salmon, Deputy Governor of Hull that "Mr. Cann is to forbear preaching in the High Church (i.e. Holy Trinity) at the time Mr. Shaw, their Minister, is doing so, it being agreed by the town that in the week-day Mr. Cann may preach in that Church when the others are not lecturing there and that upon the Lord's Day Mr. Cann may preach in the Garrison side or . . . other convenient place."

Abraham de la Pryme, a Hull antiquary, thus refers to the period:

"In these times of trouble and confusion there was *another* hotheaded preacher whose name was Mr. Can, who being a mongrel Independent, preached openly to the soldiers both in the streets of the town and in the garrison and won himself so much into their favour that they called him their preacher and petitioned the Council of State to grant them the Chancel (of Holy Trinity) to meet in, and though that the parishioners complained and petitioned against it, yet they got the grant of it in the year 1652 and walled up the arches between it and the Church (i.e. the Nave) that the one might not disturb the other in their devotions . . . and kept their filthy conventicle here until the same was purged and they cast out by our good Josiah, King Charles II."

This arrangement was officially confirmed by an order of Council of State, April 6th, 1652, which granted the Chancel for the services of soldiers under Col. Overton, conducted by Canne on the principles of the Independents whilst the nave was occupied by the townspeople and Presbyterians, to whom Shawe, as Lecturer, preached.

^a Corlass, *Hull Authors*, and *Cal. D.S.P.*, 1650.

Canne's connection with Hull, though broken on several occasions, was a long one. An author of great repute, he wrote many works of religious controversy, some of which have been reprinted.

His *Voice from the Temple* (1643) was dedicated to "Col. Robert Overton (then governor of Hull) and his religious lady, with all other dear Christian friends in and about Hull" and it has been suggested that this work was possibly the cause of his banishment from Hull about 1657. *Truth with Time*, another of his works, is dated "from Hull 1656."

It must be noted that not once does Mr. Canne's name appear, either as member or preacher, in the old minute book of the Independent congregation of townspeople.

It thus appears that there were two Independent congregations, one being composed of the soldiers of the garrison under Mr. Canne, the other of the few men and women of the town under the Rev. Robert Luddington. It is quite probable that the garrison church was the earlier one previously referred to, for as we have seen, Mr. Nye and Mr. Canne were friends and both returned from Amsterdam in 1640.

Col. Robert Overton, who was stationed in Hull in 1642, distinguished himself in its defence with much "Honour and gallantry." After being Governor of Pontefract for some time from 1645, he was appointed Governor of Hull, and he and his wife, Mrs. Anne Overton, joined the little Independent Church whose fortunes we are following in 1650. In 1660 he was removed from Hull for opposing the Restoration of Charles II. and committed to the Tower, where, it is supposed, he died some years after. Another soldier, Corporal Baylis, and his wife also joined the Church in 1649.

Joshua Marsh and Ellerker Potts were both blind. In 1629 (October 29th) the former was found vagrant and wandering in Hull streets.⁷ In accordance with the cruel custom of the time he was whipped as a "vagrant rogue" and sent to Marfleet, the place of his birth, with the pass which every beggar or wanderer had to have given him, as stated in the Statute. A controversy arose as to which place should maintain him, for he had evidently resided in Hull for some time (the qualifying period, according to the Act, was three years). It was referred to Sir Thomas Craven, Justice of Assize, who ordered Hull to pay 12d. per week and Marfleet to

⁷ See my *Bench Book Extracts*, 1929-30, 1657. B.B., V., p. 110, B.B., V., p. 113, B.B., VI., p. 27.

maintain him, or vice versa. Hull decided to pay the money, with 6d. per week awarded before, and Marfleet to keep him.

Later, Joshua was evidently permitted to return to Hull, for a month or two after the Independent Church was formed in 1643, he and Ellerker Potts became members, and from time to time various members of their families also joined.

