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Transactions

of the

Baptist Historical Society.

May a Minister take State Pay?

THE Church at Whitchurch, in Hants, possessed LVII. documents, giving a fairly consecutive body of facts from September of 1690 till 1852, including a history of the Church during the period 1690—1714, drawn up by James Millard, pastor, 1811—1817. These are now lodged at Regent's Park, though a careful transcript made by Miss Marion Cox, of Hurstbourne Priors, is available locally.

One document is of much earlier date, being the Circular Letter from the Western Association met at Wells, despatched 12 April, 1656. This was not called the first meeting, but was certainly important; under Thomas Collier's guidance it published a Confession of Faith quite independent of either the London Confession of 1644, or the Assembly's Confession. The Churches of this district, Cirencester, Bristol, Wells, Somerton, Chard, Taunton, Honiton, Exeter, Dartmouth, Plymouth, Lyme, Weymouth and Dorchester, had been visited in 1655 by Henry Jessey.

The subject matter of the letter could only arise under Cromwell, who permitted patrons and tryers to install any one to a living irrespective of his precise Puritan views. It was the Baptist churches which kept up a pressure on Baptist ministers to dissuade them from accepting any such public post as Jessey was occupying in Southwark.

For the following transcript we are indebted to Mr. Arthur Tucker, of Horsebridge.

“Question—Whether it be lawfull for a Minister of the Gospell to take a sett maintenance of those who

are without, for preaching to the Church or to the world?

“We answer that a Preacher of the Gospell ought not to accept of the place of Minister to a Parish, or Lecturer, or Chaplain, not to take a sett maintenance of the world for preaching the Word, and that for these reasons—

“1. Because God hath provided another way for the maintenance of the Ministers of the Gospell, viz., by the Church or Churches, III Ep. John 7, 8, 9; I Cor. ix, 7, 8, 18; Phil. iv, 15, 16; and if these be such that the Church which sends them forth be not of sufficient abilities, we judge it is the duty of other Churches to be assistant in such a case that the Ministers of the Gospell be not exposed to temptation in this thing, and of this we are persuaded, that such is the abilitie of the Churches, that if they be faithful and forward in the worke, and seeke not great things to themselves, they may be provided for, without taking a sett reward from the world, which would be honorable to the gospell, III. Ep. John 7, 8, 9, and whereby they might condemne the practise of the false church and their mercenary ministry.

“2. Because the taking of such a stipend doe putt a tye and fetter upon the feete of the Ministers of the Gospell to preach at certain times and places according to the will of man, whereby they are made the servants of men and deprived of their liberty to follow (I. Cor. vii., 23) the Lord freely and fully in the worke, and this liberty of a Minister we (Acts xx., 26) judge ought to be dearer to him than any outward enjoyment whatsoever, yea, than life it selfe; and seeing all saints, and Ministers especially, are to pray that the Word of God may run and have free course, then those who are sent to preach ought not to enter into such bonds, which by sad experience proves a snare unto them; and this is to be noted also that

Wisdomes's Messengers are said to be Maidens or Virgins, which showeth their freedome in the worke (Prov ix., 13) of the Gospell.

"It stops the mouth of a Minister from bearing an open and full testimony against the practise of the Parish Ministry, who, Balaam-like, run after the reward; and seeing this is the way of Anti-Christ's Ministers, it becometh not Christ's thus to follow the reward, whither that goeth, thither to goe.

"4. It hath the appearance of that horrible evill of covetousnesse and teaching for hire, and selling the gift of God for money, which is contrary to these Scriptures, I. Thess. v., 22, Mic. iii., 11, Acts viii. 20.

"5. To these considerations we add that command of our Saviour to His disciples whome he sent forth to preach the Gospell to the world, Matt. x., 7, 8, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

"These things considered, we judge it is the duty of a Church whose ministers take such sett rewards of the world, to endeavour to convince him of the saide evill, and if he continually goeth on in his practise, the Church ought to deale with him for the same, as that which gives an occasion to the enemies of the truth, and just grounde of offence to the Church of God, contrary to that rule, I Cor. x., 32. We conclude our answer with the proposalls of these three things to the serious consideration of the churches and ministers concerned in the matter.

"1. Whether some brethren have not, without a clear call from God, taken up a trade of preaching to get into a trade of maintenance.

"2. Whether the large rewards allotted by the world for preaching the Word be not a means to draw off divers ministring brethren from the service of the Churches, whereby many offences come.

"3. Whether a man may justly be judged by himselfe or others to be called to goe about to preach the

Word as a Gospell minister, which hath not faith to believe that God will be with, and provide that nothing shall be lacking to him in the worke.

“Subscribed in the name of the messengers of the severall Churches, by us

“THOMAS COLLIER.

“JOHN PENDARVES.

“NATHANIEL STRANGE.

“From Wells the 12th day of the 2d month 1656.”

Letters to Dr. Rippon from New York.

AFTER Benjamin Stinton, Thomas Crosby, and James Richardson, John Rippon continued this Southwark tradition of collecting materials for Baptist history. These three letters from one of his church members at Carter Lane, emigrated to New York, show his desire to get first-hand information. The glimpses at the American book trade and the state of the currency are interesting on other accounts.

The letters belong to the Rev. Newton H. Marshall, Ph.D., who has lent them for printing.

New York, Febr'y, 12th 1800

Dear Sir

I have sent you at last the Acct. of Revd. [interlined] Mr. Fosters death which I obtained in searching over a file of Papers in Greenleafs Office,—with the Minutes of the New York Association, the Plan of the Bula Society in the first printed paper [interlined] Called the Wester Sky & a Pamphilet of the Revival of Religion in the Eastern States and Nova Scotia it is probable that you might have heard of some of these Revivals via Boston. O that I could give more pleasing Account of Religion in this City, she is greatly increasing her Commerce in different parts of the World in this we have reason to be thankfull, but Alas we have reason to Lament the spread of Vice & Infidelity among the rising Generation & even the

Middle Aged within the last seven or Eight years, notwithstanding so many Warnings and Judgements we have Justly [interlined] experiend from the Mighty hand of God, nevertheless there is a few in differnt Denominations, that are enquireing their way to Zion with their faces [three words interlined] thither ward, so that we are not left wholly without Witnesses for God, the Baptist Church in Fayette Street for the last 18 Months under the Pastoral care of Mr. Williams a Native of Wales have recd. some pleasing Additions within the last 12 Months upwards of 20 have joined them most of whoam where Members of of Indipendant & Baptist Churchs in England, their little place of Worship is much throng'd, the porpose lengthing their Place of Worship, next Summer,—the two last members that joint them is named Louis & Lesy mentioned in the life of David George—Mr. Williams is a very zealous humble. Man, of an impeachibale Character, have not made great Aquirements in Literature, tho very good Ideas [three words underlined] of the Gospel, & is a growing Preacher [two words underlined] who long for the Spread for the Spread of the Redeemers Kingdom he is desireous of a Corrispondance with you I think I can venture to say that in him you will find in him a very honorable one,, in whoam you may place Confidence, the Church in Gold Street are yet [interlined] without a Pastor, the Church in Rose Street, is building a New Place of Worship Mr. Stanfords People most all left him as that he has not above two or [two words interlined] 3 Male Members left it is expected he will leave of Preaching in this city now doubt but you have heard ere this you have have heard of the safe Arrivele of my dear Whife & Children whom joins with me in requesting You to receive our kind respects to you & Family & the Brethren & Sisters [two words interlined] in our Church, who are all more Particulary [three words interlined] ac-

quainted with us. should take it as a favour to receive a letter from you, respecting Religion in our Church & in London, &c [interlined] I porpose giving you another letter in the Summer, & remain

Dear Sir Your Sincere & Affectionate Friend,

JNO. BOWEN

Please to direct to me at Mr. Millers No 318 Pearl N. York

[Endorsed] Revd Mr John Rippon

No 11 Grange Road, Bermondsey Parish, Southwark, London.

