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JAMES ALLEN OF GAYLE

To all but a few the name of James Allen (1734-1804), successively Methodist (Inghamite) preacher, Sandemanian (Glasite) elder, and unattached pastor, is unknown, yet as recently as 1924 two of his unpublished manuscripts, *Notes on the Gospels according to Mark, Luke, and John*, and *Notes on the Acts and the Epistles*, were printed in Perth, while more recently still (1927) a posthumous work entitled *A Treatise on Redemption* (York, 1842), was re-issued in Edinburgh. The story of Allen's life deserves to be preserved from oblivion, for not only does it reveal a deeply spiritual and gracious personality, but also throws many interesting sidelights on some of the religious movements of the eighteenth century.

I

James Allen belonged to an old and highly-respected family which for generations had been established in Wensleydale in the north-west of Yorkshire. The eldest son of Oswald Allen, Esquire, he was born at Gayle near Hawes in 1734. His parents, who were devoted members of the Church of England, endeavoured to bring up their children in what they believed to be sound moral and religious principles. James, grave and thoughtful beyond his years, early displayed a marked religious interest, and his parents designed him for the ministry of the National Church. At the age of fourteen he was placed under the care and tuition of a clergyman named Noble who kept a school at Scorton near Richmond, Yorkshire. Here he remained a little more than two years, during which he acquired considerable proficiency in the Classics. So far his knowledge of preachers was limited to the parochial clergy, most of whom revealed little acquaintance with experimental religion, but on returning home for his Christmas vacation in 1749 he was brought into contact with preaching of a new order. His uncle, Richard Allen, lately retired from the Excise service in Derbyshire, and now settled on an estate which previously belonged to his uncle, Leonard Allen, was an admirer of the evangelical teaching of the Methodists and Moravians who stressed the doctrine of salvation by faith. In Richard Allen's house James

heard a Moravian evangelist, Thomas Moore, who had been assisting the Rev. Benjamin Ingham, one of the original members of the Oxford "Holy Club", in his evangelistic tours through Yorkshire and the north-west counties. Moore's sermon made a deep impression on the boy's mind. Writing many years later, Allen says, "Though I had gone to church all my life, I never had heard our fall in Adam with its consequent condemnation and defilement, nor our redemption and recovery in Christ Jesus, set forth in an evangelical light".

Early the following summer, learning that George Whitefield was visiting his friend William Grimshaw, the Evangelical Vicar of Haworth, the parish afterwards made famous by the Brontës, Allen took advantage of a holiday to hear the distinguished evangelist. This seems to have been the beginning of an acquaintance with Grimshaw and Whitefield which was later improved. Of both these leaders of the Evangelical Revival Allen has left interesting pen-portraits. "Mr. Grimshaw", he says, "travelled among Mr. Wesley's societies, preaching generally every day, and occasionally visited Mr. Ingham's plan. He was a man of much natural levity which intermixt with all his religious fervency and zeal. He was a diffuse preacher, and successful in awakening much religious concern in the Methodistical line. I was often entertained by him with great cheerfulness and hospitality." Of Whitefield he writes: "I afterwards in life heard him frequently and rather admired his popular talent to rouse and to affect, than his aptness to teach by opening the Scriptures to instruct, inform and edify. . . . His doctrine was Calvinistical, and yet he co-incided with the Arminians in the popular appropriation and universal offers of grace. His charity was truly antinomian: for he was a Presbyterian in Scotland, an Episcopalian in England, and an Independent in America, in his conformity to their different forms of church-government. Though he made almost innumerable proselytes, he established no church-order, and consequently the people became Baptists, Independents, or Methodists. In his person he was slender and delicate, in his constitution weak, and in his diet delicately nice. He travelled in his carriage with many attendants, and made a fine figure in the flesh."

Allen records his impressions on the occasion when he first met Whitefield at Haworth: "On Whitsun-eve I heard Mr. Whitefield in Haworth Church from Isaiah liii, and

delineate the sufferings of Christ in such strong and passioned terms as greatly affected me, and indeed the whole congregation. I heard him twice the next day in the churchyard when he preached to an immense crowd, and moved the passions of the multitude." Shortly afterwards Allen was present when Whitefield preached at Gayle. The preacher was attracted to the grave and attentive lad and before departing the next morning specially commended him to God while leading the family devotions, "praying for me", says Allen, "that I might be preserved from the evil of the world and come forth fraught for the work of the ministry, which affected me very much indeed".