Fourteen years later (9th October, 1657) our Magistrates' Bench Books record that it was entreated that Joshua Marsh and Ellerker Potts, who by this time had become inmates of the Hull Charterhouse (Almshouses) might be re-admitted to their weekly pay, which had been stopped because "they had committed the grievous sin of matrimony and having plunged into crime, recklessly aggravated their guilt by annoying the Magistrates."⁸

The blind men had petitioned the Council of State and upon their cause being known and an apology made for their offence and uncivil carriage to the Bench, they were re-admitted to pay.

They were still members of the Church in 1669, but a later hand remarks against their names, "mort." This is written against most of the early names in this unique old register, signifying they had died in membership with the Church.

Some, however, are followed by the words "Quak" or "Quack," one bears the addition "Catabapt," and another "eject and mort," showing they had left the little Church and joined the Quakers or Baptists, or had been cast out for some serious offence.

For a long time the little church met in private houses. Deacons were chosen from time to time, the first recorded being Mr. John Bethell in July, 1656, and Mr. Samuel Carter on January 23th, 1659.

On this latter date (I quote from the Minute Book) "Mr. Edward Atkinson was made choice of for a ruling Elder" (for the Independents had elders as well as Presbyterians) "as a person fitly qualified for the same, with liberty to teach."

This Edward Atkinson was afterwards imprisoned (about 1663, the time of the Farnley Wood plot) with other Nonconformists in York Castle, but was liberated through the efforts of Lady Dorothea Norcliffe, daughter of Sir Thomas Fairfax, she being another member of this congregation. Later deacons were Mr. John Robinson, Mr. Scale, Michael Bielby and Thomas Goodlad.

⁸ *Hist. of Hull Charterhouse.*

In 1660 came the Restoration of Charles II. with its great flourish of trumpets, its beer-drinking and bell-ringing. The Presbyterians were still worshipping in the nave of Holy Trinity, the Independent garrison church in the chancel, and the little Independent church under Mr. Luddington was holding its meetings privately—as the Old Minute Book proves, for under the date 1660 we have “These were all members in the tyme and under the ministry of Mr. Robert Luddington, their Pastor.”

Let us now turn to the Presbyterians. Through the Civil Wars, the Commonwealth, and the Protectorate, they had been able to worship in the Parish Church as an integral part of the national State Church. They had supported the Restoration, believing that under Charles II. they would be able to carry out their desires for the Presbyterian form of Church Government.

How little reliance could be placed in the word of a Stuart they soon realised. The Presbyterian lecturer at Holy Trinity and Master of the Charterhouse, John Shawe, was in June, 1661, ordered to give up his duties as lecturer and master, “he being one,” says the order, “whose doctrine has been abominably seditious and scandalous.” (They spared no language in these days!) For a whole year he resisted, but in June, 1662, was compelled to give up the fight and retired to Rotherham “a wronged man.”

The Presbyterians and the Independent garrison church were cast out of Holy Trinity and, as with Mr. Luddington’s church, though still meeting when and where possible, their records for the next few years are scanty.

The causes were still in existence but they were driven underground by the persecutions which came upon them. Then came the Act of Uniformity and the Great Ejectment of 1662. No minister was ejected on that date from either High Church (Holy Trinity) or Low Church (St. Mary’s, Lowgate) nor from the two churches at Sculcoates and Drypool.

What information we have has been gathered chiefly from outside sources such as Bench Books, the Domestic State Papers, etc.

One entry only from 1660 to 1669 is to be found in the old register. “Mr. Robert Luddington died 20th of February, 1662, being full of days and after he had been pastor to this Church 19 years. Vivit post funera virtus.” Amidst all the rough and tumble of the Civil War and the comparative quiet

of the later Commonwealth, he had kept on his way, adding members to his church.

Some of these are remarked "Distant," signifying they were too far away to attend. Col. Overton is written down "Prisoner," and "Mort" is added later.

"Upon the day and yeare above written, being ye 10th July, 1669, Mr. Richard Astley was added as member of this Church and consented to come and preach unto them and reside amongst, or nere unto them. . . . Who was afterwards elected as pastor by universall consent upon a solemn day of fasting and prayer being the . . . day of . . . 1669."

