

## The Diary of William Newman—II.

IN the *Baptist Quarterly* for April, 1959, selections were printed from the earliest extant volume of the diary of William Newman, the first president of Stepney College, now Regent's Park College, Oxford. This further selection of material from the other three volumes also provides background material for the history of Regent's Park College and gives the reflections of a sensitive and cultured man on the events of his times. He writes of the distress of the nation at the farcical trial of Queen Caroline which taxed even his devotion to the Hanoverian monarchy. He was closely identified with the Anti Slavery movement and with the campaign for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. Matters of interest to the Baptist historian are his references to the controversy with the missionaries at Serampore and, of course, to the life of the Stepney College. He notes the growing pains of the still youthful work. He has problems with staff; the students are at times rebellious being infected with theological liberalism and political radicalism. He mentions a scheme for a rival Baptist University propounded by his gifted but turbulent colleague F. A. Cox. This scheme eventually became lost in the bigger scheme for London University, now University College, London, in which Cox was a leading spirit. The extracts which relate to the college are given without comment and are intended as a footnote to the college history.\* For the rest, Newman will be seen to have the same shrewdness of judgement as was revealed in the first volume of the diary. This covered the period July, 1808 to August, 1814. The three volumes dealt with here are :

- (a) August, 1820 to October, 1825.
- (b) October, 1825 to October, 1833.
- (c) October, 1833 to May, 1834.

In 1821, Newman exchanged positions at Stepney with Solomon Young the tutor. Newman retained the presidency and Young became resident tutor. In 1826, Newman resigned altogether. Some extracts from the diary are given in George Pritchard's biography of Newman but they are mainly concerned with Newman's spiritual well-being and material of interest to the historian is overlooked.

Soon after the close of the period covered by these diaries Newman suffered a paralytic stroke and after several months of weakness he died. Although little material is quoted which relates to this aspect of his work, it has to be remembered that throughout

\* *From Stepney to St. Giles*, by R. E. Cooper. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 10/6d.).

this whole period he was the pastor of the church at Bow and fully occupied with preaching and pastoral duties.

### *National Events*

15.8.20. The Queen's letter to the King published yesterday makes a deep impression.

17.8.20. This day the Queen's trial commences.

21.8.20. The Queen's cause improves. The great apprehension now is that the King will suddenly put an extinguisher on it by dissolving the Parliament before the Defence begins.

10.11.20. Today the third reading of the Queen's bill was carried by 108 against 99, a majority of 9 but Lord Liverpool withdrew it. The Counsel rushed in to inform the Queen. She sat motionless, but after a flood of tears in her carriage she recovered. The news spread like lightning and the country is full of joy. I sent the students a bottle of Madeira to drink the Queen's health.

17.7.21. All the talk is about the coronation and the unhappy situation of the Queen.

19.7.21. The King's Coronation Day. The bells are ringing. . . . Alarming reports of tumult in London kept us up till near 12. Some were singing "Queen for ever." The poor of the parish of Bow had a dinner at the Coborne School.

8.8.21. Brother Ivimey's little boy came to tell me the Queen died last night at 11. It affected me very much. Our Mary wished the King at the bottom of the sea! I am sorry to perceive this to be a very general feeling. I thought it my duty to oppose myself to this with decision.

19.3.24. New Post Office begins this week. New London Bridge. First pile driven last Monday.

25.4.24. Signed the Petition for the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts.

23.6.24. Saw the Lord Chancellor Eldon reading, writing and hearing Counsel (three things at once).

29.6.24. At the Anti-Slavery meeting, Macaulay junior spoke admirably. What an animating prospect—we have a young Wilberforce, a young Macaulay, a young Haldane.

7.1.28. Test Act Committee very full. Lord John Russell and Lord Holland and John Smith offered to bring in our question as soon as possible.

4.2.28. Test Act Committee. Animated discussion. The Catholics wish to unite with us. We declined it, yet anxious to declare we have no hostility.

4.2.28. Aspland very animated. He said the members of both houses thought more highly of the importance of the Bill

than the Dissenters themselves. . . . He thinks they will next open to us the Universities.

