

Notes.

Henry Jessey and St. George's.

Mr. Horace Warde, M.A., has been good enough to test the often repeated statement that Jessey was rector of St. George's, Southwark, in the times of the Commonwealth. Calamy had stated only that he preached there in the morning, but Crosby said that in 1660 he was "ejected from his living;" and this is the phrase that has been varied and embroidered.

William Rendle, F.R.C.S., late Medical Officer of Health for the parish has written an interesting account of "Old Southwark and its People." After quoting Walter Wilson's version, he comments at page 82:—"It is not likely . . . that Jessey was then rector of St. George's; he was probably lecturer or curate; as lecturer it was perfectly consistent that he should have another congregation elsewhere." This would be a case parallel to John Simpson, noted at III, 123. And Mr. Rendle points out that William Hobson is recorded as the legal rector 1639-1688 in the list by Manning and Bray, Surrey III, 654. This is exactly parallel to the position of Swadlin at St. Botolph's.

Mr. Warde has therefore examined the registers, and finds that in 1776 a great clearance of them was made at the rate of three-halfpence a pound, so that no records remain earlier than 1700, except a few registers back to 1600.

One of these contains entries of "christnings" right through the Commonwealth period. This is highly suspicious, and the fact of the book being orderly suggests that it is a late compilation. In any case, it gives no obvious clue to the persons who made the entries. But there is a smaller volume composed of pages of parchment and paper bound in disorder, some even upside down. They appear to be the original sheets of the period 1653 to 1657, and they mostly record marriages, which are certified by Sam Hyland or Robert Warcupp; a few are certified by George Potts, Thomas Lee, Thomas Vincent or Christopher Searle, as being solemnized "by" the certifier. Jessey's name does not appear anywhere.

The interpretation of these originals is not hard. The Nominated Parliament adopted the system so familiar to us, of having a lay Registrar of Marriages, births, &c. Hyland and Warcupp were members of parliament, and justices of the peace. It was in the latter capacity

that they were entitled to solemnize marriages. The Registrar would then receive the certificates from any of the officiating persons. When the system ended, his collection seems to have been placed among the parish archives, and to have been roughly bound.

We gain the negative evidence that Jessey took no part in certifying any birth, death or marriage in the parish. The 1671 biography asserts that he was morning preacher there, but Mr. Warde asks if there is any documentary evidence existing to show that he had any connection with St. George's.

John Leeds of Manchester.

The records of the Court Leet in Manchester give a graphic picture of town administration from 1650 to 1687. One or two early Baptists figure; Mr. Jones was fined in 1666 and 1675 for letting his swine wander without rings in their snouts; John Wiggans was fined in 1675 for a broken pavement. John Leeds, who interests us because in 1672 he took out a licence for Baptists to worship in his house, figures often. In 1668 he lived in Market Street lane, and next year it was his duty to notify all strangers who came to live there. In 1670 his business as chapman had so increased that he bought several messuages in Toad Lane, next year he added a barn and orchard near the Acres, and bought a house near the Hanging Ditch. He was appointed to many offices; especially market-looker for corn, weights and measures, white meat—an office shared once with another Baptist, Edward Gathorne: it is amusing that he was fined fourpence for a wrong measure of length; finding another man's corn-bushel short, he was assaulted and blood was drawn. After much neglect to scour a ditch, he turned a water-course into it and got into more trouble; but proved so able to defend himself that his opponent made him steward of Pownall Hall, Wilmslow.