With a view to preparation for Holy Orders Allen proceeded to St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1751. There he seems to have lost something of his earlier religious enthusiasm, but he was disgusted by the manner of life all too prevalent among the students, and became convinced that Cambridge was no place to equip a man for the Christian ministry. A year later he returned home unsettled in mind and heart. Certain Inghamite preachers whom he heard failed to impress him and he decided to associate only with the worship of the Established Church. Religious questions still exercised his mind, and he intimated to his father that he desired to give up his course at Cambridge. Unwilling to persuade him against his will, his father proposed to send him to Edinburgh to study medicine, but before this decision could be carried into effect circumstances occurred which completely changed his plans. At this juncture Benjamin Ingham visited Gayle and James unburdened his heart to the evangelist who showed a great interest in the youth whose spiritual concern was so sincere and earnest. Ingham told him "that flesh and spirit struggled in them that believed, like the twins in the womb of Rebecca, and that sanctification was not perfect in the saints in this life". Referring to this period of his life, Allen says that he was vainly seeking for religious certitude in emotional experiences: "I did not then perceive that I was struggling to establish my own righteousness and did not submit to the revealed righteousness of faith. Certainly my eye was not single towards the only reason of hope, Christ crucified. Not his work alone, but inward frames and feelings constituted the foundation of my joy and rejoicing." Be this as it may, Ingham's influence was sufficient to engage the interest and co-operation of Allen in his evangelistic labours.

II

Allen's active association with the Inghamite Connexion extends over a period of nine years from 1752 to 1761. This body owed its origin to the Rev. Benjamin Ingham who, though descended from one of the Ejected Ministers, was himself brought up in the Church of England. At Oxford he came under the influence of the Wesleys and became an early member of the Methodist group. Like his fellow-members he assiduously observed religious exercises and has been described by Canon Overton as "the most thorough High Churchman of the early Methodists". After his ordination in 1735 he accompanied the Wesleys on their mission to Georgia. During the voyage the friends first came into touch with the Moravian brethren whose influence so profoundly affected their careers. On returning to England two years later Ingham preached the evangelical doctrine which he had learned from the Brethren. Opposed by the clergy who refused him their pulpits he proclaimed his message in the open fields and in private houses. His fervid evangelism produced a revival of religion and a transformation of social morals in that part of Yorkshire in which he laboured. So great was the response that he found it difficult to make adequate provision for the Societies which sprang up as the fruit of his ministry. Unlike John Wesley, Ingham did not possess in equal proportions the gifts of evangelism and organisation. In his perplexity he turned to the Moravian Brethren, who agreed to lend their co-operation. From the Moravian headquarters at Fulneck evangelists were sent to various parts of Yorkshire and Westmorland, and even as far south as the Midland Counties. It has been stated that Ingham seceded from the Establishment to join the Moravian Church. This is not correct, but his fifty Societies were placed under Moravian supervision and assumed a markedly Moravian character. Meanwhile Ingham had married Lady Margaret Hastings, sister of the Earl of Huntingdon whose wife, the famous Countess, was a keen supporter of the Evangelical Movement. In course of time differences arose which resulted in Ingham severing his connection with the Moravians in 1772. He now decided to carry on independently and to gather Societies under his own jurisdiction. Among those who adhered to him were the brothers Batty, Lawrence, William, and

Christopher, sons of Giles Batty, Esq., of Newby Cote, near Settle. It was at this juncture that James Allen, now a youth of eighteen, also joined him as a colleague.

In November 1752 Allen commenced his "pilgrimage as an itinerant preacher" in association with Christopher and William Batty. Early in the New Year he addressed a meeting at Gayle. Says he: "I was timorous and much dismayed at the thought of preaching before my parents, friends, and countrymen. My knees trembled and smote one against the other, being scarcely able to support my body. I blushed before the audience, and began with much flutter and discomposure. The tremor soon ceased, my tongue was loosed, the scriptures were opened to my view, and I spoke with freedom and distinctness of the salvation which God had prepared." For three months he remained in the vicinity of Gayle. Increasingly he became convinced of his call to the ministry of the Gospel: "My conscience bore me witness I had no sinister views. The Cross was before me, and my reward only with the Lord. I looked for seals of my ministry, and thought I saw them."