New York Augst 15th 1801

My very Dear Sir,

I recd your pleasing Epistle with ye Parcell [three words interlined] the middle of last Month, favord by Mr. Brown, which gives me a Considerable pleasure to hear of the increase of Our Church, with your Baptizing of two Minissters, Also of Mary Glassgow, may she prove to be a God fearing Woman, as I veryly believe she has joind a God fearing people please to give my love to Mary and tell her that it have given me often [interlined] a pleasing Reflection with gratitude [these two words added to replace one smudged out] being brought to hear the word in Carter Lane, & joined to the Lords [interlined] people, tho there is many very [interlined] friendly & pious people here, I expect never to be so well satisfied, & happy in Pastor & people as with them, may she be enabled to realise those inestimable [ma interlined] Blessings, with similar Reflections,

I wrote you a short letter & sent you two numbers of the Misy Magazine by the Brothers Care of the Capt Dickenham, with the acknowledgement of the receipt of three first parcells, I have Obtained 14 Subscribers for the Register, with an Expectation of more you please to send me Ten volumes of No 1 & Nine Vols of No 2 half Bound & Letterd as these will compleat the above Subsrs with what I have in hand, I have sold the two tune Books, and have an Order for two more, if you please you may send me 4 or Six with & without Clasps as before, also have [a word obliterated] an Order for three of your [two words interlined] Hymn Books with the Adenda Mr. Williams have introduced them in their prayer meetings at Fayette Street & intend by degrees to introduce them in public Worship, so I believe you may Venture to send 1 doz of the enlarged Edition of the Selection six on common at 3/s & six of Larger or better paper at 3s. 6d Sterg, & one of Fine Royal paper not pressd, & bound in Calf with Head if a good Likeness not else [two words interlined] as it is for an English Gentleman that heard you preach not three Years ago, Mr Ustick of Philadelphia was on a Visit here informd me that he had just [interlined] printed two Thousand of your Selection of Hymns, Also offord to send me two or three Dozen & Charged me Ten for every dozen I sold; he retail's them at 87½ Cents equal to 7/s N.Y Currency, & exactly each [interlined] 3s. 11¼d [underlined] Sterling, thus you see the English [these two words interlined, replacing we] Labors and the American enjoys the sweets of their Labor with little troble, it is so with every new Publication that is likely to sell, that comes over, it is the case in respects to ["Sullivan" crossed out] the Gospel its own Witness by Mr. Fuller, publisd 2000 Copies by Mr. Corns. Davis N. York, notwithstanding, Mr. Ustick gives me from 70 to 80 Dollars for P.[interlined] Ink I [inter-

lined] risfud to take any of his Books as he could have been supplied from you [interlined] what he wanted, I told ["it" obliterated] him it was not worth his while to [interlined] send any of his publishing here as I had some comeing from London of the Tenth & enlarged Edition, he was Angry with me because, I would not let him have the Adenda, that you was so kind to send me over, with other pamphlets for which I return you many thanks. Mr. Shepard Kollock Printer of Elizabethtown, printed one Thousand of your Hymns about 4 Years ago, were principally sold to [interlined] the Presbyterians for Family use, I never have been able to get the Medal or a Copper plate of it as there was not Subsribers enough to defray the Expences, in one of your former Letters, you requested to know wether there was a settle Minister at Gold Street, Mr. Collier & Mr. Snoad for near 2 Years & 4 Months have Preachd preachd [one word on each page] for them Mr. S only 5 months, he is a Universals Mr. C— I hear is going away as the went a person of better Abilities, none our English Baptist would hear him above once, indeed I do sincerely wish the had an able Zoalous & [interlined] Laborious Minister settled amongst them, whose Labors the Lord would eminently Bless, the Church is Building themselves a very spacious large Metting House of Stone with a foundation for a Steeple suited for a Bell & Clock the are now gething Rafters over [interlined] for the Roof one of [interlined] the Members told me the foundation was 80 feet Long & 50 or 60 Broad, this House surround the place where the Old one stood,—I have collectted 12 dollars as soon as I can collect Fower or Five Pound Sterling, shall pay it into the Hands of a Respectable Mercht here whoam will give me an Order or Bearer on a House in London, please to give my Christian Love to any of my Bretheren or Sisters that may enquire after me

& please to except the same yourself from

Dear Sir Your Affectionate & Sincere Friend

JNO BOWEN

N.B. Mrs. Bowen desires her kind respects to you & Family Revd Mr. Williams desires me to give his Christian Love to you In my last Letter I requested you [interlined] to send me only 12 numbers of each sort of the Register, I conclude it will be best to continue their number as usual. At present I see not prospect of Success respecting Histy of Bunhill fields, if you was to prosecute the Abridgement of Dr. Gills Exposition of the New Testiment, I could soon Obtain a very pleasing Number of Subscribers,—J.B.

New York Septr 6th, 1802

Very Dear Sir,

I Receiv'd a parcill of Books you sent [two words interlined] by the Revd. Mr. Chamberlain Namely 22 Vols, 16 of No 1 & 6 of No 2 instead [underlined] of Eleven Vols of each—Five Vols of [interlined] No 1 was mark'd on the Back as No 2 [six words underlined] A Mistake of the Binder another defect in the whole 16 Vols. of No1, is sixteen Pages wanting [interlined] commencing the second Page [two words underlined] of the Northampton Letter on Holy Peace or page 193 & ending Page 208 included which makes one whole sheet, this is a great Omission as it cannot be soon rectified being at such a vast Distance, nevertheless if you'l please to send one whole sheet for each Volume, as above discricrib'd the Bookbinder can Stich them in here, also please to send me 5 Volumes of No 2 to supply the other subscribers that are much in want of them, I am yet in want of No 25 up to the present Month (except one Dozen of No 34. [] scratched out)

that was pack'd in the aforesaid Parcell therefore will thank you to forward 12 more of ["No 34" obliterated] the last Number,) I hope these you have [interlined] sent by the Ship Two Friends as also the Tune Books & Hymn Books enlarg'd Editon [interlined] I advis'd you to forward in three or four Letters past, I also wrote for one of the [replacing "your"] best Editions of your Hymns with your Likeness bound in Calf, for Mr. Page of Norwich Old England who is also desireous of having one of your best [interlined] Arranged Editions of Dr. Watts Bound in Calf, in my last Letter sent you is an Order for you to receive £4. 10s [underlined] of a Mr. Waters whose family [interlined] lives next Door to me, the Ship Two Friends he belong to as Steward I expect is about returning to this Port.—I porpose sending you in about two Months time Seven or Eight Pounds more, as some my Subcribers are yet in the Country, Mr. Dunn has lately movd to Philadelphia, a Box of Books & Registers Which was in the Possesion of [interlined] the Late Dr. Foster & Mr. Allum Mr. Dunn [two words interlined] has left in my Possesion, the first Oppertunity I took them over, & make out a [interlined] List or Catilouge & send you in Order to have your Advice what to do with them. Mr. D. have paid into my hands, 14 Dolls. & $\frac{1}{2}$ for me to remitt you, I am sorry to inform you that Mr. D. has preach'd for [interlined] the Universalists in this City & publicly Declar'd his Attachment to their Principles.

The new Mettinghouse in [deleted] Gold Street in this City, (belonging to the Old Baptist Church) was Open'd the 2nd of May last Revd. Mr. Gano preach'd from Exodus 20 Chap 24 verse In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will Bless thee, the Hymns where 338, 339 & 344 of your Selection were sung, by a Crowded Congregation, and Liberal Contributions indeed it was a pleasing and Profitable Oppertunity. Mr. Chamberlain requested me

to give his Christian love to you, he arriv'd here the middle of July his stay here was about a fortnight, he saild from Philadelphia for India about 9th or 10th of Augst—

Mrs. B. joins with our Christian love to you & Mrs. Rippon and Remain

Dr Sir Your Affectionate Friend
in haste.

JNO. BOWEN

P.P. I send you a small Parcell that Accompany this Letter (by Capt Flower of the Ship Fair American) two M Magazines, & Minutes of N. York & Warwick Association &c. [partly printed in the Register, pages 1134 & 1150]

Revd. Dr. Rippon

Instructions to a Missionary.

JABEZ CAREY was the third son of the doctor. By 1811 the French had been driven from the East Indies, and the islands were administered by the English till the general peace, when they were returned to Holland. Meantime the Governor-general asked Carey to send Malay Bibles and missionaries to Amboyna, the very island whence the English had been driven by the Dutch long before. Jabez gave up his post in a lawyer's office and was hastily sent to take charge of the 18,000 nominal native Christians, to superintend the schools, and to be in high judicial position. Under the renewed rule of the Dutch, the work was continued, and now not only the State clergy, but the Mennonite missionaries, labour in the great East Indian islands. This letter was written to Jabez by his father as a parting instruction, and reveals Carey in two or three lights. The portion relating to personal life and mission effort has been already printed by George Smith, but he suppressed without notice the extensive portion showing his interest in natural history, which has had such beneficial results through the Botanic Garden at Calcutta. The original is at Regent's Park, and is printed by the courtesy of our president, Principal Gould.

My dear Jabez,

You are now engaging in a most important undertaking in which not only you and Eliza have my prayers for your success, but those of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ and know of your engagement. I know a few hints for your future conduct from a parent who loves you very tenderly will be acceptable and shall therefore now give you these assured that they will not be given in vain.

1. Pay the utmost attention at all times to the state of your own mind both towards God and Man. Cultivate an intimate acquaintance with your own heart, labour to obtain a deep sense of your own depravity and to trust always in Christ. Be pure in heart and meditate much upon the pure and holy character of God. Cherish every amiable and right disposition towards men. Be mild, gentle and unassuming, yet firm and manly. As soon as you perceive anything wrong in your spirit and behaviour set about correcting it and never suppose yourself so perfect as to need no correction.

2. You are now a married man. Be not satisfied with conducting yourself towards your Wife with propriety, but let love to her be the spring of your conduct towards her. Esteem her highly and so act that she may be induced thereby to esteem you highly. The first impressions of love arising from favour or beauty will soon wear off, but the esteem arising from excellency of disposition and substance of character will endure and increase. Her honour is now yours and she cannot be insulted without your being degraded. I hope as soon as you get on board and are settled in your Cabin you will begin and end each day in uniting together to pray and praise God. Let Religion always have a place in your house. If the Lord bless you with Children bring them up in the fear of God, and be always an example to others of the power of godliness. This advice I give also to Eliza and if followed you will be happy.

