

The Necrologies of John Dyer.

IN a previous article the recently discovered diaries of John Dyer were described and attention was called to the remarkable series of notes on his deceased friends and acquaintances which came at the end of them. In the 1823 diary there are sixty-one entries in Dyer's necrology, in 1827 eighty-one, in 1836 eighty-four and in 1837 one hundred and four. The following items from the necrologies are revealing and of some historical interest and importance. Entries regarding those who have found a place in the *Dictionary of National Biography* are marked D.N.B.

1823

12. Old *Mr. Dawson* (formerly Pastor of the Ch. at Princes Risboro') in his 89th year. I know but little of his former history; the reason of his removal from P.R. was a piece of folly such as has occurred more than once of late years—a desire to re-marry most unsuitably! Oh to be useful while I can & never, never, to excite the pity or indignation of the friends of Christ by acts of *senile* indiscretion, sh^d I be spared to old age.
14. *Mr. Edmonds*, Birmingham, aged 73—for 36 years pastor of the church in Bond St—one of that generation of preachers now fast wearing away, who permits themselves to *jest* in the pulpit.
36. Dear bro *Ward*, of Serampore! a loss indeed to the cause of Christ in India. He was removed after one day's illness, on the 7th March. So uncertain is life, even the most valuable. He was eminent for *spirituality* of mind, which diffused itself thro' all his converse. You could not be with him without perceiving that he walked with God—And yet, in the unhappy affair between Serampore and the Soc^{ty} he was sadly warped by prejudice! Let that now, however, be buried in eternal oblivion!
37. July 28. Little did I imagine that ere my return from my Cornish tour, I sh^d hear of the death of dear *Hinton* of Oxford, but so it is. He was seized with spasms at Reading, & expired there after a few hours illness. His loss will be felt, tho not precisely in the same way as *Ward's*. He was a man of considerable natural powers, improved by consider-

able intercourse with the world—not of great learning, but possessed the art of making the best use of what he had. Unusually fluent in conversation with something of a poetical vein that, combined with a very graceful delivery, made his ministry very fascinating! I could add more, but for the present must forbear! May a holy & able man be raised up to succeed him at Oxford!

56. *Sir Sam Spicer, Kn^t*, Mayor of Portsmouth, a brewer, on whom I had called, tho in vain, for the Mission. He appeared a remarkably vacant & stupid old man.

1827

25. This morning, Apr. 9 rec^d the solemn news of the death of dear M^r *Young*, of Stepney, after an illness of only 10 days. Yesterday I heard that he was ill, & now he is gone—I doubt not to join the glorious company above! He was a most amiable, modest, pleasant man—of considerable learning & fine taste under the direction of sincere piety. The unhappy disputes, respecting his election at Stepney, must have been peculiarly trying to him—but how little did he, or any one else anticipate *such* a termination! May God sustain his afflicted widow, & interpose to repair the breach thus occasioned in the important office at S.

D.N.B.

27. *Rev. Rob^t Hawker, D.D.*, Vicar of Charles, Plymouth, aged 73, a man well known for many years past as the leader of the Ultra Calvinists—if indeed his system may not more properly be term^d Antinomianism. My beloved Agnes & I were married by him at his own church in 1803, & as I was his neighbour for several years, frequently his hearer & connected with him in the Committees of several Benevolent Institutions, I had a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with his character, for whatever failings he had, he was a man without disguise. No one can deny to D^r H. the praise of warm & active benevolence. The poor, the sick the aged and the young alike attracted his Notice for their wants and distresses his heart could feel, & to relieve them his purse was open & his influence indefatigably exerted. I know not that I have ever seen one who excelled him in this respect. His solicitude for the spiritual welfare of others was real, I think, & fervent; tho what I consider his sadly distorted views of divine truth tended sadly to neutralize it. His memory was very tenacious & as he read little besides the Bible, it was amply stored with passages of holy writ. At the same time, whether in conversation or

in preaching it would often appear that quotation followed quotation without any distinct connexion or edifying illustration of their meaning. He had all the requisites of an orator, without turning them to much account—a commanding figure, striking countenance, most penetrating eye, thorough self-possession, a voice flexible & sonorous, capable of filling with ease the largest place, & a tongue voluble to a degree almost unprecedented. Indeed, this faculty of pouring out at will copious citations from Scripture, intermingled with a kind of running comment, expressed in a luscious colloquial dialect, almost peculiar to himself, constituted, among the great herd of professors who think but little, & resolve nearly all religion into feeling, the grand secret of his popularity, while to himself it was doubtless a great temptation to lay aside those habits of study which he found were not wanted to furnish him with something to say. But I do not mean to delineate his theological system. It would be a very desirable service for the church if some competent person who has leisure for the task, would carefully collect from his numerous tracts &c published during the last 20 years, the essence of his system, & show wherein it disagreed with the word of God. D^r H. was ambitious, & domineering; but the part of his conduct which always appeared the most inconsistent in my view was his introducing his sons Charles & Jacob, especially the latter, into the Church. I conversed with him once on the subject, & thought he was evidently embarrassed, but I had not firmness enough to tell him what many besides myself thought of the business. I could add more, but I am not writing his obituary. Before the Supreme Judge he has appeared to render his account—there I must leave him. ‘Qualis erat, iste dies indicabit.’