The Nonconformists now began to be a little bolder and even some who were in authority supported the oppressed worshippers. An agent of the Government writes on July 5th, 1669 :

"Multitudes of disaffected persons in these parts. A meeting gathered to hear the address of an illiterate Scotchman was suppressed by Cap. Carteret, at present Governor of the Garrison and several of them prosecuted."

In 1670 (May 23rd) Dissenters at Hull "have their private meetings still and there was a great disturbance in the Chief Church yesterday occasioned by a Nonconformist, who thro' a cunning contrivance of the Major (John Tripp) got into the pulpit to preach and was commanded down by Mr. Crowle, a Justice of the Peace, which caused a great hubbub. . . . had it not been for the soldiers from the garrison, it would not have so quietly ended, as they all went home grumbling. . . I hope the Lord will keep the King in safety . . . there is no question but the Presbyterians^a have some design in hand."

"May 29th, 1670. There have been great disturbances in the garrison, by the seditious meetings in conventicles.

"1670 June 12th. Since I came to Hull I have prevented the meeting of the sectaries by placing spies in every street."

"June 22nd. The magistracy here are too much disaffected to the government of the Church and too backward in the prosecution of the law against Conventicles."

"July 1st. The Presbyterians are so high at Hull that London cannot exceed them and are so excited by private letters from London—telling them how their party despise the laws, and openly speak against the Government—that they generally think the King cannot reign long. The Presbyterians

^a The term "Presbyterian" was frequently synonymous with "Nonconformist."

(i.e. the Nonconformists) "compose two-thirds of the people . . . here."

The town by this time must have been in a very excited state, but on August 6th the agent reports.

"Meetings not so numerous as formerly and since the affidavits were taken before the Mayor about Billingsley, they have much slackened."

"December 7th 1670. Hull is now free from any disturbance, Hayes and Jekells business¹⁰ having much discouraged the Nonconformists." In 1671 he says: "I find the fanatics here pretty quiet."

A similar instance of this quietening down was noted by Hadley, one of our chief local historians. He says "In Hull, the preachers, particularly a Mr. Thornberry,¹¹ the principal holder forth, was silenced and for a time, there was a cessation of the fanaticism which had so long prevailed."

The beginning of a lawful organized Nonconformity as a recognized element in national life was made possible by the Declaration of Indulgence (March 15th, 1672). Although the Nonconformists did not admit that the king had any constitutional right to make this Declaration they felt they were entitled to any relief that could be obtained.

Meeting-houses might now be licensed in the name of the occupier of the premises and individuals could obtain licences to preach. The Hull Independents immediately bestirred themselves, followed very quickly by the Presbyterians.

The former applied as early as May 15th for several licences, and the document,¹² with its quaint spelling, is worth quoting, as it definitely settles the vexed question as to the denomination of the forerunners of the Dagger Lane congregation.

It is addressed ;

" Sir Joseph Williamson
At the Earle of Arlington Office
in Stone Gallery.

" Mr. Richard Astley, minister to a Congregacon in and about Hull. he is of the Congregationall way.

A Licence for him to p'ach &c in the house of Mr. Jo: Robinson in Kingston upon Hull.

¹⁰ Whitaker, *History of Bowlalley Lane Chapel*, says Hayes and Jekell were London conventiclers.

¹¹ I can find no trace of this Mr. Thornberry in any local record.

¹² 8. P. Dom., II., 321.

A licence for Mr. Jo : Pakland to preach at John Newton his house in Auleby in Hullshire. he is of the Congregationall way.

A Licence for Mr. Jo : Marr's house in Newlands in Yorkshire for Mr. Thomas Oliver who is of the Congregationall way.
(signed)

May 15 [1672]

ROBT. COLLIER."