3. Behave affably and genteelly to all but not cringingly or unsteadily towards any. Feel that you are a man, and always act with the dignified sincerity and truth which will command the esteem of all. Seek not the society of worldly men, but when called to be with them act and converse with propriety and dignity. To do this labour to gain a good acquaintance with

History, Geography, Men and Things. A Gentleman is the next best character after a Christian, and the latter includes the former. Money never makes a Gentleman, much less does a fine appearance, but an enlarged understanding joined to engaging manners.

4. On your arrival at Amboyna your first business must be to wait on Mr. Martin. You should first send a note to inform him of your arrival and know when it will suit him to receive you. Ask his advice upon every occasion of importance and communicate freely to him all the steps you take.

5. As soon as you are settled begin your work. Get a Malay who can speak a little English and with him make a tour of the Islands and visit every School. Encourage all you see worthy of encouragement and correct with mildness, yet with firmness. Keep a journal of the transactions of the Schools and enter each one under a distinct head therein. Take account of the numbers of Scholars, the names of the Schoolmasters, compare the progress at stated periods and in short consider this as the work which the Lord has given you to do.

6. Do not, however, consider yourself as a mere superintendent of Schools, consider yourself the spiritual instructor of the people and devote yourself to their good. God has committed the spiritual interests of these Schools 20,000 men or more to you. A Vast Charge but he can enable you to be faithful to the trust. Revise the catechism, tracts, and School Books used among them and labour to produce among them sound doctrine and genuine piety. Pray with them as soon as you can and labour after a gift to preach to them. I expect you will have more to do with them respecting Baptism. They all think Infant sprinkling right and will apply to you to baptize their children. You must say little till you know something of the language and then prove to them from Scripture

what is the right mode of Baptism and who are the proper persons to be baptized. Form them into Gospel Churches where you may meet with a few who truly fear God and as soon as you see any fit to preach to others call them to the ministry and settle them with the Churches. You must baptize and administer the Lord's Supper according to your own discretion when there is a proper occasion for it. Avoid indolence and love of ease, and never attempt to act the part of the great and gay in this world.

7. Labour incessantly to become a perfect master of the Malay language. In order to this associate with the natives walk out with them ask the name of everything you see, and note it down, visit their houses especially when any of them are sick. Every night arrange the words you get in alphabetical order try to talk as soon as you get a few words and be as much as possible one of them. A course of kind and attentive conduct will gain their esteem and confidence and give you an opportunity of doing much good.

8. You will soon hear from Mr. Martin the situation and disposition of the Alfoors or original inhabitants and will see what can be done for them. Do not unnecessarily expose your life but incessantly contrive some way of giving them the word of life.

9. I come now to things of inferior importance but which I hope you will not neglect. I wish you to learn correctly the number, size, and geography of the Islands. The number and description of inhabitants, their customs and manners and everything of note relative to them and regularly communicate these things to me.

10. I wish you to pay the minutest attention to the natural productions of the Islands, and regularly to send me all you can. Fishes and large animals must be excepted, but these you must describe. You know how to send birds and Insects. Send as many birds

of every description alive as you possibly can, and also such quadrupeds, Monkeys etc. And always send a new supply by every ship.

Shells Including . . . tortoises etc. Corals, Stones of every description May be sent in a box but each should have a label with the Malay or other country name, the place where found etc. Though Stones broken from the rock are preferable to such as are worn or washed round by the Sea.—Beetles, Lizards, Frogs, and serpents may be put into a small keg of Rum or Arrack, and will come safely.

Every vegetable production is very desirable. They are of various kinds.

1. Bulbous roots, but such as are like onions or garlick, These should be taken up and planted in a box so thickly as to touch one another, or they may be put dry in a basket, with no other care than to fasten on the cover well and hang them in an airy part of the Ship.

2. Tuberous roots, or such as resemble potatoes or Yams some of these are very large and others as small as a pea. They may in general be sent as the Bulbous roots. If these are planted in earth they should have very little or no water given them on the passage.—Send me two or three hundred of such sorts if you can get them.

3. Common plants, and trees of these I hope you will not think any one too insignificant. Send the smallest as well as the largest.—Plant small plants of each sort in Boxes and always have a number of Boxes planted and well rooted ready, for if they are just planted they will all die on the passage. Just before they are put on board put seeds of trees, fruits, shrubs etc. as thick as you can sow them in the boxes among the planted trees and cover the seeds with about a finger's thickness of good fresh earth. These should have a little water now and then on the passage, not above once a

week. You must often send the same thing, as it will be ten to one, whether they arrive alive.

4. Be very abundant in sending seeds of every sort. Let these be perfectly ripe, and thoroughly dry, then pack them in paper, and put them in a basket or small box, secured from the Rats. The name should be put on every packet of seeds, and if you can recollect say whether it grows in sandy soil, on Mountain or rocks in mire or water or where.—One word is enough i.e. “sand,” for sandy soil. “Mountains,” for a mountainous situation etc.

5. Parasitical plants, or such as grow on other plants or trees. Such as you have seen me tie on other trees and water with Bhans (?) on small pots hung over them.—These only need to be stripped from the tree where they grew and put into baskets without any earth. They may be hung up in any airy part of the ship or even hung at the Main Top, and will come safely.

6. All boxes of plants should have strips of wood put over them to keep out the Rats. These strips should be about as thick as a finger, and about a finger's breadth as under. [Diagram like a ladder.] No plants or seeds must be put in the hold. [Doubly underscored.]

7. I shall also be glad of specimens of every sort of Wood (Timber) a bit, about six or eight Inches long, and two thick (with its Malay name) is sufficient. Send it Rough, I will get it planed.

I have much confidence in you to add greatly to my stock of natural productions. You must persevere in sending, and be diligent in collecting.

Your great work my dear Jabez is that of a Christian minister. You would have been solemnly set apart thereto if you could have stayed long enough to have permitted it. The success of your labours does not depend upon an outward ceremony, nor does your right to preach the Gospel or administer the ordinances of

the Gospel depend on any such thing, but only on the divine call expressed in the Word of God. The Church has however in their intentions and wishes borne a testimony to the Grace given to you:—and will not cease to pray for you that you may be successful.—May you be kept from all temptations, supported under every trial made victorious in every conflict, and may our hearts be mutually gladdened by accounts from each other of the triumphs of divine Grace. God has conferred a great favour upon you in committing to you this ministry. Take heed to it therefore in the Lord that thou fulfil it. We shall often meet at the throne of Grace. Write me by every opportunity and tell Eliza to write to your Mother.

Now my dear Jabez I commit you both to God and to the word of his Grace which is able to make you perfect in the knowledge of his will let that word lie near your heart. I give you both up to God and should I never see you on earth I trust we shall meet with Joy before his throne of Glory at last.

Your very, very affect. Father,

WM. CAREY.

Calcutta.

24. Jany. 1814.

First Impressions of Bristol.

For the following letter we are indebted to Prof. S. W. GREEN, M.A.

Bristol. January 1826.

My dear Father and Mother,

According to agreement I set to work to write to Dunstable, and that I may not forget what I ought to write, will begin with the morning that I left home, and relate occurrences. Before I set off, I felt very sick, but did not like to mention it. Riding inside the coach increased rather than allayed that sensation. I reached London however tolerably well, got some dinner at the "Cross Keys," from thence went to Basinghall St, and secured an inside place; also wrote on a card to that effect, and gave it to the porter, which I suppose you received. From Basinghall St. went to Fenchurch St. where I saw Mr. Alfred Tebbitt, who directed me to Mr. Dyer. From Mr. Dyer's I immediately proceeded to Hoxton, and saw Danl Griffiths, stayed with him about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour, and then returned by the same way that I went to the end of Bishopgate St.; from there I went on and saw the Monument and London Bridge, returning I got into the Royal Exchange about 4 o'clock, where all was bustle. Having gazed about there, and at the outside of the Bank, thought it time to get to my lodging house. I then had some tea, and told them that I should want a bed, which I forgot the first time I went. The Book-keeper, however, had told them

before. I went into the Coffee-room, where there are about ten places somewhat like horses' standings. Sitting down in one of them I had some tea, and with some trouble beguiled away the time till eight o'clock, when according to agreement D. Griffiths called upon me, and we went to Mr. Bland's, where we supped. Returned at ten, but did not get to bed till eleven, and through the noise that was made great part of the night did not get to sleep till after midnight. Was called up at $\frac{1}{2}$ past five, started at $\frac{1}{2}$ past six. Riding inside did not agree with me, and at Chippenham I was rather sick; rode outside one stage, but found that it would not do after having been inside. Reached Bristol about $\frac{1}{2}$ past nine. Had some Tea and went to Bed. My Bed Room is No. 6, Study No. 19. There is no fire place, but a contrivance to let in warm air, which makes it warmer than the dining room where a wasting fire is kept. The rooms are furnished as follows. Bed Room—Wash Hand stand, Table, chair and looking glass. Study.—Chair, Desk, and Shelves. We find our own Soap, Candles and Napkins. Mrs. Hornblower is going to provide me some napkins. The following is the order of the day. At $\frac{1}{2}$ past six o'clock a bell (somewhat like the crier's) is rung to call us up. Two or three mornings in a week Mr. Crisp delivers a lecture at seven precisely. At 8 the breakfast bell is rung and five minutes afterwards it is rung again, and in one minute the whole family is in the dining room, consisting of nearly 30 persons, when Mr. Crisp conducts family worship, immediately after which we have breakfast; on Sabbath morning, Bread and Butter and Meat and Tea, other days, Toast Bread and Br and Tea. Breakfast over we get to work till $\frac{1}{2}$ past ten, when we have to attend Mr. A[nderson]., or Mr. Crisp with our lessons. At two to Dinner, which is always a very good one. After dinner, exercise, and study till nearly six, which is tea time. Supper about nine consisting

of Bread and Cheese &c excepting Sabbath evening when we had hot Tripe and cold meat. I have got on tolerably well since I have been here and am very comfortable. Mrs. Hornblower, our housekeeper, is a very motherly person, very prudent, and pious. Think of a gentleman watching over his pupils with the affection of a parent, and giving them reproof if necessary, as though he was asking a favour, and you will represent to yourself Mr. Crisp. Mrs. C. appears to be a very pleasant lady, but she has nothing to do with the Academy.

