

The Life and Letters of John Parker.

DURING my ministry at Birchcliffe, Hebden Bridge, I became the possessor of a book which is inscribed as follows: "Henry Hollingrake's book. A.D. 1806, a gift of Mr. Fawcett" (its author). The church at Birchcliffe had been founded by Dan Taylor in 1763, and after a period of training in "The London Academy," Henry Hollingrake became its pastor in 1806: so the book represents the kindly thought of a neighbouring minister—Particular Baptist though he was—for the newly-settled minister of the mother Church of the General Baptist New Connexion. Thus the friendly relationship which John Fawcett had enjoyed with Dan Taylor was continued in the case of his successor. The book is entitled "Letters to His Friends, by the Rev. John Parker, late minister of the gospel at Wainsgate in Wadsworth, near Halifax, with a Sketch of his Life and Character by John Fawcett, A.M." The book was published in Leeds in 1794. John Parker passed away in 1793, so the Memoir was soon written, despite the busy life of its author, which may be inferred from his own words: "My other engagements are so numerous and so pressing as to render it almost impossible for me to examine, digest and correct the little pieces which my worthy friend committed to my care before his death, with a request that such of them as might appear to be useful might be published. He gave me full liberty to suppress, to alter or improve anything in these papers as I thought proper." A reference to this busy life of Dr. Fawcett is contained in one of the letters to him from John Parker: "I am glad to hear of your safe return from London, and that your health is so far restored that your once feeble body is able to bear so much fatigue. I wonder how you can preach so often, amidst such perpetual hurry, both at home and abroad." Referring to himself in the third person, our author continues: "Having been intimately acquainted with Mr. Parker for almost thirty years, he is not unwilling to have it known that he derived the most solid advantage from this intimacy, and that in the removal of this good man he has lost one of the dearest and most valuable friends he had in this world. He hopes that what is now communicated to the public will excite both ministers, and men in private stations, to follow the good example which the deceased has left us."

In the case of John Parker, we have another instance of the influence of the Methodist Revival, for as John Fawcett had been converted by Whitefield, and Dan Taylor was one of Wesley's preachers, John Parker was led to Christ by Grimshaw, the Rector of Haworth, and friend and colleague of Whitefield and

Wesley. This is yet another instance of the debt that both Baptist causes and ministers owed to the fervent evangelist of Haworth and to his preaching in private houses through the whole neighbourhood. There were at least five dissenting congregations whose ministers, and many of whose members, were the fruits of his labours. We notice that the line of division was not so much between Church and Chapel as between Evangelical and Non-Evangelical, and history continues to repeat itself in our own time.

Maybe we have imagined that it is a modern discovery—or at least a modern emphasis—that conversion should take place in the early 'teens. Some words of Dr. Fawcett will correct any such impression: "It is worthy of remark that those who have made the most considerable advancement in piety have, through the power of divine grace, been brought to set out in their religious course betimes; and generally speaking, those on whom God has put most honour and whom He has made the brightest ornaments in His Church below, have feared and served Him in their youth. Many instances might be mentioned to illustrate this observation. A considerable inducement, one would think, to engage young persons to hearken to the counsel of the wisest of men, 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.'" At the age of fourteen John Parker's delicate health prevented him from taking part in the activities and diversions of those of his own age—or even from attendance at worship. He spent much time indoors and had considerable leisure to read, and the Bible became his constant companion. He came under a deep sense of sin, but had no idea of salvation by Jesus Christ. He cried to God for forgiveness and for guidance, and yet found no immediate relief. Sometimes he was inclined to despair. Finally the person with whom he resided urged him to go and hear the Rev. W. Grimshaw, of Haworth, and promised to secure a horse for him to ride on if he would but go. He at length complied: "And it pleased the Almighty so to illuminate his benighted mind by the discourse he heard that day, that I think he never sank into his former despondency."

