

extreme care should be taken of the treasure. Imagine his surprise when it was pointed out to him that according to a note on the cover, written by Mr. Hughes, it had come from Bristol Baptist College, and it contained also the bookplate of Andrew Gifford. When he got it we cannot say, but a copy was sold at West's sale for sixpence.

ARTHUR S. LANGLEY.

A Note on John Smith's Last Confession of Faith.

In the Confession of Faith in one hundred "Propositions," published by the remainder of John Smith's church at Amsterdam, soon after his death in 1612, there is one puzzling reference which I think may be cleared up.

The 65th proposition runs as follows in the printed edition:

"That the visible church is a mistycall figure outwardlie, of the true, spirituall invisible church: which consisteth of the spirits of iust and perfect men onlie, that is of the regenerate. Rev. 1. 20. compared with 2 P. 2. 23. 27."

Now there is no such passage as the latter. To what passage then did Smith here refer in support of his opinion? The Dutch Version of this Confession gives the reference Rev. xxi. 2; a passage which tells of "the holy city new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven" but hardly gives direct support to the two contentions of John Smith in this proposition.

Smith declares here (*a*) that the visible church is a mystical figure of the invisible church, and (*b*) that the latter consists "of the spirits of just and perfect men only."

When John Robinson criticised this Confession of Faith¹ he quoted a different set of references. He says "the Scriptures brought, which are Revel. 1. 10 [compared] with Chap: 21. 2, 13, 27, speak of the visible Church only, and so are impertinent." I assume that his copy had an emendation of the reference in manuscript made by someone who saw that the printed reference was wrong.

¹ Of Religious Communion, John Robinson, 1614, p. 127.

Robert Barclay in his *Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*, following up the suggestion given by Robinson, gave a conflated reference, "Rev. i. 20 compared with Rev. xxi. 2, 23, 27," and in this I followed him in my *John Smith the Se-baptist* of 1911, p. 251.

The solution I now suggest is as follows: John Smith saw in

"the mystery of the seven stars" and the seven golden candlesticks, representing the angels of the seven churches and the churches themselves (Rev. i. 20) a hint that the visible church was an outward mystical figure of the true spiritual invisible church. He desired the inquirer to compare this passage with Heb[rews] xii. 22, 23, 27, in which the heavenly Jerusalem the general assembly and church of the first born is indicated as made up of the spirits of just men made perfect, and as an institution of an abiding character that cannot be shaken. He may then have referred to Rev. xxi. 2, 27 in order to complete the picture he wished to conjure up in the mind of his reader of the spiritual church as the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven, free from all that defileth.

The references to this Conclusion or Proposition would thus be Rev. i. 20, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 27, compared with Rev. xxi. 2. 27.

Those readers who have a copy of Dr. Whitley's *The Works of John Smyth* may make the correction in the margin at page 744, and in my *John Smith the Se-baptist* at page 251. At any rate, these references are quite pertinent to the position Smith here desired to support.

WALTER H. BURGESS.

Summary of Report for 1920.

YOUR committee deplores the loss of two members. Mr. Eustace Little of Prince's Risborough, whose long life has enabled him to master the antiquities of his county, laid us under great obligations in obtaining the minute books of Ford and Amersham for publication. Principal Gould of Regent's Park has been the invaluable President of this Society from its beginning, wise in counsel, rich in knowledge, fertile in suggestion.

The Baptist Union Publication Department is now proceeding rapidly with the printing of the Bibliography of British Baptists, 1777-1837. This second volume will be ready for subscribers in Class A during 1921.

The high cost of printing has seriously hindered the development of the Society's schemes. As extensive changes in the officers of the Society must be made in April, opportunity will be taken to outline a wider policy.