Mr. Astley's licence was issued June 15th, 1672, giving the denomination as "Independent." John Mare's house at Newland, then two miles from the city gates, was duly licensed for Thos. Oliver to preach in as an Independent, and John Newton's at Anlaby for Jo : Packland.

The Presbyterians obtained two licences for their preacher, a general one on June 10th, applied for by Joseph Wilson Junr., on behalf of Joseph Wilson, Presbyterian, at Newland Near Hull (formerly of Beverley St. Mary's and Hesse-cum Hull, the other (granted July 25th) for the house of Richard Barnes in Hull as the preaching place of Joseph Wilson (Presbyterian).

Not a month later there is still another licence, issued for a new meeting-house built by Presbyterians at Blackfriarsgate (*sic*). This was, if not the first, certainly almost the first, meeting-house built in the north.

No doubt Mr. Astley and Mr. Wilson stood as colleagues under the rising sun of their religious freedom, for, after all, they had much in common. Both had been clergymen, both ejected, Mr. Astley from Blackrode, Lancs., Mr. Wilson from Beverley St. Mary's. Both had congregations of earnest believers, hungry for the Word with the hunger of men who had been long starved through a spiritual famine. The narrow lanes of the south end of the old town, Blackfriargate, Blanket Row, Posterngate and places between, are consecrated ground.

But very brief was the taste of freedom. Within a year the Declaration of Indulgence was withdrawn,¹³ and in 1673 persecution again broke out. The congregations were harried like vermin and the ministers were hunted from place to place.

It was dangerous to keep any records, yet someone not only kept the register of the Independent congregation from destruction, but added to it the names of those who, in spite of

¹³ Note that Great Seal of Declaration of Liberty of Conscience was broken at Whitehall by His Majesty's hand. (Williamson's Journal) State Papers (Domestic), 1673.

persecution, joined the little band meeting in John Robinson's House.

Following the withdrawal of the Indulgence came the Test Act, which compelled all holders of public offices to take the Sacrament according to the Service of the Church of England.

This caused the removal of Lord Bellasis from the Governorship of Hull and the appointment of the ill-fated Duke of Monmouth in his stead.¹⁴ As the Duke of Monmouth was favourable to Protestant liberties, Hull had relief from most of the terrors of religious strife for a time.

1679 (February) witnessed the sudden death of the veteran Presbyterian leader Joseph Wilson, whose long life-story is the record of a "stormy petrel." He was succeeded by the Rev. Samuel Charles, who came to Hull about 1680 and began at once to make his influence felt. Tradition makes him the real founder of the Bowlalley Lane Presbyterian Church. He won great respect from all classes, and had a large following of Presbyterians.

There had been in Mr. Wilson's later time two Presbyterian congregations, one at the house of Richard Barnes (not the Independent of the same name, for one was a grocer and the other a joiner), and another at the Chapel in Blackfriargate, but from the coming of Mr. Charles to Hull we hear of only one, that being in Bowlalley Lane (where it probably met when he first came to town).

Mr. Charles had been ejected from Mickleover in 1662 and had led a wandering life prior to coming to Hull. He was an excellent scholar,¹⁵ well versed in the Oriental languages, a great historian, an accurate, lively and successful preacher, indefatigably studious, very retired and devout, but of a warm and courageous temper and a zealous reprovcr of reigning vices, as the sermons that have come down to us amply prove.

In December, 1682, the Earl of Plymouth was made

¹⁴ Dom. State Papers, 1673, April 30th. Duke of Monmouth appointed Lord Lieutenant of East Rdg. and Governor of Hull.

¹⁵ The original catalogue of the library of Rev. James Bayock, minister at South Cave, near Hull, from 1672 to 1737, lies before me. It contains works of all kinds, theological, political, medical, scientific, and abundantly proves that these early Nonconformist congregations were not all the ignorant sectaries they have often been considered, neither were their ministers rude and unlearned men. The Hull Presbyterian congregation had a very valuable library bequeathed to them by one of their early members, Leonard Chamberlain.