At this time, John Parker had sufficiently recovered his health to be able to attend service at the Church of England in which he had been reared. He was disappointed, and his experience is again best described by Dr. Fawcett, for it is of him that we wish to hear as well as of his friend. "But while he desired to hear of complete salvation by grace through Jesus Christ, he found that the prevailing and fashionable mode of preaching was, to lead men to trust in their own righteousness and to depend for acceptance with God not on the Atonement of the Redeemer, but on their own sincere obedience; or if they had failed in that, on

their repentance and purpose of amendment. This disquieted him much." Nor did an interview with the various clergy remove his perplexity. "It was about this time, I think, that he began to hear that judicious, steady and eminent minister of Jesus Christ, the late Mr. Alvery Jackson, of Barnoldswick." He left the Established Church with great reluctance, but by degrees his prejudices against Dissenters were overcome, "as he found Mr. Jackson's preaching and manner of life conformable to the sacred Scriptures, for which he had a most serious regard." After a time he joined the "Society" of which Mr. Jackson was the minister. His reading of the Bible, his prayers and his fellowship with Christian people, enabled him to make swift progress in Christian experience. Mr. Jackson, "a man of great reading and very considerable abilities," was delighted with the company of the young Christian, and took great pains to instruct him, hoping that he might become a useful servant of Christ. At the age of twenty-eight Mr. Parker was literally compelled by the Church, in spite of his hesitation and modesty, to take part in public preaching. For ten years he laboured successfully in this way, and was the means of starting a cause at Bolland. In 1763 Mr. Jackson died, and John Parker, already for some time "a teaching elder" of the Church, was called to succeed him as the pastor at Barnoldswick, and served with acceptance in that capacity for twenty-five years, until ill-health compelled his resignation. Two interesting sidelights on ministerial co-operation are associated with the decision to resign owing to ill-health. In a letter to "J. A.," in 1785, he writes: "I therefore ask you, and desire you to ask the brethren present at the general meeting, whether you think it is my duty to resign my charge, or to struggle on till I expire in the conflict?" Their reply was to advise him to secure an assistant, but this was impossible, owing to financial stringency. Later on, when a successor had been serving for a short time, John Parker writes the Rev. William Crabtree (founder of the first church in Bradford, at Westgate) as follows: "The labours of Mr. W. meet with general acceptance in our congregation, yet as the salary is not sufficient for the support of his growing family, he is not likely to settle here. I believe, if you could inform him of any other place more promising in point of income, he would think himself very much obliged to you. May the Chief Shepherd kindly provide both for him and his little flock!" John Parker himself had not been entirely dependent upon the support of the Church. Dr. Fawcett tells us that "He had a small plot of land at Lees, where he resided, which furnished him with the means of keeping two or three cows; and through prudence, industry and economy, together with some tokens of kindness from his distant friends, his

wants and those of his family were comfortably supplied during this period of enforced leisure." After two or three years of rest, and of this more open and active life, he was sufficiently restored to take up the work at Wainsgate in 1790, where he died in 1793 in his sixty-ninth year. During the latter part of this period he was nearly blind. His knowledge of Scripture, however, and his wonderful memory, made it possible for him still to preach on Sundays. The last time he took the service, a few days before his decease, he preached from Phil. i. 21: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." The interment took place at Barnoldswick, and Dr. Fawcett based the funeral sermon on Acts xx. 25. A great concourse of people assembled to take their final leave of a man so much and so generally respected. Dr. Fawcett quotes from the tribute of a friend a passage which sums up his most estimable qualities: "A faithful and affectionate friend indeed. One whose tenderness of disposition and sagacity of judgment rendered him highly valuable; and whose intimate intercourse with Heaven made an interest in his prayers justly estimable." Also that in the sermons, letters and conversation of his deceased friend there was "An evident display of strong natural abilities, as well as eminent piety, and that amidst all the disadvantages attending the want of a liberal education and an obscure situation in life, he displayed a fertility of invention, a vigour of mind and a justness of thought which made his compositions highly respectable." We are reminded by Dr. Fawcett that: "Several of the letters in this collection were written when the writer could hardly see the pen in his hand. He formed the characters large and wrote on, as we say, by guess." The last letter in the series is dated four weeks before his decease. His letters, "Many of which were never intended for publication, are the simple, unstudied, unadorned language of his heart, a heart warm with love to the Redeemer, glowing with the most disinterested friendship and benevolence, and ardently breathing after the salvation of immortal souls." Dr. Fawcett says the publication of such a volume is little suited to the taste of the age: "It will not engage the attention of those who read only for amusement. The polite scholar and the learned critic, should it fall into their hands, will throw it aside as unworthy of their perusal and beneath their notice." This impression of Dr. Fawcett was fully justified. In his "Memoirs" his son says: "This work has never attracted that attention from the public which its intrinsic value gave reason to expect." Over against this popular indifference, Dr. Fawcett adds: "The writer of these letters had little learning but what he had obtained from a certain ancient and neglected book called the Bible."