I went up (for it is a very steep hill) to Mr. Anderson's on Sabbath morning, went to meeting with him, and also dined with him. Mr. Crisp preached in the morning, one of the Students in the afternoon, and Mr. Foster in the evening; Mr. Foster put me in mind of the old Luton Postman, and he talks a little like him, but his preaching it would be vain and fruitless for me to attempt to describe, it was truly wonderful; Mr. Hall is to be here in about a fortnight. The Students seem to be very pleasant young Men, there are 4 new ones this quarter, all of whom were here before me, one or two of the Seniors are not come yet, the whole number will be 14.

I am learning Latin and Greek you know, and this morning I have been to Mr. Crisp with an Hebrew lesson. I am fully employed. My health I think never was better, I have coughed very little since I have been here.

Mr. and Mrs. Anderson desire to be kindly remembered to you, and Mr. Anderson wished me to say that if you were in want of someone to preach, you might apply to Mr. Hawkins of Weymouth. Mr. Ellingham's customer did receive the last parcel of plat. I must send my love to John, I should like to see him again. Tell him I get no warm beds. The Academy is a large building. On the ground floor

are the Dining room the Lecture room, The Library, the parlour, kitchen &c. As soon as we reach the second floor we get into a long passage, and into this passage our study doors open, 16 on each side, on the third floor are our bed rooms, situated in the same manner. I do not recollect anything else to write respecting my present situation, I have everything necessary to comfort, and very great advantages, and I hope I shall improve them, and turn them to the best account.

Please to give my respects to my Friends at Dunstable & Houghton,

and accept the love
of

Your affectionate Son
WM. ROBINSON.

P.S. Hebrew is read not like English beginning on the left hand of the page, but beginning at the right and going just backwards.

P.S. Two of us have this afternoon been out to purchase Hebrew Grammars. We got our books at wholesale prices. I must now get to work till 7 o'clock, (now past six) when we go to what is termed conference, when one of the students speaks, and afterwards Mr. Crisp from the same text. We have also to deliver essays &c, in rotation, but I must get to my Greek.

Adieu.

The Serampore Mission.

IN "The Life and Correspondence of John Foster," by J. E. Ryland, Letter 185, dated Stapleton, March 24th, 1836, written to Mr. Stokes, of Worcester, Foster is quite jubilant in anticipation of their visit to Mr. Easthope of the "Morning Chronicle." He had been informed, presumably by Mr. Easthope, "that he might be as quiet and retired as he pleased, and have country air"; but he writes:—"My object was not to be retired at all, and to take in as little as I could help of country air. What I should be after, would be in the thick of the town every day—in perfect contrast to the seclusion and rural scene and air at Stapleton. . . . The British Museum will be a very chief object with me." This is a fitting introduction to this letter in which he records some of his impressions of London.

His allusions to Serampore place on record some important facts, and indicate his great interest in the Baptist Foreign Missionary enterprise.

J. C. FOSTER.

Hampstead, June 17—'36.

My dear Sir,

Mr. Stokes says he shall easily find a conveyance for a line in acknowledgement of your friendly letter and the £1. for Serampore: I was truly gratified by both. Every thing from you, or that I now and then hear of you, comes associated with a train of most pleasing recollections of our fine social adventure—of a time which is rapidly retiring into the past. Fresh and vivid as the recollection is of scenes and incidents, and the pervading social interest, a portion

of time has since elapsed enough for several events of domestic importance in your family. I wish the addition to that family may be an augmentation, both for the present and eventually, of the happiness of my two kind and worthy friends at the head of it,—to both of whom I shall never cease to feel myself under a very great obligation. I shall be reminded of it every time I recall the many and diversified gratifications of the romantic adventure.

We have been here, (Mr. & Mrs. Stokes and I) about seven weeks, I think; indeed so long that for myself I am beginning to be quite ashamed;—indulged with luxurious hospitality;—commodiously conveyed into the city and back; and going about, for the forty days in succession, to all the variety of spectacles with which the great city abounds, especially at this season of the year. All this is vastly entertaining; it is however, the surface [underlined]; there is an interior world in a place like this, not accessible to the visitant;—those scenes where human nature is divested of its exterior shows, and is at work in the full activity of all its propensities, passions, vices, and conflicting interests. Much quiet, and much busy, goodness, no doubt there is, in the un-public [underlined] life of so vast a community; but it is frightful to imagine what an enormity of evil, of all manner of kinds, there must be within the circuit which encloses a million and a half of beings all infected with inherent depravity, and liable to an endless variety of grievance and misery.—What a stupendous change if ever the time do [underlined] come when through all its habitations it shall be the abode of the Christian virtues!

Within a very few days, now, we are absolutely to be off, slink back into our accustomed retreat, and wonder what we can [underlined] have been about here for so unconscionable a length of time.

Our excellent host, Mr. Easthope from his position

in the Morning Chronicle Office, and his ample and various political acquaintance, is able to give, respecting public men, and their private characters and practices, a great quantity of such information as does not circulate through the country; in the open channels of intelligence;—and a very preponderating portion of that information is a disclosure of the baseness of human nature,—especially in those sections of it to which we are sometimes taught (or at least once [underlined] were taught) to look up with respect—respect for high station, rank, office, &ct. An utter destitution of moral principle is what he charges on almost the whole herd of the finer sort of human creatures.

I am pleased with the token of your good wishes for Serampore. There can hardly be conceived a worthier cause for the assistance which you, or any Christian philanthropist, may have the ability and disposition to confer. They are working zealously and indefatigably on a constantly widening field, but with constantly straitened resources. They sustained great injury from the dreadful crash of the great banking houses, where they had a little reserve, and a little privilege for missionary means, and a little property of individuals (for instance of Dr. Carey's widow, and Dr. Marshman's grandchildren).

There seems reason to hope, from the slowly abating prejudice raised by malice and envy against them, and from the moderate success of Mr. Gibbs's continual exertions, that something approaching to a sufficiency of support will be obtained. Nothing is more remarkable in the contrast between them and the Society that made such eager exertions to destroy them, than how much more they do, in real quantity of operation, on the strength of any given quantity of money. [nineteen words underlined]. The inquiry is here and there starting—What does the Society do [underlined] with all those annual thousands—what is

it that the "religious public" has for its contributed money?

I greatly regret what appears to be a total and final frustration of our pleasing anticipation respecting Mr. Walters; for I have heard no hope any where expressed of such a recovery of his health as would capacitate him for public service. I was surprised, rather, at the information, in a letter from one of my girls, that he was lately in Bristol;—but for what purpose was not apparently known.

I trust you are destined to long-protracted health and usefulness, and your estimable companion to be a fellowhelper in the duties, cares, and best improvement of life. With friendly and grateful regards to her, and every good wish for the young people, I remain, my dear Sir,

very sincerely yours J. FOSTER.

[Endorsed] Revd. S. Blackmore, Kington. Favoured by Mr. Walter Hall.

An Unrecorded First Edition of Bunyan.

TO publish a new date for a Bunyan book is a great responsibility. It cannot be undertaken lightly by any one who appreciates the full gravity of the claim. In the case of the discovery of an edition of an accepted date there is little beyond the fact to report. It proves to be as expected, and experts are satisfied. But in the case before us we are confronted by an absolutely new date. The endorsement of it therefore, is felt to be a serious demand upon the faith of the Bunyan student. It necessitates the correction of a bibliography that has been the guide of men for more than two centuries, and it adds the appreciable number of nine years to the period of the book's existence. It is submitted that a claim involving such radical changes cannot be lightly made. The aim, however, of the present article is to show that while no shadow of doubt can be cast upon the genuineness of the copy discovered, there is sufficient laxity in the early records to account for the serious mistake now corrected.