Governor in place of the Duke of Monmouth, and the Hull Bench Book contains this entry :—

“ Dec. 20th, 1682. His lordship did intimate to this bench that two conventicles is comonly reputed to be held within this town, upon which this Bench proceeded to send for Mr. Asthley and Mr. Charles supposed to be preachers to the said Conventicles and for Mr. John Robinson, Mr. Anthony Iveson, Mr. Michael Bielby, Mr. John Graves and Christopher Fawthorp, supposed amongst divers others to be hearers of them and Mr. Bielby and Mr. Graves only appeared and they two were admonished by the Court to forbear to meet any more at the unlawful assemblies . . . and upon the messenger sent to Mr. Asthley’ and Mr. Charles’ houses who returned answer that they were gone out of town, the court ordered that they should have notice to forbear preaching to such assemblies within this town and county.”

De la Pryme supplements this bare official account by saying that the Earl, addressing the Magistrates, wished that “ the two conventicles which were here contrary to the laws of God and Man . . . might be suppressed, to which the Bench pleaded ignorance, but assured him if there were such as it were probable there might, that nobody had given in any information upon Oath, against them, and so they could not proceed against them if there were such, upon which several of the Burgesses present declared there were two of them in the town, much frequented by a company of fractious, blind, zealous and superstitious fellows, disaffected both to Church and State, and that their sanctified Preachers were called Ashley and Charles.”

It will be evident that the persecuted people had the sympathy of some upon the Bench, which is further proved by the remark of an old Alderman, Humphrey Duncalf (Sheriff in 1683 and Mayor in 1668), who told the Earl that by many years observation he found that the Dissenters who lived among them were pious, peaceable men, and loyal subjects of the king ; and therefore, he being an old man, and going into another world, would have no hand in persecuting them.

Who were these men called to appear before the Bench in company with the two Ministers ?

John Robinson was now an elder of the Independent Church which met, as we have seen, in his house. Michael Bielby was also an Independent and was Chamberlain of the town in 1681. Anthony Iveson, another Independent, was Sheriff in

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1679 and Mayor in 1690 (after these troubles).¹⁶ Chris. Fawthrop was Chamberlain in 1683 and was a Presbyterian and owner of the land upon which he built the Presbyterian Chapel in Bowlalley Lane. John Graves was possibly the son of Ald. John Graves (Sheriff in 1595, Mayor in 1598-9, and M.P. in 1601).

The Bench Book January 11th, 1683, says, "John Marshall Constable of Austin Ward informs the Bench that on December 3rd last he did heere Samuel Charles, Clark, preach and teach within this Corporation in an unlawful assembly or conventicle contrary to the liturgy of the Church of England and the said John Marshall saith that Mr. Charles is an inhabitant here."

Eleven days afterwards (Jan. 22nd, 1683) the Bench Book records that Alderman Johnson neglected the Town Sessions and refused to join with the Bench when requested to act with them when convicting several persons who frequented conventicles.

Mr. Astley escaped but Mr. Charles was "caught" and hauled before the magistrates February 2nd, 1683, and recounts the trial in his diary, a very spirited defence being put up.¹⁷ But to gaol¹⁸ he had to go.

Regaining his freedom, Mr. Charles retired to Welton in 1683, under the "Five mile Act," where he stayed some years, sending to his people in Hull written sermons from time to time, and travelling up and down in the Wolds preaching wherever possible.

"Thus was the town," says our "genteel" historian Hadley,

¹⁶ An interesting Bench Book record in 1665 states: "His house shut up owing to plague and watchman appointed."

¹⁷ An extract from the trial:

"But," said Mr. Charles, "are there no malefactors in Hull, but two ministers of the gospel, Mr. Ashley and I? Are there no drunkards, no swearers, no Sabbath-breakers. . . ?" etc.