As to the *manner* of John Parker's preaching, a remark of

Dr. Johnson, concerning Dr. Watts, is regarded by Dr. Fawcett as applicable to John Parker. "He did not endeavour to assist his eloquence by any gesticulations, for, as no corporeal actions have any correspondence with theological truth, he did not see how they could enforce it." What is more to the point is a reference to the *quality* of the preaching: "It cannot be supposed that his abilities in the pulpit always shone with the same degree of splendour. He had his dark, as well as his lucid, intervals, but when he was under a favourable gale, and his subject peculiarly interesting, who could hear him without astonishment? It was a feast divine to sit under the sound of his voice at such seasons—a torrent of sacred eloquence, issuing from the fervour of his mind, seemed to carry away the hearts of his hearers before it. Who could resist the wisdom or the energy with which he spoke?"

It is instructive to consider the *subject matter* of his preaching, for we are comparing notes between his time and our own. "The strain of Mr. Parker's preaching was experimental and practical. He laboured most assiduously and constantly to inform the ignorant, to quicken and arouse the 'secure,' to direct the humble inquirer, to comfort the mourner, to exalt the Divine Redeemer as the author of eternal salvation, and to promote that vital and practical holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. He testified to all the nature, the necessity, the importance and the proper fruits of repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. He dwelt on the obligations under which the subjects of Christ's kingdom lie to obey His laws, to wear His yoke, and be conformed to His example." With his loyalty to truth as he conceived it, John Parker combined a toleration of the views of others not always attributed to the age in which he lived. "Though he was steady in his own religious sentiments, and held fast what he looked upon to be the truth, yet he was very 'candid' to those who differed from him in doctrine or practice, leaving them the same liberty to think and judge for themselves, which he knew he had a right to take." His position Dr. Fawcett describes as that of "A moderate Calvinism," and again we may be surprised, for it is so "moderate" that we hardly recognise it as "Calvinism," having in mind some varieties with which we have come in contact. Briefly, Mr. Parker's system was as follows, in Dr. Fawcett's own words: "He thought it clearly revealed in the Scripture that man, created after the image of God, is now sunk into a state of depravity, guilt, bondage, helplessness and misery, that his recovery from that state is owing to the purpose and love of God; that there is full salvation in the Cross of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, Who by His death gives life everlasting to

all of every nation and condition who believe in Him and receive Him; that the Holy Spirit applies the salvation of Jesus by quickening, renewing and sanctifying the polluted sinner. And that, in consequence of this, he brings forth fruit to God and walks in the ways of holiness, till, at length, through the riches of divine grace alone, he is brought to the possession of eternal glory." In a letter to J. A., John Parker thus speaks: "The Saviour in whom we trust and whom we recommend to others is infinitely and unspeakably precious," and urges his brother minister—a junior—in these terms: 'Tell them to give Him the first and chief place in their hearts, to hold Him fast, and never let Him go. Tell them that this will make their days easy, their lives useful, their end blessed and their future state happy for ever.'

Whilst passing through the crisis which led to his retirement from active work for a period, feeling that his own time may be short, he writes urgently: "Cry aloud and spare not, publish it wherever you go, that God is good to Israel, that He cries to the perishing sons of men, 'Look unto Me and be saved all the ends of the earth.'" It is interesting to observe the way he writes about the work of preaching to John Fawcett himself. "When I take my pen in hand to write to you, I give you the advice which I need myself. You always take it kindly, for you believe the old man means well, though his manner be somewhat blunt and his address unpolished. I wish you well with my whole heart in every relation in which you stand, and that your life and labour may be lasting blessings to the Church of God. I recommend it to you to preach often to yourself and sometimes to your people, 'Keep yourselves from idols.' Read much, think closely, pray hard and preach fervently, and, as near as you can, practise what you recommend to others; and wherein you fall short, lie down in the dust and weep over your imperfections." (John Parker's frequent posture for prayer was to lie prostrate as the most humble attitude before his Maker.)