Let me at once state that it is a copy of the first edition of "The Barren Fig-Tree" that has come into my possession. Hitherto there has been no recorded copy in existence. From the earliest time the date has been written down as that of 1682. The first known edition is that of 1688. My newly discovered copy bears date of 1673.¹ The copy is in good condition, being almost faultless, the text is absolutely perfect. Mistake with regard to the date is impossible, it being so clearly defined. The volume must be valued not only as providing the pure text of the author, but as authoritative in giving the true date. It may be too much to say that it is unique; there may or may not be other copies extant; but as a first recorded copy it has that distinction. To call attention to such a discovery is a duty alike

¹ London, Printed for Jonathan Robinson at the Golden Lion in Paul's Church-Yard 1673.

in the interests of the history of literature in general and Bunyan students in particular. The debated question of the existence of a first edition is now finally settled; for a copy in possession is its own sufficient witness; the imprint at the same time infallibly fixes the date.

With reference to a first edition being unknown it will be sufficient to quote two writers, both eminent for patient research and profound knowledge of Bunyan literature; I refer to the late Mr. George Offor, and the Rev. Dr. John Brown (late of Bedford, now of Hampstead). The former writes:—"Although we have sought with all possible diligence, no copy of the first edition has been discovered."² The latter states "that no copy of the first edition is known to exist. The earliest is a re-print made immediately after Bunyan's death in 1688."³ These verdicts have now long been before the public, and no discovery, so far as I am aware, up to the present, has been made to discredit them.

In dealing with the question of the supposed date of 1682, it will be necessary to examine the earliest sources of information available. Happily these are not far to seek. A formal bibliography, quite an unusual item of literary equipment for the times, is in existence. A Mr. Charles Doe, a friend and admirer of Bunyan, drew up this list. His hero-worship issued in a practical service. Soon after our author's decease in 1688 he attempted to produce a collected edition of his whole works, in two volumes folio. A broadside⁴ sheet including his proposals for the first volume was issued. This embraced twenty items, ten in manuscript, and ten which had already been printed in separate form. This was the first list, which however contained no dates.

The "Struggler," which was a kind of second prospectus, contained much curious information respecting Bunyan and his writings; also "thirty sound reasons" why his works should be highly esteemed and therefore purchased; it included also a list of his sixty books. This production was in some cases bound up in the first folio volume, which was published in 1692. Mr. Doe met with difficulties through the existence of copyright claims, hence the second volume was not published until 1736.⁵ The

² The Whole Works of John Bunyan, Blackie & Son, 3 vols. in 6, last issue 1888.

³ John Bunyan: His Life, Times and Work. Isbister, 1885 and subsequent editions.

⁴ A copy in the British Museum. 12 c.1. 3**.

⁵ Two volumes folio, 1736-7, Samuel Wilson. ²¹Containing 47 pieces.

most valuable item in the "Struggler" is, of course, the list of books; "containing the chronological order in which Mr. Bunyan's books were published, and the number of editions they passed through during his life."

Mr. Doe's enthusiastic efforts did not end here. In 1698 he published "The Heavenly Footman"; for under Bunyan's influence he became a preacher, and then, that he might make his works more widely known, a quasi-printer and publisher. The imprint would indicate that he still followed his original vocation, it reads thus:—"London, Printed for Charles Doe, Comb-maker, in the Borough Southwark, near London Bridge, 1698." The little volume is in my possession, and is valuable not only because of its text, but for a lengthy catalogue and notes. It is added at the end of the book and consists of sixteen pages. He thus introduces it:—

Running Reader! I that now help you to this Heavenly Foot-man in Print, (being the Person that first moved and procured the *Printing in Folio*, above Twenty of our Author Bunyan's Pieces) have also now given you here, a Catalogue of all that great Convert's Works, in order of Time, as they succeeded each other in Publication, (as near as I can understand) and I do also love them, and would have you do so too, as they are the Experience and Knowledge of a great Convert, which indeed is a great Monument of the mighty power of Grace, and a fit Fellow-Traveller for a Heavenly Foot-man.

Borough, London.

CHARLES DOE.

March 26, 1698.

On the fourteenth page of this catalogue he records a most important item of information. In his "Struggler," the list includes sixty items. The last four are:—"A Christian Dialogue," "The Heavenly Footman," "A Pocket Concordance," "An account of his Imprisonment." They are described as manuscripts yet unprinted. He now says:—

These four books . . . were never yet Printed except this now of the Heavenly Footman, which I bought in 1691, of Mr. John Bunyan, the eldest son of the Author; and I have now put it into the world in Print, word for word, as it came from him to me.

These notes prove how intimate Mr. Doe was with the Bunyan family, and what opportunities he had of gathering first-hand knowledge. His industry also is placed beyond doubt. Within ten years of the death of Bunyan he had issued three lists of his books, and had caused to be published eleven works from manuscript. He made a brave fight for his friend. Few men have

had so enthusiastic a bibliographer. When his humble origin and slender equipment are considered his achievements excite grateful admiration. His saving clause, "As near as I can understand," is sufficiently flexible to admit of many errors foreboding ill in days to come; but after all is said, he enjoys the distinction of having given to the world the first bibliography of one of its most popular authors.

Much space might be occupied in critical observations upon these lists. It could easily be shown that though they are said to be "chronological," this is not the fact; but these details must be reserved for another occasion. In justice, however, to Mr. Doe it should be recognised that even at this early period it was difficult to get together anything like a complete collection of our author's works. Thus in his quaint autobiography called "A Collection of Experience," dated 1700, Mr. Doe says he had great difficulty in securing copies of some books. His words are:—"That I have proved by trying most London booksellers; and before that given them about twice the price of a book; and I know not how to get another of those sorts for any price whatever." From this statement and other considerations, it may be concluded that original issues of all the books included in his lists had not been seen by him. If so, here is an ample explanation of the incorrect date of the book in question. There can be no doubt that in his opinion it synchronized with the date of the "Holy War." Respecting the perpetuation of the blunder an easy explanation offers itself; in the absence of a copy proving it otherwise, it would be concluded that a personal friend of Bunyan would not make a mistake. The false date has, therefore, been repeatedly printed down to the present time.

At this point, with the co-operation of the printer, I would seek to reproduce, as closely as possible, the title pages of the editions, respectively issued in 1673 and 1688, i.e., without the production of a special block, and in ordinary type:—

THE
Barren Fig-Tree:

OR,

The Doom and Downfall of
 the Fruitless Professor.

Shewing,

THAT THE DAY OF GRACE MAY BE
 PAST WITH HIM LONG BEFORE HIS
 LIFE IS ENDED.

THE SIGNS ALSO BY WHICH SUCH MI-
 SERABLE MORTALS MAY BE KNOWN.

By JOHN BUNYAN.

*And now also the Ax is laid unto the
 root of the trees: therefore every tree
 that bringeth not forth good fruit, is
 hewen down, and cast into the fire;
 Matth. 3. 10.*

LONDON, PRINTED FOR JONATHAN ROBINSON
 AT THE GOLDEN LION IN PAUL'S
 CHURCH-YARD, 1673.

The Barren Fig-Tree:

OR,

THE DOOM & DOWNFAL
OF THE *FRUITLESS PROFESSOR*.

SHEWING, THAT THE DAY OF GRACE
MAY BE PAST WITH HIM LONG
BEFORE HIS LIFE IS ENDED.

THE SIGNS ALSO BY WHICH SUCH MISE-
RABLE MORTALS MY⁶ BE KNOWN.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

—who being dead, yet speaketh, Heb. ii. 4.

To which is added,

HIS EXHORTATION TO PEACE AND
UNITY AMONG ALL THAT FEAR GOD.

LONDON;

PRINTED FOR J. ROBINSON, AT THE GOLDEN
LION IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD 1688.

⁶ My—as printed (for may, of course).

Here then are distinct differences. The variations also are emphasised when the title-pages are placed in juxtaposition. The first is enclosed by a fine metal rule, the second by a broad black border, such as was used for funeral sermons. This dissimilarity has suggested a theory; I introduce it with diffidence; it is, that the copy from which the 1688 edition was set up was faulty in the title page. Why should the most fitting text be exchanged for one that would apply equally well to any work posthumously printed? It is clear that in 1688 a printed copy of the book, or the original manuscript must have been available; and the former is more likely than the latter.

A further point is also raised at this time. We now know the first edition is not dated 1682; but are we to conclude that there was or was not an edition of that date? An authority in these matters thinks we must accept it as a fact, except we can prove the contrary, because it has been so stated. I confess I am not of this opinion. I think that the date 1682 is given in mistake for the first, and not in addition to it. Moreover, though the issue of 1688 bears no description of an edition, yet that of 1692 is described as only the third.

If I am not too tedious may I point out two other scraps of bibliographical information. In the edition of 1688, an additional piece is added, called "An Exhortation to Peace and Unity." It was the opinion of Robert Robinson, a Baptist minister of Cambridge, that it was the work of another hand. This was endorsed by Mr. Offor, and Dr. John Brown indicated several reasons in support of the conclusion. Such a combination detracts from the simple aim of the publication and perhaps of the publisher. But subsequently the volume of "The Fig-Tree" reverted to its original form in everything except size of sheet. It was printed alone, the black border was abandoned, the original text restored, and it became again one of the few superior looking books bearing Bunyan's name. I venture, therefore, to suggest that it was printed from a newly found copy of the first edition. The original date nowhere appears, but it is a distinct reversion to type.

