

worthy of high honour. He himself would have given the whole glory to the Lord who used him to influence more powerfully than any other Russian Baptist evangelist the men and women of his vast country.

Will his work abide? Who can doubt that it will? "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ."

J. H. RUSHBROOKE.

## Frederick Tryon of Deeping.

IT was Saturday morning in the year 1850, at the town of Sleaford, Lincolnshire. My grandfather's household, of which I was a child guest, was as usual about early. My dear aunt, his housekeeper, had a journey before her, for to-morrow was the first Sunday in the month, when she endeavoured to be present for Communion at the Baptist Cause at Deeping, some twenty miles away, where she was a member.

At an early hour the carrier's waggon started from the market-place. It was a large covered vehicle that once or twice a week travelled from Sleaford to Peterborough and back, conveying passengers, parcels and goods. Its occupants, country folk with their bundles, whiled away the time on the slow journey with bucolic talk and comments on local events.

At Folkingham we halted to bait the horses. The jail near the green had a treadmill, and when the prisoners were on it two fans revolved above the roof, a process I afterwards heard called "grinding the wind." My childish enquiry was met and satisfied by a brief explanation and a solemn warning as to what becomes of children who go wrong.

At Bourne was a long halt, when my aunt went to the house of an aged Christian friend to lunch and talk. Then on again till we alighted at Deeping where, with a widowed relative, we were to stay till Monday. Her three young children, destined in after years to occupy honoured positions in Christian service, gave a cheerful tone to that quiet Puritan home.

Sunday morning, calm and bright in those fen-lands, to chapel. A plain building facing a street on the bank of the Nene, then a placid little river, but in autumn and winter over-

flowing its banks and flooding the street, necessitating a footpath of boards or the aid of a vehicle.

It was named "Cave Adullam," and had been built in 1839 for the Rev. Frederick Tryon, B.A., erewhile vicar of the parish.

The chapel was full; people from the village, labourers, some in smock frocks and leather gaiters, and their families, farmers and gentry who had driven in from the surrounding district. Mr. Tryon ascended the pulpit. He was then thirty-seven years of age, a tall handsome gentleman in clerical suit and white tie. After the first hymn followed the reading and prayer, a solemn reverent approach to the throne of grace, another hymn and the sermon. "He mostly spoke of the text in its connection with the context, and dwelt much on the practical bearing of the subject as a whole upon the life and experience of his hearers. His preaching had an individuality that was peculiarly his own and invested his message with an authority and reality that convinced those who heard him that he was a man sent from God to preach His everlasting gospel."

Sermons were long in those days and few hearers could follow a deep doctrinal line of thought. The place was warm and quiet. One or two men took off their coats and put them on the gallery front; several stood up awhile to shake off drowsiness. One mother with a boy each side made them alternately stand up. It was all done quietly and no one seemed disturbed. Service ended; friendly greetings; some of the congregation driving or walking home, others staying for another meeting.

Not till after years, with a matured mind and some spiritual desire, did I realise the greatness of Mr. Tryon's ministry.

He was born in 1813 at Bulwick, Northants. His ancestors, Walloons, had left Holland during the persecution of the early seventeenth century, and after several removals settled there. Many family tablets are on the walls of Harringworth Church, the next parish.

During his school days an accident to his right knee led to prolonged suffering and permanent stiffness, but he was active and became a skilful horseman.

In due course he went for some years to Trinity College, Cambridge, and soon after leaving came under the influence of a college friend named Arkwright, who, recently "turned saint," to the disgust of his gay chums, had become Vicar of Cromford and, impelled by evangelical fervour, led him to seek the Lord. He was ordained in Durham Cathedral and became Curate at Wirksworth. With deepening conviction of the importance of spiritual things, his preaching "caused a great stir among the people," and when an evening service was projected the Vicar

was so alarmed that he wrote to the Bishop, who without any inquiry ejected him. Licensed to another curacy he found the rector violent and quarrelsome, until one day he unexpectedly said, "Mr. Tryon, you shall never be annoyed by me again." He kept his word and left his curate to carry on the work in peace.

The living of Deeping St. James was offered him. His worldly friends urged him to decline as there was "no society and no hunting." Here he began in 1838, and to quote his biographer, "During his short ministry the Church was crowded, not only with parishmen, but with numbers who came from long distances to hear him preach the gospel."

His experiences and the spiritual exercises of mind he was passing through shook the foundations of his ecclesiastical profession and led him to dislike the service for the baptism of infants, and to dread reading the burial service over those who died drunkards or in open sin. The matter became so urgent that on 1st March, 1839, he sent his resignation to the Bishop. "After what I have felt to-day I could not attempt to officiate again. . . ."

With the aid of friends a Baptist chapel was built and opened in October, 1839, when he preached his first sermon there. His last was on the 8th March, 1903.

Seeking no change, no larger or more prominent sphere, he laboured in that quiet village for sixty-three and a half years. To some who expressed surprise he said, "I love Deeping and the poor people round here whom God has given me for my friends. I shall never leave them till I can as clearly see the hand of the Lord in removing me as I saw it in placing me here." On another occasion he said, "I promised the Bishop to be diligent in this parish and I will be faithful to the end."

His ministry was not confined to preaching; he visited the afflicted, kept up a large correspondence, was liberal to those in need, and to those causes that stood for benevolence and truth. In his early ministry he travelled much on horseback or driving to local towns and villages and various places in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, also, until old age, by train to London and many places far off to fulfil preaching engagements.

Mr. Tryon was twice married. His first wife died in 1844. His second wife was the eldest daughter of Diana Hilbers, and granddaughter of Sir Thomas Whichcote, of Aswarby; she lived till 1896; one of her sons became minister at Stamford. The only daughter of his first wife lived till 1929, diligent till the end of a long life of eighty-eight years in Sunday School and other work at her father's chapel.

In his diary, September 14th, 1861, he wrote: "Henry C.

Hilbers has been a great help to me, preaching all the time in my absence to the people at Deeping; he grows in grace."

Mr. Hilbers, his brother-in-law, was a barrister, he had been a pupil of Lord Westbury. Coming under deep spiritual concern he withdrew from legal practice and devoted his life and talents to humble Christian service. Deeping became his home, but most of each year he regularly travelled a round of villages supplying the pulpits at small chapels or relieving some rural pastor for one or two Sundays.

He was a gentleman of culture, with a gracious spirit, and preaching gift beyond many. As his young friend and guest I realised his kindness and tact in dealing with the poor people attached to those rural causes with their narrow outlook and sometimes curious notions.

A Conservative, with a country gentleman's outlook of his period, Tryon disliked political changes and even dreaded some of the altruistic movements that were coming in. His life-work and ministry had a line of its own, distinctive from some with whom he was one in faith and doctrine. Its practical searching "drift" (a favourite word) was seen in the strict self-denial of many of his followers.

As a guest at my parents' home and the friend and pastor of our relatives, as a visitor at his house, a hearer on many occasions, I knew him well and realised the grace and greatness of his remarkable life and ministry.

T. R. HOOPER.

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## Leadership and Fellowship.

THREE hundred years give ample time for a church to unfold its strength and to test its principles. There are a few Free Churches in the country, as at Horningsham, Tiverton, Lincoln, which have more than three centuries to their credit. In London the oldest Free Church is the Baptist, which began at Wapping on 12th September, 1633, and kept its tercentenary at Walthamstow. The present pastor has told its story, largely from its own records, which run for more than 250 years. Stepping back from the trees, shall we try to discern the wood?

In every century the church has had an unusual number of men above the average. John Spilsbury was laughed at by out-