He shares his discouragements with his friend: "My hearers seldom object in words to what I advance, but many of them reserve this liberty to themselves—to do as they like." This experience of disappointment becomes still more painful in a letter in which he confides in his brother minister, James Hartley, the founder of the Church at Haworth: "It is a trying time in the church here. But it would be too tedious to tell you all here. I think sin and Satan would destroy us if they could. Were it not for the former, I should not fear the latter. For were sin to have no place among us, I would write upon the Church's door—'Satan, I defy thee.'" The perplexity of human nature troubled him greatly, as we shall gather from a

paragraph contained in a letter to his brother minister, William Crabtree: "In your next sermon, try if you can answer that question, 'What is man?' He is such a mystery as quite confounds all my powers of investigation. He pretends to religion, he owns himself a sinner; and yet the rebel seems to think that religion should neither change his mind nor mend his manners; but only entertain his ears, tip his tongue and cover his deceit. And yet he is so wise in his own eyes and so good in his own esteem that he will not bear to be told either of his sin or his danger, nor bear to be informed that unless he be converted and become a new creature he cannot enter the Kingdom."

The pastoral work of John Parker is beautifully described by Dr. Fawcett when he says that the pastor has now met again: "Those whom he watched over with tender and faithful care, whose sorrow it was his endeavour to soothe, and whose joy in God's salvation it was the delight of his heart to promote."

His devotion to the work is gathered from a reference in a letter written whilst a serious epidemic prevailed in the district (1783): "A fever prevails of which some have died and others are still languishing. I have visited seven or eight in one day. I have hitherto escaped the infection, though the offensive smell has sometimes overcome me. But I am willing to venture health and life when duty calls. The dangerous disorder is still spreading." His demeanour and tactfulness are thus described with appreciation by Dr. Fawcett: "He did not assume an air of austerity or moroseness, but on the contrary, he was mild, gentle, affable and cheerful in conversation. He had the peculiar felicity of gaining the attention of the company into which he happened to come to such hints of advice, instruction or admonition as he thought most likely to do them good. And he had the art of doing this without exciting their disgust or kindling their resentment." In visiting, he took an interest in the children and servants, giving helpful advice and remembering each need in suitable prayer. "The great ends he had in view in his preaching he also sought to promote by his friendly visits, and thus he seconded in the parlour what he advanced in the pulpit."

An impressive testimony is paid to his devotional life and its effect upon his public and private prayers as a minister. "In the gift of prayer Mr. Parker excelled most men I ever knew. Those who united with him in that exercise, whether in public, or in private families, cannot easily forget the spirituality, the humility, the propriety and the fervour of his language at the Throne of Grace. In his addresses to God his soul seemed to expand and delight itself, as in its proper element. He needed not written forms of devotion to assist him, but prayed like one

who was accustomed to familiar intercourse with his Maker. The reason why he excelled in this happy talent was, as I always thought, his being so much habituated to devotional exercises in private, when from day to day he poured out his soul before God for himself, for his friends whose cases he particularly remembered, for the whole church and for all men."

In the same letter we find examples of the way his concern embraced each member of the household. "Please to give my respects to your industrious companion in life and tell her that amidst all her domestic cares and labours I hope that she, with Mary, is pursuing the good part, which shall not be taken from her." "Give my love to your son, and tell him I hope he is aspiring after useful knowledge, lively faith, heart-religion, elevated devotion, a holy life and an everlasting heaven. I forget not your daughters. May they be wise virgins, the comfort and joy of their parents, the ornaments of the family, and as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace." At this point we may fittingly include another message to the wife of John Fawcett: "Be pleased to give my respects to your spouse, and tell her I earnestly desire her happiness, and consequently her progress in holiness. Tell her to try, in the midst of her children, to be as meek as Moses, as patient as Job, and as prayerful as Hannah."

That it was from his prayer-life that the vision came and the urge to declare it is evident from a sentence or two in his letter to his friend the Rev. W. C.: "When it is well with me in the closet, I long to tell to others what I see and feel." The practice of carrying on a ministry of the Word from house to house is also described by Dr. Fawcett: "So long as he had strength and health to do it, he not only preached publicly on the Lord's Day, but more privately from house to house, where he might have an opportunity of addressing those who neglected public ordinances."