One effect of the discovery of the new date is the transference of this book to quite a new group of companions. It is now brought nearer to "Grace Abounding" than the "Holy War"; and the "Confession of Faith, etc.," and "Peaceable Principles" are its close associates. In composition and spirit it has much more in common with "Grace Abounding," than either the "Pilgrim," or the "Holy War." It is an introspective, earnest, terribly solemn book, full of faithful warnings, and portentous threatenings. Dr. John Brown shows that his long imprisonment

ended in 1672. There is every reason, therefore, to suppose it to be a prison book, i.e., composed in prison. It has all the marks of due deliberation and careful development upon it. High rank amongst Bunyan's many productions will be granted to it by all appreciative readers.

Few books carry with them more distinctly the confirmation of their own date. And as it is a responsible undertaking to correct a bibliography of such long standing I gladly call attention to the circumstance. On the last leaf of the address to the reader which is without pagination, there is a list of books, six in number, advertised; the heading being, "Books lately printed for Jonathan Robinson." Of these I possess two dated 1672, and I have verified that three others were of the same date. It may be concluded, therefore, that it was published quite early in 1673.

That I might secure the verdict of the greatest living Bunyan expert, I sought an interview with Dr. John Brown, which was graciously granted. I referred to the fact in "The British Weekly," of February 4. This veteran Bunyanite, had no explanation of the recorded false date, but immediately gave his adherence—when he had seen the book—to the one conclusion here affirmed, that at last the genuine first edition had been found. It is imperative therefore that henceforth this book shall be known by a new date, namely, 1673.

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The Barren Fig-tree: or, The Doom and Downfal of the Fruitless Professor. London, Printed for Jonothan Robinson at the Golden Lion in Paul's Church-yard, 1673.

Collation:—Title 1, l. To the Reader 4, l. l. Signatures A to I. p p. 192. 24, mo.' First Ed', 1673.

Do. To which is added His Exhortation to Peace and Unity, etc., 1688. (No description of Edition.)

Do. 1692. (Described as third edition.)

Do. 1695. Fourth Edition.

Do. 1709. Sixth Edition. (In my possession.)

I have not seen a *fifth* edition. All these from 1688 include the "Exhortation." The sixth has a front. The author is resting his arm on a skull; there is an open mouthed beast with flames issuing therefrom, representing hell; and a barren tree in the background. It has the broad black border.

A copy dated 1728 is in my possession. The original title is reproduced; the treatise makes up the entire book; it is on good paper and well printed. No edition is indicated.

JOHN C. FOSTER.

A Seventeenth Century Baptist Church: Bromsgrove.

FEW Baptist Churches, dating from the latter half of the seventeenth century, have so complete a record of their early days as that of Bromsgrove. From this record a fairly accurate sketch may be made of what a Baptist Church was in the troublous years of the Restoration period. Its first book dates from 1670, but the resignation of its first pastor in 1696, which refers to his thirty years labour "in planting and building up ye Church," fixes the date of the Church's foundation as the year 1666. The name of this first pastor was John Eckels, who as a youth came from Bewdley, ten miles distant, to Bromsgrove to learn his trade as a "clothier," the town being then famed for its production of cloth and linen. This youth, according to Crosby, had been baptised at Bewdley by John Tombes, B.D., the "Anabaptist lecturer" of the Parish Church there, who formed the Baptist Church in that town whilst ministering at the Parish Church. Eckels was known as "the boy preacher," and probably divided his earlier efforts at preaching between the two towns, Tombes having left the former to become one of the "Tryers" in London under Cromwell's ordinance for the approbation of public preachers.

Puritanism had left its mark in the town of Bromsgrove after a local reign of thirty years, but the rise of Nonconformity and the formation of the Baptist Church in particular, is in no way attributable to it. Here, as elsewhere, the Separatists stood aside from the Puritans, who were jealous of their separation. The Puritan vicar of the town in the year 1643 had been denounced by Charles I., from his headquarters at Oxford, as a "rebel," the king demanding his expulsion. But owing to the uncertainty of the king's position in his struggle with the parliament, and the changes already introduced into the Established Church, the good man was left undisturbed by the Dean and Chapter of Wor-

cester, who were the patrons of the living. On his death, his son-in-law, John Spilsbury, M.A., another Puritan, received the appointment of public preacher. But at the Restoration, being dissatisfied with conformity, he resigned the living and afterwards formed an Independent Church in the town.

Whilst Spilsbury was exercising his ministry at the Parish Church, Eckels was preaching in the open-air, or in such houses as were available, and thus introducing Nonconformity in the form of Separatism, and the opinions of the Baptists in particular. Undaunted by the Conventicle Act of 1664, which was designed to silence the ejected clergy of 1662, Eckels prosecuted his work. That Act, however, expired in 1667, when the ejected clergy and the Separatists again boldly opened their conventicles. Archbishop Sheldon, therefore, poured out letters from Lambeth urging the bishops of his province to enforce at least the canons in the ecclesiastical courts. Sir Matthew Hale, on the other hand, drafted a bill for the comprehension of the Nonconformists and indulgence to others, but the Commons would not listen to it, and parliament was adjourned. Sheldon continuing his agitation ordered the Dean of the province of Canterbury to ascertain what conventicles were actually meeting. The results of his enquiry were digested in 1669, and a copy of the result is at Lambeth in the Tenison MS., 639. The Bishop of Worcester reported that at Bromsgrove and Kings Norton (a chapelry of Bromsgrove) there were several conventicles, but very few considerable persons attended; the teachers were sometimes Nonconforming clergy, in their absence other laymen. With a mass of facts showing conventicles rife, parliament in May, 1670, passed another Conventicle Act to be permanent.

Between the purchase of the Church book in 1670 at a cost of two shillings, which is duly recorded on its first page, and the year 1672 only one entry appears, viz., the admission of a member. The reason for this was doubtless the desire to avoid the danger which written records might occasion in the persecution of Nonconformists which was rife under the new Conventicle Act. The ecclesiastical authorities were busy in the diocese of Worcester, under pressure from Lambeth, in seeking to exterminate Nonconformity; the little Church in Bromsgrove experiencing its full share of suffering, as a reference to "sore and great temptation" doubtless indicates. According to Crosby, the pastor, John Eckels, was arrested whilst preaching, greatly abused, and flung into a dungeon of Worcester goal. There is, however, no reference to this in the Church Book, or in the letter of resignation which Eckels tendered in 1696. Other particulars given

by Crosby of his liberation are incorrect, and as the records of the gaol have perished, no corroboration is possible. But it is very likely that his imprisonment was a fact, for the Independent pastor in the town so suffered. In 1672, however, the Church waxed bolder and inscribed in its book a "Covenant." This was the year of Charles II.'s "Indulgence" to Nonconformists on condition that their preachers and places of meeting became licensed. The Baptists of Bromsgrove, whilst availing themselves of the liberty of worship granted, did not apply for a license, and to the honour of all the Baptist Churches of Worcestershire, be it recorded, not one of them applied. The reason for this is doubtless to be found in the principle to which they adhered, viz., that the "civil magistrate" had no authority over the conscience in matters of religion. Charles II. had no moral right to persecute, therefore they recognised no obligation to apply for a license to worship God according to their own consciences.

The Covenant, which is a lengthy document, is not a doctrinal Confession of Faith. Strictly speaking, the Church has never had a doctrinal Confession of Faith. It, however, sufficiently indicates that its signatories held the doctrines which we broadly denominate Evangelical. Of their own unworthiness this little knot of believers were conscious by describing themselves as "a company of poor despised worms, partakers of the heavenly calling," who through grace had been "brought into the fellowship of the glorious gospel of the Son of God to partake of the holy things of His house, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth." "The Dayspring from on high" had visited them through the tender mercies of God, and had given them light when they sat in darkness and the shadow of death. They declare themselves "subject to Christ our only Lord and Saviour by His holy word and Spirit; whereby we through mercy have put on Christ by baptism, according to the Apostolical doctrine which is after Christ." With evident reference to Rome, they declare, we "have separated ourselves from Anti-Christ and the accursed thing, according to the commandment of the everlasting God." "Therefore lying under divine obligation to love fear and serve the God of heaven and earth" they proceed to ask "what remains but that we should be followers of Him as dear children, and to carry it towards the children of the most high God as becometh Saints, in all love, humbleness of mind, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, and to bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." They therefore covenant "to sanctify God in our hearts and to make Him our fear and dread in our lives, to do what we can for

the Gospel's sake, even for the honour of the truth as it is contained in the Scriptures of truth; to avoid causing the enemies of the truth to blaspheme the worthy Name; to take all opportunities to wait upon God in the place appointed by the Church; to eschew the sin of speaking evil of one another; to tell no person of the weakness of our brethren or sisters until we have performed our duty to the offending, according to the mind of Christ in Matt. xviii: 15, 16, 17; to keep in the way of separation from all doctrines of men, and to hear the Church we are now members of in reproof, correction, and counsel, believing her to be built upon the foundation of the Apostles, prophets, and Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Finally, "never to leave the communion of the Church we have given ourselves up to, to embrace any other doctrine that tends to schism and division of the Church until we have appealed to the Church for satisfaction." It will be seen that the severer doctrines of Calvinism find no place in the minds of these people, whilst the evangelistic note, not always clear in those days, is strongly sounded. Thirteen members, including the pastor, attached their signatures to this covenant.