After the separation of Ingham from the Moravians attempts were made to bring about a union with the followers of Wesley. The Minutes of the Methodist Conference (1753) contain the item: "Can we unite, if it be desired, with Mr. Ingham?—Answer: We may now behave to him with all tenderness and love, and unite with him when he returns to the Old Methodist doctrine." Two years later the matter again came up for consideration. Mr. Ingham, accompanied by some of his preachers, including James Allen, appeared at the Methodist Conference in Leeds. Wesley admitted Ingham but declined to allow his colleagues to enter. The attempt at union was unsuccessful, and in the same year (1755) Ingham summoned his preachers to meet in Conference at Winewall to discuss matters of doctrine and discipline. Ingham himself was appointed General Overseer, and William Batty and James Allen were elected as General Elders to assist in the supervision of the Societies. After examination in their doctrinal principles Batty and Allen were ordained by Ingham with prayer and the imposition of hands. This ordination marked a distinct break with the Church of England, and it now became necessary to secure licences for the Inghamite meeting-houses. As Ingham

declared that he was neither a Moravian nor a Methodist the licences were taken out in the simple name of Protestant Dissenters.

Popular as Mr. Ingham was, his work was not carried on without opposition, and for some years violent antagonism continued. James Allen relates an alarming experience which befell himself and some of his friends at Lancaster in May 1760. A mob of between five and six hundred attacked the place of meeting. Appeals to the magistrates were unavailing. "Abundance of stones of two, three, and four pounds weight, were cast into the rooms both above and below stairs, so that we could scarce find a place of safety from bodily harm." The following morning the civic authorities were again approached, but with no success. "This was a dark and gloomy day. Every countenance spoke wrath, detestation and revenge; every tongue railed on us, and every street offered new affronts." Ultimately, as the result of Mr. Ingham's representations, reparation and protection were secured.

During this year (1760) Allen's preaching tours covered a wide area extending as far as Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. The year is also noteworthy as furnishing the first indications of a rift within the Inghamite Connexion, and of differences between Allen and his chief which soon ended in their separation.

Ingham was a born evangelist but he lacked the gifts of a theologian and an administrator. Doctrinally his position might be described as Baxterian—a position midway between the Arminianism of Wesley and the Calvinism of Whitefield. Ecclesiastically his views were unformed, and even after his appointment as General Overseer the polity of his Connexion remained undefined. A plan of government, derived mostly from the Moravians, was submitted to his preachers who, however, postponed decision until after further consideration. In some respects the Inghamite Societies had affinities with the order found among the Moravians and the Methodists. The members of a Society were divided into "classes", each having a leader who superintended the spiritual interests of his small group. Candidates for fellowship were publicly examined respecting their faith and experience. If any difference of opinion arose over the acceptance of a candidate the matter was decided by "lot". On acceptance new members received the "kiss

of charity". Love-feasts were observed and the Lord's Supper was dispensed monthly.

In 1759 Ingham's attention was drawn to Robert Sandeman's *Letters on 'Theron and Aspasio'*—a work intended as an answer to a popular book written by James Hervey, an Evangelical clergyman highly respected for his scholarship and saintly character. Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio* dealt generally with the Christian Gospel and more particularly with the Way of Salvation. Sandeman, who represented the small Scottish denomination known as the Glasites, the followers of John Glas¹ who had been deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland in 1730, passed severe strictures upon this book and took the opportunity of expounding his own theory of faith as "the bare belief of the bare truth of the Gospel". Ingham read Sandeman's *Letters* and Glas's *Testimony of the King of Martyrs*, and his interest was further aroused by George Whitefield's account of the order and discipline of the Glasite Churches in Scotland. James Allen also read the works of Sandeman and Glas. About this time he made the acquaintance of a Baptist minister named Wilbraham (afterwards a Sandemanian) who introduced him to the recently published *Epistolary Correspondence between S. P(ike) and R. S(andeman)*. From this period we note a change in Allen's general outlook and a growing dissatisfaction with Ingham's system. At the meeting of preachers held at Winewall at Christmas 1760 he took exception to the use of the Lot in admitting members and choosing officers.