25.4.28. We congratulated each other on the success of the Dissenters' Bill, praised the firmness of the Duke of Wellington who has fought for us against Lord Eldon.

26.6.28. The bishops are preparing a King's College in London—Bishop of Chester says it will be open to Dissenters!

6.2.29. Mr. Wilk's funeral. Hundreds of ministers attended and thousands of people within the Tabernacle where the coffin was placed under the pulpit. Rowland Hill's address was very good and he shouted and wept. Tens of thousands of people were thronging all the way as we went in procession on foot, and vast multitudes were found in Bunhill fields where Mr. Hill read a part of the Liturgy.

23.9.29. At nine with Freeman to see Elizabeth Fry in Upton Lane on the Suttée question. She thinks female signatures were not acceptable on the slavery question; advises us not to ask for them. . . . She keeps steadily to the prison discipline question; feels the danger of being dissipated and overwhelmed by a multiplicity of good objects, many of which she can not touch. She thinks it is for everyone to have one object.

26.6.30. This morning at quarter past three our beloved King George IV died at Windsor.

28.7.30 95 of us went up to St. James with addresses to the King and to the Queen. We were most graciously received. He appears to be a most sensible, spirited man. There was an air of seriousness in his manner. The King made an *ex tempore* speech after reading his answer in which he most roundly and loyally declared that he would not interpose between a man and his Maker in matters of religion. The Queen with five or six ladies appeared. She seems to be a modest, simple, benevolent woman with much sweetness of manners. We all kissed the King's hand. Twenty of us by seniority, kissed the Queen's hand. The Duke of Sussex came in with the Queen. Sir Robert Peel introduced us. The Duke of Wellington sat talking with Lord Aberdeen. Lord Hill stood near the King. Brother Douglas fell down the steps of the throne. The King smiled, made an effort to help him up and kindly said he hoped he was not hurt much.

21.7.31. Annual meeting of the Charity School. Lord Henniker told Mr. Gold he would not subscribe if the *girls* were taught to write.

8.10.31. The Reform Bill thrown out by a majority of 41. Some of the newspapers in mourning.

*Baptist History*

20.6.22. Our Mission Society at Queen Street. Wilberforce spoke charmingly, his silvery tones, his musical voice, his evangelical spirit highly interesting. But there are strong marks of debility; he seems to be shattered. Kinghorn spoke well. Bunting delivered one of the most eloquent stirring speeches I ever heard.

20.9.22. Cox thinks we must recognise the separation of Serampore. It has, alas, already taken place.

1.10.22. Reviving hope that the Serampore Question will be happily settled.

5.11.22. Brother Ivimey told us he had sown the seeds of a new Baptist Church at Canterbury.

6.3.23. Crishno the Caroenter, the first native convert, is dead.

24.6.24. Annual Meeting of our Mission Society. Very animated. Sutton from Mooshedabad presented from a Bramin his poita, his 'holy thread.' Many wept; many clapped, stamped, shouted!

28.12.25. Union collection of hymns (Bristol). Hymns on baptism are to be omitted as sectarian! Every one may see which way the wind blows now. Baptists are ashamed of their baptism, Dissenters are ashamed of their nonconformity. Protestants are crying after the Apocrypha, and if these things grow, Christians will be ashamed of Christ! O Lord, arise and plead thine own cause while many who ought to speak loudly are silent and ashamed.

17.8.26. Saw Mr. Wilson of Olney. He can boast of two things—that he shaved Cowper the poet for a course of years and that he made a wig for Dr. Carey.

23.3.27. Birt spoke out warmly respecting the Serampore brethren, "their covetousness and their pride."

20.11.27. At Carter Lane, large company. Warm discussion of the question, How are we to account for the increase of crime?

30.6.28. Read to the end of Dr. Marshman's pamphlet. He has an extraordinary command of temper. Delusion and confusion from the beginning. Nothing like the organisation of a committee until after Fuller's death. The core of the mischief is the opposition of the juniors.

21.6.32. Annual Meeting of our Mission Society. Full house. Kinghorn commenced. Philipppo, Knibb, astonished all with their fervour and feeling and manly eloquence. Barry the Wesleyan missionary; Stovel; Campbell of the Tabernacle. Rarely, if ever in my life, have I heard such addresses. The excitement was amazingly intense.