¹⁸ What holes the Hull Gaols were; John Howard visited them afterwards and describes them as follows:—The House of Correction (or Detention) in Fetter Lane (called by Howard the Bridewell):—"Two rooms below and two upstairs about twelve feet square; very offensive; no fireplace; court only twenty-two by ten; not secure, and prisoners not permitted to go to the pump; no sewer, no allowance, no straw. Not whitewashed since it was built. Debtors from the Court of Conscience sent hither." The other prison, "Town and County Jail," was called the Bell Tower. Howard says: "The ground room is a damp dungeon. Leads for debtors to walk on: no court: no water accessible to criminals: no sewer, and the felons' rooms are offensive. Gaoler no salary: fees 13s. 4d."

“for awhile cleared of these wretched vermin, the miserable guides of a deluded multitude.”

The Bench Books of this period make interesting reading for they show the harvest which was reaped by spies and informers. The chapel and meeting-houses were closed, and those who attempted to meet were repressed with great harshness.

Three examples may be given.

“1684, Michael Bielby, Jho Yates, and John Robinson estreated in ye Excheq(uer) for 11 (? two) months at 20 lb. per month for not repairs to their par^h Church.”

“1685 February 9th, John Robinson fined for keeping a conventicle in his own house 20 lb.” (This was our own little Independent meeting.)

“1685 October 13th. Wm. Harrison for the same 20 lbs, John Green for preaching there 20 lbs.” (This was the Baptist meeting)

Few members were added to the Independent congregation during this trying time. The old register shows that from 1679, when 12 new members were added, the figures dropped the next year to three only and the same in 1681. In 1682, 1683, and 1685 not one was added, and only four in 1684.

The Chambers MSS. includes the following reference to Monmouth's rebellion :

“1685 Upon receipt of a letter from Lord Middleton that ye King had received advice of ye entire defeat of ye Rebels and that they should take care to examine all persons that are travelling and are not well known and secure them, the Bench ordered severall people to be confined to their houses till further order ; amongst which were Michael Bielby and his son Jonathan (Mayor 1719), Leo^d. Chamberlain (a Presbyterian leader) Anto. Iveson, Jno Baker, Richard Cook &c and afterwards Daniel Hoare, Sen^r. (Alderman. Put out of Aldermanship on the charge that he had not received Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England) and Wm. Idle. Capt Copley, Governour complained to the Bench that Jno Baker who was confined to his house, did not observe his confinement ; and that he opened a letter sent by the post to ye said Baker in which were treasonable words, upon which the Court committed Mr. Baker to Prison.” This man was a remarkable stirring character, dubbed “the Protestant tinker,” being a brazier or pewterer.

A. E. TROUT.

(To be continued)

John Penry : His Life, Times and Writings

BY WILLIAM PIERCE. HODDER AND STOUGHTON. 20s.

MR. PIERCE prefers not to think of this solid and substantial work as the sequel to his earlier volumes on the Marprelate controversy. But most of us will link the three together as a trilogy of honest and painstaking investigation into one of the manifold aspects of English religious life under Elizabeth. Mr. Pierce has made this field particularly his own, and though he rather gives us the impression that with this crowning labour he may rest from his toils, those toils are so fascinating that we do not despair of seeing some further contribution from his pen.

Mr. Pierce has peculiar qualifications for the long task which he has now completed, and the present reviewer can only follow him afar off. It is true there was a Grieve in the Penry business from the beginning (p. 211n.), and that his modern namesake has tramped the road between Mynydd Epynt and Brecon, published a reprint of the *Æquity*, and transcribed three or four of the other writings in readiness for the day when we shall produce our overdue *Corpus Independentium Patrum*. But only one who has lived in and for his theme as our author has done, is competent to weigh and appraise a work into which so much research and sympathy have been poured.