We now come to an event of far-reaching consequences both to the Inghamite Connexion and to Allen's future career. Desirous of obtaining further information concerning the Glasite doctrine and discipline, Ingham decided to send William Batty and James Allen to Scotland to see for themselves the practices of the Glasite Churches. In August 1761 these two preachers proceeded North on what was understood to be a private mission. The diary of this visit has been preserved. The itinerary included Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth, Dunkeld, and Dundee. Arriving in Edinburgh early on Sunday morning, August 16, Batty and Allen visited the Meeting-house where they heard Sandeman preach. At the close of the service they

¹ For the life and work of John Glas see *Records of the Scottish Church Hist. Soc.*, Vols. VI and VII, and for the teaching of Glas, the *Evangelical Qrly.*, Vol. XII.

introduced themselves to the preacher, who invited them to his house where they were received with great cordiality. Their host impressed them as "a free, open, and sociable man". Long conversations took place on faith and order. The visitors informed Sandeman that they had over 1,500 members connected with their Societies which they desired to establish in a Scriptural church-order. At Perth, whither Sandeman accompanied them, they "found such a hearty, hospitable, kind entertainment in the manner of Christian fellowship, and upon the footing of the Gospel, as was unexpected and quite wonderful and beyond anything we have ever seen" (*Diary*, August 19). On the Friday they proceeded to Dundee where they met John Glas, who insisted on their accepting the hospitality of his home. They presented a letter from Mr. Ingham, along with a contribution of five guineas as a token of appreciation of the help derived from his *Testimony of the King of Martyrs*. The following day they conversed on religious topics, indicating their agreement with the doctrinal opinions of the Glasites, after which Mr. Glas "rose up and came to us and said he thought he must give us a kiss of charity, which he accordingly did with great affection and gravity". They attended services at which Sandeman and Glas preached on the following Sunday, and on the next day they set out on their return journey, filled with admiration for all they had seen and heard. The hosts were equally delighted with their visitors. A fortnight later Sandeman said in a letter to a London friend: "The Yorkshiremen who were both preachers of long standing, staid with us more than eight days. I went with them to Perth, Dunkeld, and Dundee,—the more we were acquainted we were the fonder of each other. Mr. Glas was very much pleased with them."

Batty and Allen returned ardent advocates of Glasite principles. They duly presented their report to Mr. Ingham and the preachers, but full consideration was deferred until the next General Conference which was to determine the government and discipline of the Societies. Meanwhile Batty and Allen lost no opportunity of proclaiming their new opinions. In a letter to Allen, Batty reveals the state of his feelings: "Upon every reflection of our journey into Scotland, I feel a love to the people, and my heart drawn after them. Surely the journey was providential and seasonable. But the clear light

shining among them gives me to see things differently amongst us." Though he anticipated difficult times ahead, he was sure that many were prepared to support them. The Conference which assembled at Thinoaks in Craven on October 16-17 discussed the question of re-organisation. It was decided to abolish the Methodist "society plan" and to adopt the congregational order similar to that found in the Glasite Churches. Unfortunately, trouble arose over other questions. Mr. Ingham proposed the name of Mr. Edward Gorell as an elder, but objections were raised, whereupon Ingham suggested that the matter be decided by "lot". This was opposed by Allen and some other brethren. Says Allen: "During this conference I expressed my dissatisfaction with the Lot, the choice of elders who had no aptness to teach, and Mr. Ingham's authority." Dissension became rife. Attempts at conciliation were made by Lady Huntingdon, William Romaine, George Whitefield, and others, but they failed to prevent a schism. Though William Batty sided with Allen in the dispute, his personal affection for Ingham outweighed other considerations, and he remained with his chief until his death, after which he himself became General Overseer of the Connexion. Allen and his supporters decided to sever their association with the Inghamites and unite with the Glasites.

The controversy had disastrous effects upon the Inghamite Churches generally. Secessions and excommunications were so numerous that the Societies were reduced from eighty to thirteen, and the membership from 1,500 to 250. Many transferred their allegiance to Mr. Wesley. Under date July 23, 1766, Wesley writes: "I went to Tadcaster. Here Mr. Ingham had once a far larger society than ours; but it has now shrunk into nothing; ours meantime is continually increasing." One of the bitterest blows to Ingham and Lady Margaret was the defection of their only son, Ignatius, who seceded to the Glasites in 1766. Some years later, William Romaine declared of the Inghamite Societies: "If ever there was a Church of God upon earth, that was one. I paid them a visit, and had a great mind to join them. There was a blessed work of God among that people, till that horrid blast from the north came upon them and destroyed all."