24.10.32. Dr. Rippon, green as a plant, juvenile as ever, told

us that this day 60 years ago he came into London. Next day preached his first sermon. Aspland proposed his health. His acknowledgement very serious and tender.

14.11.33. Knibb said he never knew a negro Christian to marry an unconverted woman; that he would be excommunicated if he did. If a missionary of the highest qualifications were prepared to be sent out, having an unconverted wife, he would object if it were his own brother.

### *Other Notes*

17.6.23. Home Mission at 6. Edward Irvine spoke with much intellect and passion; singular elocution; arrogance in abundance; confessed his "trammels"; gloried in them; then called for our commiseration; then despised it; then boasted again that he was a churchman! When he acknowledged our freedom as nonconformists, the people clapped and shouted.

3.10.27. Bible Association very fervent. I congratulated the meeting on the resolution of the parent Society to cast out Bel and the Dragon and Tobit and his dog and the fish and the fumes of his roasted liver and the amorous Asmodeans.

### *The Stepney College*

30.9.20. The students are anxious to debate the Question between Hall and Kinghorn.

3.10.20. The young men in several instances infected with a spirit of Radicalism.

2.11.20. Thought a good deal of resigning my charge as resident here. This is a matter that requires the gravest deliberation. Put down Pro and Con to weigh them.

14.11.20. The students sent by Mr. Griffin a paper full of complaints and charges against me. I heard it read with more serenity than might have been expected. All seemed astonished. The Committee treated me and the other tutors with much respect.

15.11.20. It appears from Kippis's account of Doddridge that he was attacked in the same manner and on the same topic too! All the students were examined (by the committee) and their paper was rejected. The Treasurer gave them a lecture and they were assured that if they would bring another paper without comments and stating facts respectfully it should be attended to.

23.1.21. Dr. Rippon very affectionately inquired again, as he has often done, how things stood here. I told him . . . that I thought the students would not have proceeded so far if they had not been countenanced by persons out of doors.

10.4.21. We sung "The Crowns of British Princes shine." Warne refused to sing. He was afterwards surly as a bear.

13.4.21. I directed the classes to rule their paper book and provide pages and columns for the different parts of speech and thus work out a Grammar, a Vocabulary; in time a Lexicon and Concordance and perhaps a Critical Commentary.

5.9.21. Cox met us at 11. Much time was spent in considering how he might be accommodated with his air pump. Tomkins read a sermon at 12—a very poor thing indeed—very deficient in evangelical sentiment for which most of the students censured him.

31.10.21. The three rebels went over yesterday to Mr. Cox. He gave them no encouragement. Nothing can be anticipated except their expulsion, the other students have unitedly intimated that it will be better for them when they are gone.

2.11.21. Met the Committee at 12. A paper called a Remonstrance was read; full of radicalism. After full consideration, agreed to expel them at once.

25.1.22. Fine morning, the sun shone. I went to Stepney with a light step, but returned with a heavy heart. While I was reading the last two chapters of 2 *Tim*. D. G. (Gould) was reading Byron's *Childe Harold*! I reprov'd him afterwards, not perhaps with sufficient severity.

10.5.22. Gould read a paper on the question, "May we admit Unitarians to Church fellowship?" He introduced the subject very modestly. It soon appeared, however, when I put the question round, that he was strongly inclined to support the affirmative. The Lord preserve him! I expressed surprise that his feelings did not revolt.

7.6.22. Tomkins' essay on the Authority of the Canticles disgusted and pained me. He very broadly insinuated that the book was obscene! I came home with strong feelings and before I sat down to eat and drink, read it through again.

13.12.22. At 10 met Kinghorn at the gate. Five juniors were excused. Seven brought each a paper of four pages on a subject selected by himself out of those discussed during the year. Mr. Kinghorn was all alive; very prompt, acute and candid. A flame of holy fire burned brightly in all he said to them. At the close, he addressed the whole number and concluded with prayer.