These thirteen members doubtless represent the full numerical strength of the Church in the year 1672. That they were not more in number is doubtless accounted for by the fact that the previous six years had covered a period of painful persecution, when public work was more or less proscribed. Indeed fines were imposed upon those who did not attend the Parish Church, the proceeds being applied to apprenticing local "parish lads." But during the eleven years following great progress was made, so that by the year 1683 the Church numbered about 87 members. Members of well known local families were drawn into it and men of substance joined its ranks. And so when another episcopal enquiry was set on foot in 1676, the results of which for the province of Canterbury are enshrined in a handsome volume at the Salt Library, Stafford, Bromsgrove stands out not only as the largest town in the diocese of Worcester, but as the very capital of dissent. Three hundred people over the age of sixteen were recorded as frequenting conventicles, no other parish in the diocese furnishing a hundred.

The pastor, like most of his order, received no remuneration for his services, but laboured in commercial pursuits as a clothier, which in those days meant a cloth-worker or merchant. The officers of the Church, in addition to the pastor, comprised deacons and elders. Its business was evidently conducted in an orderly

manner, the burden of which were cases of discipline, which was rigidly enforced. The appointments to office were made by solemn prayer and fasting. Careful observation was taken of the attendance of members at the monthly observance of the Lord's Supper, visitors being appointed to interview absentees. Discipline was exercised for "disorderly walking" and "sin against the Lord," the most common lapse being that of drunkenness. The offending members were warned and pleaded with, and if amendment did not ensue they were "cast out of the Church." In cases where repentance issued, restoration took place, and letters from penitents were copied into the Church Book. Towards the end of the century, marriages of members began to be solemnised, evidently without being conducted at the Parish Church. These are headed "the sivill (civil) contractt of marridg was between——and——solemnized and performed before ye Lord God, Angells and us who were witnesses at ye same time." Sometimes these services took place at a Church Meeting. The witnesses whose names are appended, in one case, number as many as twenty-three, testifying perhaps to the popularity of the parties.

Nor was the interest of the Church confined to its own immediate affairs. It seems to have considered the needs and difficulties of other Churches, witness the entry of 1690—"that there be a letter sent to Hooknorton for to stir them up to theyr duty concerning theyr pastor." The idea of a Sunday School did not suggest itself to the Church until 1798, but a list of children's births was commenced in 1674 and continued for many years, probably with a view to keep in touch with them as they grew up. A list of baptisms, headed "B. B." (believers' baptisms?) begins with the year 1688, although there were many before that date, in addition to the ordinary Church Roll, which does not indicate how the members joined. A list of deaths, commencing in the year 1684 was also kept, the interments being made in the parish churchyard.

The expenses of the Church were small, inasmuch as no meeting-house of its own existed, and no salary was raised for the pastor. The first money account appears in 1694, when it was agreed that "the generall sums of money bee payd into the hands of the deakons for the yous of the poore of this congregation and other necessary charges by us who have voluntarily hereunto subscribed for the year following,"—an admirable method indeed of providing beforehand for the year's expenditure. The amount subscribed was £7, and the expenditure embraced such items as "2 garments to baptize in 8/7," "Bro. Eckels' charges

for going to London to ye meeting of ye Elders there 1 to 0," his charges for travelling to the Association meetings at Hooknorton 5/6, together with the charges of other delegates, "paid for 2 post letters come from Bro. Belcher 7d.; items paid to the poor varying from 5/- to 1/-. A balance of 8/3½ however remained, which was given to the poor. The reference to the Association points to the Midland (now the West Midland) which the Bromsgrove Church with eight other Churches joined to revive in the year 1690. That Association was formed in 1655, but since 1658 had suspended its operations owing to the death of Oliver Cromwell and the persecution which followed the restoration of the Stuart kings.

With such a record of activity and progress, it is not a little startling to find that no meeting-house existed through all these years. The people met in "ye place appoynted by ye Church," which most likely meant the houses of its members. It was not the house, but the reality and power of Christian fellowship which most concerned them. Where they baptised is not known, but the town brook ran near the back of one of the houses in which they met, and was probably used for the purpose. At the same time a Church with upwards of 80 members having no settled place of meeting is somewhat unique. It was not until the year 1700 that the house of Humphrey Potter, a worthy and generous deacon, was registered according to the requirement of the Toleration Act, as the Baptist meeting-house. Behind this house he had already erected, or was about to erect, the meeting-house which he afterwards bequeathed to the Church. This worthy man was a mercer, who also held the public office of Overseer of the poor, was a friend of Thomas Newcomen, Baptist pastor at Dartmouth for twenty years and the almost forgotten inventor or adapter of the steam engine. Indeed a part of the good deacon's wealth was derived from shares in the practical work of erecting Newcomen's engines at the coal pits of Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Northumberland, and the copper mines of Cornwall.

Before the close of the seventeenth century the Church had become associated with more than one prominent name in Baptist history. The following entry appears in the book—"Richard Claridge, A.M., late Rector of Peopleton, was baptised October 21: 1691." Claridge was presented to the Rectory of Peopleton, in the County of Worcester, in 1673, but for several years after entertained doubts as to the doctrine and ceremony of the Established Church. He sought refuge first amongst the Baptists, but in 1697 joined the Quakers and removed to London. He was

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an energetic preacher and in private life a man of estimable character. His published works have been repeatedly quoted by Quakers in vindication of their Society from charges of Socinianism.

But a still more notable name also appears,—“ David Crosley of Barnoldswick-in-Craven, in the county of York, was baptized the 10th day of the 6th month, 1692.” Crosley, however, did not long remain in the town, for on “ the 26th of the 7th month ” of the same year, a letter was given him, sending him forth to the ministry. What brought him to Bromsgrove is not known. He was born at Heptonstall Slack, Yorkshire, in the year 1669, but appears to have lived at Barnoldswick before coming to the Midlands. His name, however, appears on the roll made as late as the 10th day of the 4th month, 1698, and in the money account of 1694 there are two sums of £1 2 0 and £1, “ given to Bro. Crosley.” He became the originator of about twenty Baptist Churches in Yorkshire and Lancashire, which in turn have given rise to nearly sixty more, to say nothing of men whom he influenced to devote themselves to the ministry. A late note in the Church Book states that he died September, 1744, at the age of 75 years, and was buried at Goodshaw, Lancashire.

Thus ends the story of a Worcestershire Baptist Church of the seventeenth century, situated on the high road from the North through Birmingham to Bristol in the West. The town of Bromsgrove to which it belonged, with its 2,000 inhabitants at the time, was not an unimportant one when we bear in mind that the population of England was only five-and-a-half millions.

JAMES FORD.

Leonard Busher, Dutchman.

THE facts generally known about this early Anabaptist are, (1). That on 8 July, 1611, Matthew Saunders and Cuthbert Hotten, writing to Johnson's Ancient Church at Amsterdam, mention three kinds of English Anabaptists in that city, "Master Smith, an Anabaptist of one sort, and master Helwise of another, and master Busher of another." (2). That in 1614, he, a citizen of London, published with an address to King James and the parliament, "Religions Peace: or A Plea for Liberty of Conscience."

Many editors and historians have glanced at these facts, sought to tell more about the man, and then have passed by on the other side. Thus H[enry] B[urton] who republished the book in 1646 for the behoof of the Presbyterians, was content to call him "an honest and godly man," and then to reinforce his arguments. Mr. Hanbury knew only the book. Dr. Underhill elicited a little of the internal evidence, and verified that no other work by Busher was known in 1846. Dr. Dexter unearthed the allusion by Saunders and Hutten, while Barclay was favouring the false guess that he consorted with Helwys and Morton. Masson added to this the further embroidery that he worshipped in a dingy meeting-house on Newgate. President Whitsitt from the concluding paragraphs argued most inconclusively that he wrote in Holland. Here the enquiry seems to have ended, for Doctors Christian and Lofton were content to take him as a starting point or an axiom. The purpose of this paper is to examine more carefully the internal evidence of his book, and then to adduce fresh external evidence as to the identity of the author.

First, as to the indications to be gathered from his own text: the references are made to the pages in the edition by Dr. Underhill of Burton's reprint. He styles himself a subject of King James (26, 79), and refers to England as "our" land (16, 52, 78). He is poor, and unable to print two books he has written.

(72). He shows himself peculiarly interested in the Jews of his own time (24, 28, 30, 33, 38, 47, 51, 59, 63, 70, 71); and refers to the Syriac version, which was in his day known by the researches of Tremellius, a Jew, and his son-in-law Junius, who died at Leyden. With the Netherlands also he is well acquainted, not only with the Brownists there, including Robinson (51), and Johnson (73), but with Alva's persecutions of an earlier date (77), and with the general toleration obtaining there (41, 54); these particular allusions are reinforced also by more general ones to exile for conscience sake (31, 70).

This interest in Holland is explained at once by the fact that in 1611 he was in Amsterdam, a leader of some Anabaptists. But the extraordinary interest in the Jews deserves more enquiry, for it can hardly be attributed solely to the fact that Jews abounded in that city. Up to the present, no fact has come to light that explains it. It is tempting to conjecture some link with Junius, le Jon, a Walloon; but so far the link is missing.