Writing twenty-five years later, Allen informs his son Oswald that "our leaving Mr. Ingham's connection hinged on our

objections to the authority he assumed, and the unscriptural usages he introduced into the order of his Churches". Batty, in his Journal, states that "though Mr. Ingham was a man who in his general character and behaviour did not seek his own ease, advantage or honour, the situation of affairs led the people to give and Mr. Ingham to take (though with reluctance) more authority than was justifiable", but he considers that Mr. Allen was unreasonable and obstinate in his attitude at a time when it might have been possible to repair the breach. It is to the credit of both Ingham and Allen that, in spite of their differences and separation, they continued to hold one another in affectionate esteem.

III

Allen's connection with the Glasites dates from 1762, in which year he proceeded to Scotland where he was received into communion and appointed to the eldership. His accession was a distinct acquisition. A man of gentle birth, good education, and earnest piety, he possessed considerable influence in the district around his ancestral home in Wensleydale. He was the first Englishman to hold the office of elder among the Glasites—a position which he sustained until his separation some seven years later. It was largely due to his labours that the Glasite movement developed in the north-west counties of England. During this period, 1762-1769, Churches of the Glasite order were formed at Gayle, Newby, Kirkby Stephen, Kirkby Lonsdale, Whitehaven, Kendal, Colne, Liverpool, and York.

The first Society was that established at Gayle of which Allen was elder. Gayle being a little village, the membership was very small. About a year after its formation it consisted of eight persons, including Allen and his wife, a daughter of Mr. Edward Wilson of Newby. Within a few months of his return from Scotland other Societies were formed at Newby, Kirkby Lonsdale, and Kirkby Stephen. "These beginnings of church-order," says Allen, "made us many enemies and stirred up much opposition in every place." By August 1763 the group of Societies had a combined membership of 78.

From the correspondence which passed between James Allen and John Glas it appears that the former had considerable difficulty in bringing his friends into line with Glasite

doctrine and discipline. Glas suspected that some followed Allen not so much from changed conviction as on account of their earlier relationship. The Inghamite Societies were the fruits of evangelistic efforts in which the emphasis was placed on preaching, not on apostolic order. Glas deprecated the fact that Allen's friends were more interested in sermons than in discipline. He considered that they were inclined to minimise the importance of the Lord's Supper, for which he blamed their previous association with Ingham. "Till your people be cleared of this prejudice", he wrote to Allen, "they will make little of the ordinary officers, the elders or bishops of a church, nor will they make much of the Lord's supper, nor of the work and labour of love amongst themselves, nor of the communion of churches." The people were slow to recognise the mutual relationship of the Churches. According to Glasite order it was necessary that in each Church there should be at least two elders to constitute a presbytery. Failing two elders the Lord's Supper could not be observed, nor could discipline be administered. Consequently the help of elders from sister Churches had to be called in. Some of Allen's friends questioned if such officers had any function in Societies other than those to which they personally belonged. This attitude irritated Glas, who in a letter to Allen dated September 16th, 1762, said: "And will not your disciples at Newby, whom you are bringing into church order, when you visit them, receive you as an elder? Or will they not allow him they have chosen, when he visits Gayle, to be received there as an elder? If your brethren will not proceed on such communion and mutual help of churches, they cannot have the Lord's supper and regular discipline, and so no full communion in any of these contiguous churches till they get a presbytery amongst themselves."

Theological questions also caused trouble. Some of Allen's disciples are dubious concerning the doctrine of Predestination which was a distinctive feature of Glas's teaching. Even before the breach in the Inghamite body William Batty anticipated that this article of belief would prove a subject of contention. Glas counselled Allen to have nothing to do with "foolish questions and disputes", lest in the heat of philosophical contention "raised by this fiery dart of Satan" some of his people should be "driven toward free will in opposition to the scripture doctrine of grace". He considered it better that the Churches

should be smaller in numbers than that an opening be left for controversy.