It may seem strange to us to be reminded that men who lived in the age that we associate with the Methodist Revival, and who were the children of it, should have to yearn so earnestly for revival! "Our present prospects in Church and State (in 1779) are overshadowed with a heavy gloom. Our public affairs appear to be in a sad way. My heart fails me with fear. But God can make darkness light before us and crooked things straight." Or again: "My poor heart sighs and sinks for want of more success. One end for which I have desired to live a little longer is to see a revival of vital religion, to see the power of godliness govern the hearts and adorn the lives of those with whom I have to do." In another letter: "The deadness and degeneracy of this age are indeed lamentable. I fear religion has much forsaken the closet and is far from the hearts of many." Three years later he writes

in the same desponding tone : " I fear the righteous are both few and feeble in this our day. May the Lord arise and have mercy on Zion. May He send forth faithful, spiritual and affectionate labourers, who, with seeing eyes and feeling hearts, shall not only watch over and feed the flock of Christ, but with yearning love alarm and allure the wanderers and gather them into the fold of the Good Shepherd."

A few references to the Christian life in the manner of the time indicate the qualities appreciated in those days, and some of the truths which received emphasis. Naturally, it begins with the new birth. This is described in a poem from which a few lines are selected :

I may myself a Christian deem,
And such to other men may seem,
And yet my heart be unrenewed,
My sinful passions unsubdued.

Mercy divine will not delay,
When broken-hearted sinners pray,
The humble cry is heard in Heaven.
And the repenting soul forgiven.

Some interesting things are said in praise of " Humility." Writing to " J.A.," John Parker concludes a passage of earnest good wishes with this desire : " In particular, may you be clothed with humility—this offspring of grace, this earnest of glory. Humility is the best companion in the parlour and the pulpit, at home and abroad, in prosperity and adversity. It will do us good even on a dying bed. It is a good preparative for every duty and a defence against temptation and unbelief." He further praises the same virtue in a letter to a " Few Young Persons." His manner of address is self-revealing : " I speak freely to you because my heart loves you, my soul prays for you, while with dim eyes, pained limbs, and a trembling hand I write to you. May the good Lord evermore preserve you from those dangerous snares to which you are exposed. May you be helped to keep your hearts pure, your hands clean, your love and zeal fervent, your consciences clear, your characters fair and your garments unspotted while you pass this defiling world." And on " humility " his advice runs into verse :

Be clothed with humility,
That dress divinely fair ;
It far excels those costly robes
Which earthly princes wear.

There is a very earnest warning against " Lukewarmness " in a beautiful letter to " Three Young Persons." " I would beg leave of you to take heed of that evil of evils, a lukewarm spirit in the concerns of religion. This, alas, like a pernicious plague,

spreads and prevails among the professing followers of the Redeemer and threatens to diffuse its infection through the whole household of faith. Lukewarmness stands connected with that fashionable mode of attending divine ordinances which is now so common. I mean with a careless, unconcerned air and with wandering or drowsy eyes. The appearance of so much unconcernedness spoils the beauty of spiritual worship, affects our fellow-worshippers and damps the spirit of the poor minister, or makes him as fretful as poor Jonah when he had lost his gourd." Mr. Parker suggests prayer and obedience to the Divine promptings as a remedy: "frequent recourse by humble faith to the all-compassionate, altogether lovely and loving Jesus," and an ever-present appreciation of the sacrifice He made on our behalf.

Another fault to be avoided is "Loitering." "Loitering, I believe, would be the certain way to fill my mind with doubts, my days with trouble and my end with darkness; from all which may you and I be delivered. It is better to be worn out with labour than eaten out with rust." After this, we are not surprised to find an eloquent tribute to "Godly Zeal," in the form of a poem from which we select a few of the twenty-one verses.

'Tis she the saints awake doth keep,
But wanting her, the virgins sleep;
Her absence from the church I mourn,
And earnest long for her return.

Kindle, O Lord, in me the flame
Of holy zeal for thy great name.
For want of this I hourly mourn;
O let me for thy glory burn!

Why should I loiter in the way
Which leads to everlasting day?
Help me with ardour to pursue
The noble prize I have in view.

In a letter to a young Christian, "Miss A," he writes: "This converse with Heaven will be a happy expedient to fortify you against temptation, to preserve your feet from falling, and to keep your heart warm and your hands strong in the work and way of the Lord, to which at this early period of life you have been enabled to devote yourself."

In a state of depression the writer says: "You may call me Jonah if you please. I am so full of weaknesses and contradictions that if ever you see me in Heaven surely it will fill you with wonder." A word of comfort in bereavement sent to Mrs. Priestly on the loss of her husband arrests us by its beauty. She is to find comfort in the fact that "He hath closed his eyes in peace, quitted the field with honour and left behind him the

precious savour of a good name in the church, the family and the world. May you be helped to steer towards the same happy shore and your dear bereaved children be your companions in the blessed voyage. Let not your heart be troubled for nothing but sin can really hurt the submissive soul. For though the ties of nature will have no place in a future world, yet the closest ties and better bonds of Christian love will wax stronger and stronger and be maintained with unutterable and everlasting delight."