37. *Robert Stevens, Esq.* of Shacklewell, 73. Treasurer of the Protestant Society for promoting civil and religious Liberty. Director L.M.S., Comm^o B. & F.B.S. & indeed connected more or less with most of our leading religious Institutions. An active man of business, & I suppose a genuine lively Xtⁿ. D^r Conquest his worthy son-in-law spoke of him this morn^g at the Comm^o of the R.T.S. as eminently exemplifying Ps. XXXVII. 37. All, however, do not concur in similar eulogiums. M^r S. formerly subscribed 10 G^d annl to our Mission, but withdrew it on pretext of strict-communion! May 8.

D.N.B.

38. *Rev. Leigh Richmond, M.A.*, Rector of Turvey, Beds & Clerical Sect. to the R.T. Society & author of two or

three of the most popular publications circulated by that Society. The Dairman's Daughter, Negro Servant &c. He was a man of genuine piety and expansive benevolence possessing a vigorous imagination and fine taste & rejoicing to consecrate all his talents to the service of him who gave them. The news reached us this morning (May 11) as we were assembled at the Anniversary of the T.S. & spread much concern & I hope a feeling of solemnity through the very numerous assembly, or rather assemblies, as two rooms were occupied!

49. *Mr. Thomas Walker*, 63, for many years celebrated as a singer & who assisted D^r Rippon in preparing his tunebook for the press. He was, I believe, formerly a member of the Prescott St, but his tuneful propensities proved a snare to him—his domestic life was eminently unhappy—and he died in a state of derangement! I think of my dear brother with concern, when I remember the end both of Bright, Maze Pond & Walker! Alas, how melodious may the *voice* be, when the *heart* is utterly & hopelessly dumb!
67. M^r Timms, Sen^r of Devonshire Sq. formerly a Deacon of M^r Fuller's ch. at Kettering, & one of the little band who met to form the B.M. Society, Oct. 2. 1792. I suppose M^r Hogg now to be the only Survivor of that company.

D.N.B.

79. *Rev. Alex^r Waugh*, D.D. aged 74, for 46 years, Pastor of the Sco Presbyterian Church in Well St. Oxford St. an excellent & venerable man, who has long occupied a prominent place among our public religious characters. He had powerful imagination, which long and habitually exercised upon Sacred subjects had induced an original & attractive style of expression in his public exercises—& was a fertile source of wit & humour in his colloquial intercourses. He excelled, particularly, in public prayer when the intellectual feature I have noticed was happily combined with much devotional fervour & pathos. Of the state of his congregation, or his success in the grand object of winning souls for Christ I know very little.

1836

6. *Rev. J. W. Morris*, residing near Bungay, formerly of Dunstable, in former times the intimate friend of Carey, Ryland & Fuller, author of a life of the latter, & some O^r Works—a man certainly of ability, but whose later years have been considerably under a cloud. I knew but little of

him personally but it appeared to me there was always an air of pompous self conceit abo^t him. He is now gone, however, to his own master he standeth or falleth.

12. *John Bell Esq.* 71. an eminent Chancery Counsel, the intimate friend of Lord Eldon. We consulted him in reference to John Deakin's will, & he very kindly return^d the fee. It was said of him that tho' the ablest lawyer at the bar he could neither speak, or write, or walk. His dialect was thoroughly Cumbrian, his handwriting none but his clerk c^d decypher, & he was lame, having a deformed foot.
46. *John Pownell Esq.* 77. deacon of the Sabbatarian Bapt. Church in Eldon St^t. for 51 years, & I suppose nearly the sole male member in it. He appeared a worthy man, though not of very strong mind. His son, Henry, is a man of considerable property, a firm High Churchman, who occupies Spring Grove, near Hounslow, formerly the residence of Sir Jos^h Banks.
53. The only son of M^r James Low, of Gracechurch St^t. a youth of 17 or 18, with a distressing deformity on one side of his face. Of his character & spiritual state I am ignorant.

D.N.B.