Things did not work smoothly with the Churches. Cases of discipline were frequent and occasioned much heart-burning. Allen records that as early as 1762 uneasiness was caused over the question of marriage with unbelievers which had been considered unlawful by the Inghamites. Though such marriages were still thought undesirable, there seemed no distinct prohibition in the New Testament. Certain young men, however, took advantage of the situation to act foolishly and bring reproach upon the fellowship. In September 1763 the London Church sent one of its elders, John Barnard (formerly an Independent minister) to visit the northern Churches. His stay extended over a month during which Allen accompanied him on a tour through Craven, Westmorland, Wensleydale, and as far as York. Barnard stressed the necessity of discipline, but shortly after his departure trouble broke out at Newby, with the result that six members were excommunicated. Allen seems to have thought that the measures taken were too drastic, for he comments: "This was one of the first instances of church-power, which would not listen to any remonstrances, and admit of no resistance. Considering our raw and ignorant situation, the measure was harsh and cruel. More forbearance ought to have been exercised for the end of instruction."

In other Churches disharmony began to appear, leading to withdrawals and excommunications. Within two years the membership at Kirkby Lonsdale was reduced by one-half. A dispute over a case of discipline caused strained relations between Allen and Glas, though Allen afterwards admitted that his judgment had been mistaken.

Wrangling became all too common in the Glasite churches. Allen's grief is expressed in a letter dated December 1765: "Intercourse in the churches affords the most striking specimens of the wickedness of the human heart in ourselves and others. Brethren in Christ are better acquaint, and have to do with one-another's consciences and conversation in a way and manner unknown in the world. The courtly dealings of the world and the plain dealings of such as fear the Lord, towards one another, form a great contrast. And plain dealings in admonition, reproof and the observance of Christ's law of love, serve to

manifest in the church all that is earthly, sensual, and devilish in us."

During the two years following the establishment of the first Glasite Churches in the north of England Allen was unremitting in his service to all the Societies, but as soon as there appeared a prospect of elders being settled in the Churches he began to contemplate some form of secular employment so that, as he puts it, "I might eat my own bread and have to give to him that needed". Throughout his life Allen was strongly opposed to professionalism and mercenariness in the ministry. In October 1785 he addressed to his son a long letter headed "On the Honorary Maintenance of Elders" in which he deals very fully with what he calls "a subject in various respects of serious importance". Both the clergy of the National Church and the Dissenting ministers come in for severe condemnation. From this letter we learn that when he first joined the Glasites or Sandemanians, Allen's expenses were met by the voluntary contributions of friends, and that his private family needs were supplied by a small annual allowance from his father. When it was proposed that he should be maintained by the Churches in a manner suitable to his social status he declined to accept remuneration: "This I could not reconcile to my principles and my conscience. I could not see how, in such case, my self-denial for Christ's sake, was to appear." He proposed to become a partner in a hosiery business, but owing to the disapproval of his father and also of the Sandemanian Church in London the project fell through, though later the venture was taken up. For seventeen years Allen continued in the hosiery trade, not only supervising his factory but also working with his own hands. The business did not prove lucrative. Allen says that, on an average, he took no more than half-a-guinea a week out of the stock. Had it not been for the generosity of his father and the kindness of friends he would not have been able to carry on his religious activities.

Allen's ministry in the Glasite body was far from happy. Though to the end of his days he remained a firm believer in the main principles of Glasite doctrine and order, the expectations with which he joined the fellowship were not fulfilled. He states that one of the chief reasons why he left the Inghamites was his objection to the domination of Mr. Ingham. He hoped to find more freedom among the Glasites who were professedly

