

## An Elegy on Andrew Gifford.

AMONG the papers of the late Miss Maud Gould, of Hampstead, there was recently discovered a small broadsheet, on which is printed "An Elegy on the Death of Andrew Gifford, D.D. By R. Burnham, Minister of the Gospel." As it has not formerly been known, it is reproduced in full below.

Andrew Gifford was born in Bristol in 1700 and died in London in 1784. He was the son and grandson of ministers of the Pithay Baptist Church, Bristol, and became one of the ablest and best-known ministers of his day. He settled at the Little Wild Street Church in 1730, and five years later, following a split, established a new cause at Eagle Street, of which he was the minister for nearly fifty years, and which was supported by a wealthy and influential congregation. Gifford was a gifted and learned man, well known as a collector and connoisseur, and in 1757 secured appointment as the first assistant librarian at the new British Museum. His publications included works on coins and on early English Bibles.

He played no great part in denominational affairs. The eleven London ministers who then constituted the Baptist Board refused to associate with him, "owing to a sin of his youth made known and not forgiven in his manhood." Gifford was appealing to classes who never entered their meeting-houses, gathering merchants, gentry, members of both Houses of Parliament. While they were popularly known as Antinomian, he was awake to the evangelistic gifts of George Whitefield. When that fiery spirit was in danger from bigots, it was Gifford who introduced him to the Speaker; when Tottenham Court Road saw his new chapel, Gifford went to the opening; when Whitefield's sermons were to be printed, Gifford was asked to collect and edit them.

Gifford was buried in Bunhill Fields at an early hour in the morning, in compliance with his own wish "to testify his faith in the resurrection of Christ, who came early on the first day of the week, and likewise his hope of the resurrection morning at the last day." His library and collections were bequeathed to Bristol.

There were few contemporary Baptist tributes, but he had at least one enthusiastic admirer, Richard Burnham (1749-1810), minister first at Staines and later at Soho. Burnham wrote an obituary article in the *New Spiritual Magazine* and also this elegy. He was the composer of a large number of hymns, none of which seems to have secured the approval of posterity, and in 1806 ventured on an elegy on the death of Nelson. Since

Gifford and Burnham had very different theologies, it is to the credit of both that the young hyper-Calvinist published his lines on the West End preacher.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH  
OF  
ANDREW GIFFORD, D.D.

By R. Burnham, Minister of the Gospel.

Gifford, an honour'd servant of the Lord,  
Call'd by his grace, to preach the gospel word,  
Inspir'd by love, was zealous to proclaim  
All the bright glories of the Saviour's name;  
In the great work, his soul aspir'd above,  
His theme was Jesus, and eternal love;  
Strong were the passions of his heav'n-born soul,  
Nor men, nor devils could his zeal controul;  
Whene'er he preach'd, love stream'd thro' ev'ry text,  
And all his soul was on the Saviour fix'd,  
Waiting on him to bless the sacred word,  
That numbers might be rais'd to know the Lord:  
O how he spake of Jesu's matchless charms,  
And welcom'd sinners to his tender arms,  
Justly invited all the trembling throng,  
To fly to him, and raise a noble song  
To sov'reign love, to Jesus and his blood,  
And prove the pleasures of enjoying God!  
For heav'n *reveal'd*, did GIFFORD sweetly breathe,  
A present Saviour—present *now* to save,  
The great Salvation *now*, ev'n *now* to prove,  
And feel the great Redeemer's dying love;  
Love in the *heart*—love richly *shed abroad*,  
Love *all divine*—the wond'rous *love of God*;  
That *more* of this, and *more* might still be found,  
*More* still enjoy'd, and *more*, still *more* abound;  
Thus, thus he spake, and thus he sang aloud,  
Thus breath'd his flaming soul for *more of God*.  
And thro' his converse brilliantly appear'd  
The glorious image of the God he fear'd:  
He lov'd to dwell on Jesus, and his cause,  
And ev'ry saint had GIFFORD's high applause.  
Great were his thoughts—to parties not confin'd,  
Large was his soul—lover of all mankind,  
Saints of all names, he cordially embrac'd.