21.1.23. Committee at 11. I spoke freely on the prerequisites for a candidate.

1. Has he a mind ?
2. Has he a heart?
3. Has he a mouth?

18.3.23. Closed my lectures on the Greek Testament—260 chapters. I have given them my own version accompanied with remarks, critical, practical and often devotional. And to do this, since August, 1821, I have walked nearly a thousand miles! Mr. Booth read the Greek Testament as he told me, more than 40 times by reading a chapter every morning. Mr. Wesley sometimes faltered in quoting the English Testament, but never in quoting the Greek. Ridley, the most learned of the Reformers, learnt all the epistles of Paul by heart.

4.4.23. D. Gould read an Essay on the Influence of novel reading which was elegantly written, containing a faint and too feeble condemnation.

27.11.24. Read *Acts XXVII*. Question, "Is it lawful to admit unbaptized Christians to Church fellowship?" All in the affirmative except Whitewood and Pearce.

12.1.25. Rumour of a new Baptist college near London.

20.1.25. Walked with Burnside to the Kings Head. He told me about the new college (Cox and Hughes, Shaw, Waymouth—Buckland). Thinks it is a castle in the air.

1.2.25. F.A.C. (Cox) defended himself concerning the new college.

7.10.25. Moris Jones read an Essay on the objections to academies—very good.

8.12.25. Special General Meeting. The Treasurer and Mr. Kinghorn spoke admirably. . . . Mr. Young and myself were requested to withdraw. We went into a room below. A sub-committee was appointed which may lead to important results.

9.12.25. Milcham told me what course was taken. He thinks that there is a party forming of young men against the old, the new school against the old; thinks the Treasurer secretly encourages it. What can I do? Complaints have poured in upon me from all sides.

13.12.25. John says I have committed two offences never to be forgiven. One, strict communion; and the other is, I have not bowed sufficiently to the Treasurer.

6.1.26. Mr. Young thought my removal inevitable. . . . It appears they have determined I shall die, how to put me to death is the only question.

28.1.26. The cause is now perhaps, not the cause of an individual tutor, but the cause of vital religion against a mere heartless form with the decorations of literature and philosophy.

28.3.26. I am greatly perplexed about submitting to the imputations of my young opponents at Stepney.

28.4.26. Mr. Young told me the students were under examination 4 hours . . . did not get home till 11. He believes

that many of them signed a joint letter after Christmas in answer to a private letter from one of the Committee of Enquiry.

29.4.26. Committee of Enquiry at 12. They wished to know if I had anything by way of explanation or contradiction to their report which I understood was made up of 38 questions and answers. I told them there was not time.

Their anxious wish was to obtain a pledge that I would resign if they would drop the proceedings.

I said I will give no such pledge. I have told you solemnly repeatedly and as I thought distinctly, my resignation shall not precede. I am an innocent man and more than innocent. . . . If I were to do so, some would say, "When it came to the point he was seen to shrink from examination." Many are sufficiently disposed to degrade me but it is rather too much to ask a man to degrade himself.

When the vote was taken the select committee were in the utmost distress, first seeking to shelter themselves under the wing of the General Committee then anxious to know if I was not preparing to appeal to the public.

"Then will you destroy all the documents?"

I said, this is premature; I shall burn none and you shall have your liberty. You need not be alarmed about my publishing anything. But if necessity requires, and I should have no friend, I must defend myself as well as I can.

15.6.26. Saw Mrs. Young. She thinks they cannot stay; reminded me of Cox's forwardness to take my place when I ceased to be Resident.

16.6.26. Mr. Young nearly prevailed with the students to write an apology and they went from him to prepare it, but some opposed. He thinks the idea prevailed that if they did so, Mr. Ivimey would get hold of it to print it! F.A.C. (Cox) was in the second rebellion and said, "Be firm" yet voted against the three. Keen remonstrated and he got out by saying "You went too far." J. Groser said he had perfect contempt for F.A.C. I remember that Wayland charged him with aiding and abetting in the grand rebellion of 1820; and Tomkins a few weeks ago acknowledged this to Mr. Young.

28.8.26. Called on Dr. Evans (of Bristol College). He says his case was like mine—one ungrateful pupil . . . I had many.

25.1.27. Wrote a letter to the Committee relinquishing my claim on the annuity at Stepney.

R. E. COOPER