We expect a minister in that day, as well as this, to emphasise the work of the Holy Spirit. In view of his own rebellious heart and disturbing conscience he reasons: "It is well indeed that the promise of the Spirit shines in the firmament of the gospel as a star of the first magnitude. This is the Shekinah of the New Testament Church. I therefore mourn that this almighty agent is so much forgotten and so often grieved by myself and others. Because of this our souls are lean and our churches languish. That this very important truth may be more regarded by us all is the unfeigned desire of your poor and unworthy brother, J.P." (To James Hartley, the founder of the church at Haworth.)

In his introduction, Dr. Fawcett thinks that some will criticise the frequent references to death and the after-life. We call it "other-worldliness," but Fawcett's name for this outlook is "Heavenly-mindedness," and he gives us the Scriptural authority for it. Our review of this correspondence would not be complete without some illustration of this much-mentioned topic. He says that "When we change worlds, we shall not change masters, nor even the nature of our employment." Mr. Parker had his own conception of the effect of preaching on this theme. To William Crabtree he writes in 1781: "Were I to tell you all the feelings of my anxious heart I should fill a volume instead of a letter. I must leave what remains to the next world. I have heard of a better country than this in which we now live, where sin and Satan cannot enter. Brother, make haste towards it, and take your wife, your children and as many as are willing to go along with you. For I am persuaded that the intelligence given us of the good land is certainly true; and it grieves me to see so little attention paid to it. While I am telling my neighbours of it from time to time some seem not at all to believe the report, others hear it with as much indifference as if it were a cunningly devised fable; some actually fall asleep while the tidings are sounding in their ears." But let us see his picture of that future life for ourselves, with its triumphs and its manifest effects. This time it is a letter to his younger colleague in the ministry—"J.A." "True Christian love may suffer a declension, but shall never see death. It will outlive our tears, surmount our discouragements, and reign

triumphant in our happy souls for ever. May the present foretastes and future hopes of it cement our hearts, lighten our burdens, sweeten all our comforts, brighten our darkest hours, and exhilarate our motion in duty's ways, till, in the strength of grace, we reach the happy goal. In the meantime, may the love of God be so shed abroad in our hearts as to diffuse its light and heat in all our ministrations."

Nevertheless, even for John Parker the dark portal which leads to that happy existence had sometimes its terrifying aspect. Writing to Dr. Fawcett he pleads: "Dear Brother, beg one smile for me at that solemn hour, for I dread the thought of dying in the dark." He had, his desire, as J.F. describes it, "The very night before that in which he expired he was remarkably cheerful in the company of a few of his friends, whom he endeavoured to encourage in the way of holiness, and to establish in the truth as it is in Jesus. The following day he wished to be alone, that his meditations on approaching glory might not be interrupted. Death to him had lost its terrors, and appeared with a mild and gentle aspect. The last enemy he could welcome as his friend. It had long been his desire, with submission to the Divine will, that he might finish his labours and his life nearly together. And God was graciously pleased to grant his request. When he had discharged the duties of the very day on which he expired, he went to rest and entered into the joy of his Lord. He silently fell asleep in his Saviour's arms, and had a quick transition from this world to another. Who can forbear on such an occasion to say "Life, take thy chance, but O for such an end."

To conclude, the Methodist revival was, in some measure, a reaction from academic preaching—learned arguments about the existence of God, and moral essays on right conduct—and from religious exercises which had little relation to the heart of the professor and still less expression in his life. It was a return to vital experience of fellowship with God and a life inspired and governed by man's relationship with Him. In this movement John Parker was an "Isaac" sort of man, following in the wake of the pioneers, assimilating their ideals and consolidating their gains.

Surely the notion that the preachers of that time relied on the motive of fear to the extent that is sometimes credited to them is not borne out by the perusal of this biography and the study of this correspondence. On the other hand, if this method was used, it was not the main factor in producing results. What did count was a man for whom God was the great Reality, the centre of thought, feeling and will, the source and sustainer of "the life which is life indeed" here, and its glory and crown for ever.

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