The weakest lamb, he tenderly caress'd;  
 Words of pure love in sweetest accents broke,  
 And something heav'nly in his ev'ry look;  
 Unfeign'd affection ran thro' all his heart,  
 And laws of love he ever did impart;  
 No rigid frown sat low'ring on his face,  
 But ev'ry look spoke godly tenderness,  
 Malignant words did not his lips defile,  
 But all he said was with a pleasing smile,  
 Soft—sweet, and soothing—loving, free, and kind,  
 The great materials of the Saviour's mind.  
 All, all that knew him must for ever own,  
 That Dr. GIFFORD was a second John.  
 In peace at last he breathes his final groan,  
 Dies in the Lord, and springs upon the throne.  
 Ah! GIFFORD's gone, he's took a glorious flight,  
 Up to the realms of infinite delight;  
 There with his Jesus, now he sits and sings,  
 See how he smiles before the King of kings;  
 There, there he feeds on heav'nly love alone,  
 Drinks the pure water from th' eternal throne,  
 Handles the harp with sweet seraphic skill,  
 And loudly sounds, "My Lord's done all things well:"  
 O how he tunes the instrument of praise,  
 Whilst all his soul's dissolv'd in heav'nly lays;  
 Ravish'd with love, he shouts Messiah's fame,  
 And ev'ry anthem swells his charming name.  
 Oh! how he flies all o'er th' extended plains,  
 Triumphs and sings in most delightful strains;  
 Rolls the high praises of his Lord along,  
 And ne'er grows weary of the joyful song:  
 No sin, or sorrow ever can molest,  
 No evil incommode his peaceful breast.  
 Growing delight he'll ever, ever prove,  
 Lost in the blaze of pure immortal love.  
 Hark! hark ye favour'd ministers of God,  
 Hear, in what strains he sings of Jesu's blood:  
 Catch the sweet sounds of pure celestial praise,  
 And be more zealous in your future days;  
 Go on with fervor in your Master's cause,  
 And grasp the honours of divine applause:  
 Court not the smile of the professing train,  
 Nor strive unduly their applause to gain;  
 On Jesu's glory keep a single eye,  
 Or you may tremble when you come to die:

Man's *mere* esteem will into nothing sink,  
While the poor soul is quiv'ring on the brink  
Of vast eternity—Ah, striking thought,  
Shall we at last be right with God, or not!  
Shall we with boldness see the Judge appear,  
Or sink in darkness—horror, and despair!  
Shall we behold him with a joyful heart,  
Or trembling hear the dreadful word, "*depart!*"  
Shall we for ever with the Saviour dwell,  
Or feel *damnation* in the *lowest* hell!  
Muse all ye preachers of th' incarnate Lord,  
Try—try your spirits by his sacred word.  
And if but conscious that you aim to spread,  
The glory of your great exalted Head,  
Go on, and prosper—keeping close to God,  
And tell the wonders of atoning blood.  
Tho' devils rage, and wicked mortals fight,  
Jesus is yours, and you are surely right:  
In his great cause more rapidly go on,  
Till you shall hear the crowning word, "Well done:"  
Urge on your way 'gainst ev'ry frowning foe,  
You shall from conquering unto conquest go.  
Soon shall the storms of life be overpast,  
And you and I, be with the Lord at last:  
Then with dear GIFFORD, we shall surely join  
All the sweet music of the blissful place,  
And ev'ry note rise high, to sov'reign grace.  
This be the theme on which we'll ever dwell,  
"The great Redeemer hath done all things well:"  
There we shall meet with nothing to annoy,  
But sweetest concord ever shall enjoy;  
There all the realms of blessedness explore,  
And love, and sing, and praise, for evermore.

LONDON: Printed by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Pater-noster Row,  
for, and sold by, L. J. HIGHAM, No. 39, Banks's Court,  
Blue-Anchor-Alley, Bunhill-Row.