The book is considerably enlarged through Mr. Pierce's decision to give us a background as well as a portrait. Many of his readers will appreciate this, and be glad to have his sketches of Cambridge life and discipline in the sixteenth century, of the social and religious conditions of Wales, and of the rise of English Separatism, though these are available elsewhere for those who know their way about. Less necessary, perhaps, are the pages that deal with the school curriculum and the road from Cefnbrith to Cambridge, the ecclesiastical situation in Scotland and "the tenets of the persecuting hierarchy." Two of the most valuable features of the book are the detailed analysis given of Penry's writings, and the bibliography. These in themselves testify to the amazing industry of the author, and if further proof were needed, it can be found in the transactions Mr. Pierce has had with Dr. Caroline Skeel and the Bursar of Peterhouse. Text and footnotes alike evidence a vast field of reading and consultation; Mr. Pierce has burrowed in every likely quarter, and has cast his net far and wide. I do not know that very much that is new has come to light beyond

the fact that Penry was absent from Cambridge between August, 1584, and October, 1585. The definite facts relating to his stay in Edinburgh are given with greater fulness than I have previously seen, but they are still tantalizingly meagre, which, of course, is not Mr. Pierce's fault. His real objective, to straighten out the story that has hitherto been inaccurately and inadequately told, and to give some sense of the spacious stage on which his hero played his part, has been thoroughly attained.

On some points, indeed, we could wish a little more light. The circumstances of Penry's introduction to the circle at Northampton are very vague. How did he come to know Sir Richard Knightley (p. 74)? Surely he could hardly have known as early as 1584-5 (p. 73). Why, when Burghley counselled him on the 23rd May, 1589, after the first appearance at King's Bench, to write to the Queen, did he delay till two days after his condemnation on the 25th? Mr. Pierce says (p. 476) the delay was "wholly due to his lack of writing materials." Could he not have asked Burghley for these at the interview, or at least, when every moment was precious, sent for them at once rather than four days later? And this above all, might not Penry have done more for the cause he had at heart, his "one thing," by devoting himself to an itinerating mission among his countrymen, or, at least, settling down in Wales, and showing what was possible, than by persisting in the course he chose, and getting ever more and more angry with "Archb. and Ll. Bb." so that the evangelization of his country falls more and more into the background? For a lover of the principality he gave it rather a wide berth. This is a question that teases me, and though it will probably be regarded as pedantic or trivial, I should like to know Mr. Pierce's real thought about it.

Mr. Pierce contends stoutly for I. Eliz., cap. 2, as the sole statute under which Penry was charged. In this he follows the early evidence of the Court Record and Coke's Book of Entries. He does not spare Mr. Champlin Burrage, who in 1913 challenged the application of the title "Congregational Martyr" to Penry. Mr. Burrage may not be the ideal collaborator in research, but I rather feel that the method and tone of Mr. Pierce's references to him detract, to some extent from the value of the present work. It must be remembered that not Mr. Burrage, but Dr. W. S. Holdsworth, was responsible for the suggestion, not of the "gratuitous" substitution of 23 Eliz., cap. 2 for 1 Eliz., cap. 2, but of its addition. "He (Coke) should have said that it (the indictment) was founded upon both statutes." But Mr. Pierce falls upon Mr. Burrage much as Whitgift fell on John Penry, and I find myself almost using Mr. Pierce's own words on Penry with reference to this new sufferer—"Poor young man, he little suspects the course the prosecution will take. . . ."

The following misprints should be noticed : p. 75, note 2, read p. 150 ; p. 143, l. 1, read Marmaduke ; p. 166, l. 14, read oaths ; p. 192, l. 16, read p. 217. On p. 218, n. 3, on the principle that "to him that hath it shall be given," Dr. Peel gets an additional e ; on p. 202, third paragraph, "the beginning of this chapter" should surely be "the beginning of this division"—the reference is to p. 148. Perhaps worst of all, after protesting soundly on p. 5 that Penry was *not* born in 1559, Mr. Pierce, on p. 17, makes him eleven years old in 1570. One might also ask why (p. 15) there should be any expectation of finding Penry's name in a list of schoolboys drawn up in the reign of Edward VI. "Lord Bacon" (p. 336) is an error that seems immortal. There is no need to describe the Cymmrodorion Society as "learned and patriotic" (p. 131), true though it be.

