

*French of D'Alembert without any mutilations.* This is a faithful translation, page by page, of *L'enfer détruit*; at the end the translator makes a note to the effect that he suspects the first half of the work not to have been a translation from the English at all (that was "a fiction frequently used by the school from whence it sprung"), but that on the other hand he has seen a bookseller's note which said that in *The Phoenix* (two volumes of 1707, "purporting to be a reprint of curious and scarce pamphlets on theology") a dissertation was mentioned, "that he thinks must be the original of the second part of this work." "Although we have been at pains to translate it from the French, there is little doubt, but it was originally written in English, about the middle of the seventeenth century . . ." Thus Richardson re-appears in English in a new dress. The British Museum catalogue, like Barbier, erroneously transfers Richardson's authorship to "John Whitefoot."

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*The University Library, Leeds.*

## James Jones's Coffee-House.

ISAAC MARLOW in 1698 resumed his campaign against the singing of hymns, and published a small octavo, hitherto known only by one copy at the Bodleian. Another has just been lent to the Society by the Rev. Frank Thompson, of Hove, to whom our thanks are due. The incidental gleanings throw welcome light on Baptist affairs in London then. Previous happenings may be easily summarised.

Isaac was sent in the year of the plague to Hereford, and about 1666, when he was sixteen years old, he was baptized there; his brother Joseph also joined the Baptists, but all other members of the family belonged to the Church of England. Isaac went to Amsterdam, where he married Esther Leader, daughter of John Leader from the General Baptist Church at Horsleydown. This church soon called a young tailor from Winslow, Benjamin Keach. He in 1672 married a Calvinist, and founded a Particular Baptist church on Goat Yard. Soon he was the centre of an enthusiastic group, of whom George Barret worked both sides of the river, at Rotherhithe and Stratford. When the Marlows returned to England, Isaac settled down with Barret and his friends at Mile End Green.

Before Keach was quite at the front, the leader in Southwark was James Jones, who shepherded the church founded

in January, 1641-42, by Munden and Skippard. It had outgrown a warehouse on Pickleherring Wharf, and a baker's; Jones owned a coffee-house in St. Olaves, which became headquarters. In 1656 he had given a bond to be of good behaviour; in 1672 he took a licence to preach in his own house; three years later he joined a dozen other London ministers in a letter to Gifford at Bristol; in 1681 a spy reported that with four helpers he had three places of meeting. His church belonged to the L.B.A. of that day. He was often prosecuted, but was bold enough to defend himself and publish a guide as to the legal procedure. Yet he suffered so severely that when James published his Declaration of Indulgence in 1687 he wrote and thanked him. This apparently damaged his influence among Baptists, though it may be that he died soon. The certainty is that he was never heard of afterwards. His church seems to have melted into Keach's.

Here comes in news from Marlow. The coffee-house continued as a Baptist centre, where Elders and Ministers of the Baptized Profession met every week. Though there was another such centre, this appears to be the more important, and is evidently the same group that in 1715 met at the Hannover coffee-house in the city, then at the British; the minutes of this later period are in our library. It is thus seen to be much earlier than the society founded in 1723/4 for Particular Baptists only, the present Baptist Board.

At Jones's coffee-house the ministers were often appealed to for advice; even to-day we constantly find that a Fraternal is invited to do business, and to counsel outsiders. And Marlow both objected to two advices they had given, and to their setting up a kind of papal authority. That they approved of singing was the first occasion of his writing; and in this matter he was fighting a losing battle. He felt it more serious that from the Episcopal Church, through the General Baptists, they were using the laying on of hands. At first this was after baptism, on the analogy of many cases recorded by Luke; but now it was to appoint a minister, on the analogy of Timothy. He argued this, and knew quite enough to point out that in Galatia the believers voted by show of hands, not laid hands on the minister. On both these usages he feared superstition might creep in, as though grace were transferred by succession.

Therefore Marlow hit out against the assumption of authority that he saw growing. In 1689 a conference of 101 Baptist churches in London had established a common fund, for sustentation, itineration, education. This was managed by nine London merchants, of whom he was one, and his brother-in-law, John Leader, was another. But the ministers at Jones's coffee-house were in a position "to infect our People with their

Corruptions and, if they aim at it, to lick themselves by degrees into a kind of Episcopal Presbyterian Discipline." Indeed, he feared that their proceedings, "if not rightly understood, may unwarily betray the independancy of our Churches into the Hands of Universal Officers or Superintendents over them."

The particular ten whom he named as setting up their "New Kind of Prerogative Court at Jones's Coffee-House," were Hercules Collins of Wapping, Benjamin Keach of Horsleydown, Richard Adams of Devonshire Square, Leonard Harrison of Limehouse, Joseph Stennet, the Seventh-day minister (of Pinners' Hall?), Richard Allen of Turners' Hall, John Piggott of Hart Street, Jeremiah Bass, "a singer," Benjamin Dennis of Stratford, and Thomas Harrison of Petty France, who was son of Marlow's co-treasurer, Edward. Against these he quoted William Kiffin of Devonshire Square, Robert Steed of Newgate Street, John Scot of Richmond, Hugh Smith, a minister, and Luke Leader, "who have under their hands confirmed my charge of a Contrived Lye on Mr. Collins." It is not surprising that when leading Baptists were thus divided on a moral issue, the influence of the denomination waned. At least this express challenge of authority arrogated by pastors in conference did delay its growth; the subject can easily be studied, and does deserve some systematic attention.

Marlow had apparently made his fortune by 1700, when he left London for Leominster. The benefactions of his family there, and the accumulation of documents augmented by Joseph Thomas, form other stories.

*Faith in Action*, by A. J. Nixon, B.A., B.D., Ph.D. (Kingsgate Press, 2s. net.)

We welcome this little volume from the pen of Dr. Nixon, who has already published *Priest and Prophet* and *Understanding the Bible*. He relates the Christian faith to some of the facts of life—fatigue, panic, fear, care, suffering, happiness, patience, works, the inevitable—his underlying idea being that Faith is something that is held to be used; that it has "relevance" for the lives of ordinary men and women; that it can be applied to the multiplicity of concerns which, for such people, make up Life. He has therefore given us just the book to place in the hands of wayfaring men and women: it will help them to face life with all its multitudinous demands and all its pressing and baffling problems.