82. *Rev. John Rippon*, D.D., 85, after having, for several years, been incapable of public service. He was by far the oldest member in our body, & ever since the death of D^r A. Rees, the father of the United body at Redcross Street. He succeeded D^r Gill at Carter Lane in 1773, & as the D^r began in 1720, the two occupied the same station for 116 years! D^r R. had his excellences & his failings also, but he was doubtless a good & useful man. May I be ready to follow him. I do not wish to live so long.
13. *Major Gen. Neville*, of Sutton, a man of some note among people of his class—evangelical church people. He assisted in supporting a little 'conventicle' in his parish, though his churchmanship constrained him to confine his own attendance within walls where no gospel truth was to be heard. Such are some of the consequences of a *state* religion.
17. (Feb^r 17) After an illness of several years originating in a contusion of the hip, *Julia*, the fifth dau^r of M^r Wood of Brentf^d. She died at Melksham, having resided there some years wth M^r & M^{rs} Keen. I had hoped favourably of her, but she had imbibed very fully all the Irvingite heresy, like nearly all the other younger members of that numerous family. This case like many others, must be left to the decision of *that* day.

44. On Wed. 12 Ap^l my venerable friend & father *Will^m Steadman*, D.D., of Bradford entered into rest, aged abo^t 73. Few men have laboured wth more cheerful zeal in the service of the Redeemer than he. Few have been more hon^d by tokens of divine approbation, & the universal respect & veneration of all who knew him. He was my beloved father's most intimate friend. At that time he was pastor of the church at Broughton whither he went from Bristol Academy. In 1799 he removed to Plymouth Dock & soon after obtained for me a situation there. In Feb^y of the following year, I was baptized by him, & I & my Agnes enjoy^d his pastoral care till 1805 when he removed to Bradford, & assumed the direction of the Academy newly formed there. In a few years his first wife died, & soon after his very hopeful son William. Subsequently he married Miss Meekes, a very amiable and pious woman, but deeply afflicted. She survives him, but is, I hear, totally unconscious of her loss. His son Thomas lately remov^d to Bradford, at the unanimous invitation of the church, late M^r Godwin's. The d^m own church was provided during his life-time with an acceptable co-pastor in the person of M^r H. Dowson; the Academy with a president in M^r Acworth of Leeds, so that the good man had nothing to do but to breathe out his soul into the hands of his Redeemer. Oh to follow him so far as he follow^d Christ!
62. *Louisa Goodenough*, who was long our servant 'Susan'. Alas! poor young woman, her mind was very dark, poisoned by the influence of an establishment on ignorance. But did I attempt all I could for her? I have long been self-condemned on her account. She is beyond the reach of effort now!
63. My old friend M^r *Burks* of Edmonton expired in peace on Monday 26th June. For many years he was the London representative of our Mission, & greatly helped dear Fuller & his friends by his judicious, businesslike unostentatious mode of managing business. To me, also, he was an important aid, for some years after I succeeded to the Secretaryship. For a long time past he has been withdrawn into privacy, the subject of great bodily infirmities, but his mind serene & peaceful. At length the kind messenger came to summon him home in the 75th year of his age!
70. On Lord's Day, 16th July, my dear old friend & intended father-in-law, M^r *Samuel Jackson* of Dorking, in his 81st year. A good old disciple. His departure was eminently

peaceful. He came to his grave as a shock of corn fully ripe.

92. *Sam^l. Hope Esq.* of Liverpool, after suffering the awful calamity of loss of reason, apparently occasioned by excessive mental exertion in profitable business. He was the great stay of the Serampore Mission. May the result prove that a merciful providence is working even in so solemn an event as this!
103. *Mrs. Deakin, Glasgow*, a choice Christian woman, once the most influential of all the religious people in that city, a warm friend of Fuller & the mission, & very kind to me during my visits there. Of late years her husband has suffered great reverses in worldly things, & as both were warm partisans of Serampore, we have had little intercourse, but I have never ceased to regard them with affection & esteem.

Those interested in Baptist history will recognise Wm. Ward of Serampore, James Hinton of Oxford, Solomon Young of Stepney College, Joseph Timms, the Kettering deacon, Webster Morris of Clipston and Dunstable, John Rippon, Wm. Steadman, Wm. Burls, an early treasurer of the B.M.S., and Samuel Hope of Liverpool, who helped to maintain the Serampore missionaries after their breach with the London committee. Dyer's notes throw many interesting sidelights on the personalities of a great generation.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

The Dignity of Man, by Lynn Harold Hough. (Independent Press, Ltd. 6s.).

Dr. Hough argues the dignity of man with zest and copious illustration. It rests in man's relation to God, who gave him intelligence, authority and the power of choice. Man betrays his heritage when he chooses evil. Repentance is essential and is awakened by the vision of the divine love in the Incarnation and Death of Christ. Human dignity must be the test of all social planning. Immortality is God's final seal on human worth.

The writer scarcely does justice to the deep-seated nature of evil, or to the riches of the redemption wrought by Christ. But the book is worth reading, for there is much that is freshly written and stimulating to thought.

FRANK BUFFARD.