A. J. GRIEVE.

A History of British Baptists

By W. T. WHITLEY, M.A., LL.D.

(Chas. Griffin, 1923. 10s. 6d.).

WE opened this book by the learned editor of the *Baptist Quarterly* with great interest. Dr. Whitley has done so much for Baptist history during the last twenty-years that we knew we were certain to find a scholarly account of the denomination to which he belongs. We are sorry to have to confess to a measure of disappointment—caused, no doubt, by the fact that our expectations were so high. Dr. Whitley will not be alarmed at criticism, for his own John Smyth put the matter truly enough :

"Credit through writing bookes, is a thing of such dangerous hazard, by reason of the varietie of censurers, that it is doubtfull whether a man shall winne or lose thereby."

To write a history of British Baptists is no easy task : the main division of the Baptists into General and Particular, and the other minor divisions, make the story a complicated one to tell. Dr. Whitley's volume is full of information, and some of his chapters are very valuable, while he does not hesitate on occasion to express his own opinions—about Roman Catholicism, for example, or about the attitude of the Baptists to education in day and Sunday Schools, concerning which he is very severe.

Dr. Whitley is perhaps a wee bit too much of the advocate to be an ideal historian. His chief aim is to make the Baptist "the senior Free Church denomination," and to that end he magnifies Smyth while depreciating Fitz, Browne, and Harrison (is there any authority for saying Harrison was executed, as Dr. Whitley does in *The Works of John Smyth*, p. cxviii.?). In the present work, strange to say, he seems to have a special grudge against Congregationalism (cf. pp. 75, 208, 269, 303). He claims that while the Independents, except for a moment in 1658, consisted of isolated congregations:—

"From the beginning Baptists were not 'Independents'; they always sought for fellowship between the different Churches, and they were very successful in arranging for permanent organization."

One challenge to Congregationalists might well be taken up by some member of the Congregational Historical Society. Dr. Whitley points out that while it is usual to refer to Cromwell's Army as an army of Independents, "no Congregationalist has troubled to identify any number of officers who held his views or belonged to an Independent Church."

Our main quarrel with modern Baptist historians, however, is that they take so much pains to dissociate themselves from the Continental Anabaptists: they still seem to live in the sixteenth century, when the Munster atrocities made all men shun the "Anabaptist" label. We are glad to note that Prof. Farrer has protested against this reading of history (*Baptist Quarterly*, January, 1924), and we trust he will follow up what is a very important point. The Anabaptists made a glorious witness for religious freedom, and present-day advocates of toleration ought to be proud to be descended from them, for they were real pioneers. No doubt they had non-resistance as an article of their belief; no doubt they objected to the taking of oaths and the occupying of civil offices; but the John Smyth for whom our British Baptists claim so much held that the disciples of Christ "are not to go to law before the magistrates, and that all ther differences must be ended by (yea) and (nay) without an oath." Possibly, however, Smyth changed his mind about this, as he did about most things. In order to preserve a right perspective the present writer, while admiring Smyth, has found it well to write, on the title-page of Dr. Whitley's *Works*, under Mandell Creighton's dictum about Smyth—"None of the English Separatists had a finer mind or a more beautiful soul"—the words of John Robinson, who knew Smyth: "His instability and wantonness of wit is his sin and our cross."

At times Dr. Whitley's meaning is not quite clear—we had to stop twice on p. 197—and there are one or two slips which should be corrected in a latter edition. Among them we note:—

104. *fanatique secteries*. Modernise or put quotation marks.
112. *mistook* their opportunity.
179, 227. Should not *Rawden* be *Rawdon*?
180. "*who did lift Bridlington.*"
355. "*wrought these wonder ends.*"

Barclay's very valuable *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* might have been mentioned in the bibliographies.

We do not desire to end on a critical note. Dr. Whitley has given us the best history of British Baptists yet written, and all students will find his volume of great use. We are indebted to him for this latest contribution to the study of Nonconformist history.

ALBERT PEEL.