Independents. But he soon discovered that he had not escaped from bondage to "every human yoke". Glas's authority was scarcely less manifest in his connexion than Ingham's in his. Looking back upon this period of his life, Allen says: "We have seen human authority superseding the authority of God, the fear of man taking the place of the fear of God, in subjecting one church to the elders of another, or a number of churches to the control of certain individuals, or the members of a single church to the *ipse dixit* of a ruling elder. In one word, we complain that congregational-church principles have very visibly given way in practice to those of presbytery and prelacy." He was not altogether satisfied with the generally-accepted views concerning the qualifications of elders and the grounds of excommunication. He doubted the correctness of the Glasite interpretations of "the husband of one wife", "having faithful children", and the "second absolution", but for the sake of peace he suppressed his personal feelings. Matters, however, came to a head over a question upon which he could not compromise, the deputation of elders. He had good reason for believing that the conduct of one of the most prominent elders in the London Church was not worthy of his profession and office. Events proved that he was justified, but his remonstrances caused great offence to the brethren in London. Other Churches sided with the London Church, with the result that early in 1769 Allen himself was "cut off" from fellowship. He desired peace but refused to act contrary to his convictions. The Churches at Gayle and York which supported him were also excommunicated from the Glasite body. "We have been cut off wrongfully", he declares, "for no other reason than in pleading in behalf of the self-denial of the Elder's character prostituted and profaned in the instance of Mr. ——."

IV

After his separation from the Glasites, Allen continued to minister to his friends at Gayle with whom the society at York was for some years in communion, but during the thirty-five years which followed he had no denominational connection. An attempt at union with the Old Scots Independents under David Dale, the famous Scottish mill-owner and philanthropist, came to nothing owing to differences in doctrine and order.

Allen keenly felt his religious isolation, but was content to plough his lonely furrow. Says one who knew him well: "Had Mr. Allen followed the public opinion, or sought its applause, he would in all probability have been a shining character. His natural talents as a public speaker were of the first rate, and his education had been liberal. And whatever temptations he might have to mix with the world, either in its follies, or doctrines, few men indeed have manifested such a uniform and steady moral conduct. He thought it his duty to preach the gospel, as far as he understood it, to those little flocks who were united together with him in the profession of the truth; and in thus obeying the dictates of his conscience, he enjoyed a peace of mind in his study of the scriptures and in the fellowship of his few friends, infinitely more valuable than the smiles of the world." Allen himself records: "Our charity-feasts were always weekly and well attended, though our number rarely exceeded a dozen. I had much comfort in the services of the day, and was more enlarged in my views of the doctrine of Christ, in my public testimony here (Gayle) and elsewhere. . . . Amidst the many discouragements in my lone situation, and the want of assistance from the brethren in exhortation and prayer, I was preserved from despair. Uneasy reflections on my being separate from the churches called for much self-jealousy and examination. But the conclusion ever was, 'Let God be true and every man a liar'". Sixteen years after his separation from the Glasites division occurred in the Church at York. This little community received overtures from the London Church with a view to reconciliation, but Allen himself was deliberately excluded from the proposal. Some of the leading supporters were won over, until only a staunch friend, Mr. Baldock, Allen's son Oswald, and two or three women remained when Allen visited York in December 1785.

For nearly twenty years longer Allen continued his ministry among his attenuated flock, but of this period there is nothing eventful to relate. In isolation and obscurity he carried on his work at Gayle until his death which took place on October 18, 1804. The little Church continued to meet until nearly the close of the nineteenth century. After its dissolution, the old meeting-house, known locally as the "Sandemanian Chapel", was converted into a village recreation room.

Allen was a diligent student of the Scriptures and theological

literature. He left behind him many manuscripts, several of which were subsequently published. Among these the most important are his *Christian Songs* (York, 1805), *The Danger of Philosophy to the Faith and Order of the Churches of Christ* (York, 1807; second ed. Beverley, 1852), *Observations on the Evidences of the Truth of Divine Revelation* (second ed. York, 1824), *A Treatise on Redemption* (York, 1842; reprinted Edinburgh, 1927), *Notes on the Gospels according to Mark, Luke, and John*, and *Notes on the Acts and the Epistles* (2 vols. Perth, 1924). From his eighteenth year he had made a practice of committing to writing his reflections on the Scriptures. These he began to collect in 1780, and in 1793 he undertook the labour of transcription. His Notes were not intended for publication but "were written for my own satisfaction, and as hints to assist my reflections and meditations in future life". Allen's exegetical works on the Gospels, Acts and Epistles reveal both scholarship and spiritual insight and are still deserving of study. The same characteristics mark his sermons, many specimens of which appear in *The Christian Advocate* for 1809 and 1810.

James Allen was a man dignified in person and manners, sincere in faith, firm in conviction, zealous in good works, and self-denying in character and work. In a larger religious communion his abilities might have found greater scope and a wider influence.

Edinburgh.

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