Leonard Busher recounts an anecdote about Joan Bocher, the Anabaptist martyr from Kent. The names are sufficiently alike to invite a search for any link, but the facts about Joan, summarised lately by Dr. Gairdner, are these: She is first heard of at Colchester before 1539 as Joan Baron, pleading a pardon by proclamation for those who had been seduced by Anabaptists and Sacramentaries. She moved to Canterbury, where apparently she married a butcher, and so became known as Joan Baron or Bocher. In 1542 she was at Calais, where a jury acquitted her of heresy, but the council held her to answer another charge at Canterbury. Next year, after confessing her doctrine, she pleaded the pardon afresh. Ultimately, as is well known, she was burned in Smithfield by order of Edward VI. There seems no link between her and Leonard Busher in time or place; the coincidence of name appears a mere accident, for Gairdner quotes her real name as Baron, and Evans cites a manuscript calling her Kpell.

Evans refers us to Burns' history of the foreign refugees in England for Leonard Busher, and finds there a Domyinic Busher who lent money to Elizabeth. Burns has preserved the names of three other refugees to Kent with somewhat similar names: James Bucer was minister of the Dutch Church at Sandwich in 1562; Jan Bauchery, also of Sandwich, subscribed a penny for the poor in 1571; Francis de Buisson came over to Rye in 1572, a minister. But nothing has been discovered to link any one of these four men to Leonard Busher, although Evans' conjecture may yet prove near the truth, for Leonard betrays no affinity with Kent.

Nor is any help forthcoming yet from the statement of Henry Burton that he was a citizen of London. The Great Fire of 1666 destroyed so many records that the Guildhall appears to contain nothing which would show to what City Company he belonged. Nevertheless it may be that in the archives of some ancient company he may have been enrolled, and those which survive may prove to contain his name and some data about him. Unhappily they are not readily available for research.

Meantime we turn away to Holland, to take up the other clue. He was an Anabaptist leader at Amsterdam in 1611.

Now, on the first Sunday after Easter in 1591, Judith Busscher married Jan Willink. They both died of the plague in 1636, and are buried in the church at Grol, to which they moved after living at Vreden, a town where in 1561 an Anabaptist had been imprisoned and executed. She had previously resided at Geesteren, near the town of Borkeloo, county of Zutphen, close to Bockholt, the scene of the great congress of 1536, attended by Anabaptists from Holland and England. The pedigree of Judith's descendants was traced with care in 1767 at Deventer, and a visit there and at the Hague laid open a most interesting genealogy. One granddaughter married at Bockholt, her daughter married at Amsterdam, and her daughter in turn married Jacob Smit. A great-grandson married also at Amsterdam, and his daughter married Jan Smit, to whom she bore six children, including two Jans and one Johanna.

These facts suggest two conjectures. First, that Leonard Busher was related to Judith Busscher, both being Anabaptists, and in the same district. Second, that her descendants intermarried with the descendants of John Smith, of Gainsborough, who died in Amsterdam 1615, but whose wife joined the Waterlander Church there, and had children.

Another curious fact may be mentioned about Judith Busscher, though it has no direct bearing on Leonard. In 1580 there came to Haarlem a lad of eighteen, called Thomas Tayler, from the West of England, where he was a cadet of a good family; his brothers vainly sought his return, but found him settled in his convictions and determined to express and enjoy them. He therefore settled down with several English companions, and became a good Netherlander; finding a Flemish girl also exiled for her faith, he married her and founded a family that became renowned in the district. To-day Haarlem is adorned by a museum and library bearing their name, and a short search in that city disclosed an elaborate pedigree, published at Amsterdam in 1728. From this it appears that the Taylers, who were Ana-

baptists, intermarried with the descendants of Judith Busscher. It is remarkable that Taylor in 1580 took refuge in Holland for his faith, and changed his nationality; while between 1611 and 1614 Leonard Busher left Holland for England, and was afterwards described as a citizen of London.

Thus far the probabilities seem that Leonard Busher was originally a Dutchman. These are now greatly strengthened by a letter from him, written on the eighth of December, 1642, from Delph, to Abram Derikson, of Amsterdam. The letter is in Dutch, and may be seen in the Mennonite archives at that city, where the assistant librarian, Heer Carel Ströer, was good enough to read it and translate it roughly with the present investigator.

"IN DELPH, THE 8 DECEMBER 1642."

"Unhappy (I would that I might say with truth, Happy) brother in Christ, Abram Derikson: Greeting.

"I have sent you various letters, but have received no reply. Nor have I heard from Thomas Cuyp since September, when he came from England. I have since sent a letter to him on the 18th of November, but no answer. I wish you would tell him so that I may know what is the matter with him. Also, be so kind as to give me a reply to my letters to you and the brethren with you. I am an old weak man, far into 71 years, and lie under overwhelming burdens; kindly bear this in mind, you and your brethren. God's will be done, whose command is to love one another as one's self, and to help him, so that he need not remain under his burden. You know my state well, both in the faith and in worldly affairs; yet in both you leave me under my burden, unhelped; think well over it, if God is not displeased.

"You must know also that I lie under error, yet you do not help me out; with this God is more displeased, for I have often asked help. Do not hate me, (for I love you all, and do not flatter you), as the Scribes and Pharisees hated Christ's disciples. You may think it strange that I call you all brothers, but such you are, unless you do not believe that Jesus is Messiah: [side-note: 1 John v. 1, 2.] because you believe that, then you believe also that you must be my brothers in Christ. If you must allege that I do not believe in that—but this you cannot do. Then because we all believe so, and as the apostle says that those who so believe are born of God, then we have a Father in heaven; thus it must necessarily follow that all His sons are brothers together, but our Brother Christ is the eldest. Now since that is true, I therefore wish that you will give testimony to me in both matters, even as Christ and His apostles enjoin.

" Hoping and trusting shortly to receive an answer, I commend you all with myself to the grace of the Lord Jesus the Messiah.

Your desolate brother in Christ,

MARK LEONARD BUSER.

" In the alley between Pieterstraat and Brouwery, of the overturning world."

This letter, which has long been catalogued in the Mennonite archives, can hardly have escaped the attention of previous students; yet no one seems to have published anything about it. The inferences are manifold.

To begin with, there can be no reasonable doubt that this is the same Leonard Busher of 1611 and 1614; this writer is poor, has to do with Amsterdam, is in touch with Anabaptists there, as well as with England, yet to some extent differs from his correspondents in theology.

But he proves to have two Christian names. At this period Englishmen habitually bore only one, two names being a luxury seldom indulged in till about 1750. But in Holland cases occur before this time of longer names, e.g. Dirk Pieterse Smuel of Edam, burned at Amsterdam 1546-7, and Tieleman Jans van Braght, the Mennonite martyrologist of Dort; the suggestion is that Busher was Dutch. Moreover, his name Leonard is not common in England, whereas it was borne by several Dutchmen, such as Leonard Harman, a shoemaker in London about 1578; Leonard Bouwens, the Anabaptist evangelist of Friesland, who died at Hoorn in 1578, and Lenaert Plover, drowned at Antwerp for Anabaptism in 1560. As we know about Judith Busscher of Geesteren, who married in 1591, while Mark Leonard Busher was 71 years old in 1642, or was born in 1571, the cumulative evidence for his Dutch nationality is very strong. And the fact that this letter is in Dutch and deals entirely with Dutchmen, converts this almost to a certainty.

Of course Leonard Busher the author expressly and repeatedly avows himself a subject of King James, and claims England as his land; but this phenomenon is easy where a man has emigrated and naturalised. Nor is it unknown that in old age such a man returns to the land of his nativity; Henry Morton Stanley and Andrew Carnegie are recent examples of this. And we may remember that the Apostle Paul, being born of Hebrew parents at Tarsus, was also a Roman citizen. His letter to Rome leaves in the shade his descent, and at first he is at some pains to

dissociate himself from the Jews, of whom he writes in the third person:—"They were intrusted with the oracles of God. . . . Are we [Christians] better than they?" though the exigencies of his argument oblige him at last to disclose that according to the flesh he is an Israelite. Yet Paul, like Busher, left it to another man to record in writing his citizenship of the capital.

We conclude, therefore, that Mark Leonard Busher was of Dutch descent, and that while he was undoubtedly an English subject in 1614, yet he spent his middle age and his old age in the Netherlands.

His correspondent on this occasion was Abram Derikson. This man was teacher of the Fleming congregation of Doopsgezinden or Anabaptists, who worshipped in Amsterdam on the Achterburgwal (N.Z.), still a street of some importance. This office he held from 1617 till his death in 1645. There had been many splits among the Anabaptists, and in 1627 he was active in promoting a union on the basis of the Apostles and Prophets—i.e., the New Testament alone. Doubtless it was because of this liberal spirit that Busher appealed for recognition as a brother, while not concealing that there was difference of opinion.

There is some reason to hope that this appeal was successful; for in the list of deacons at the church, "by den Toren en het Lam"—a union Church in Amsterdam—figures Andries Busscher, serving two terms, 1679—1684 and 1689—1694. It is pleasant to hope that Leonard's son or grandson found this plea for brotherliness and tolerance heard and acted upon.

Here end for the present our facts and conjectures. But two inferences remain. The plea for liberty of conscience, as alone able to secure Religion's Peace, was put forth not by an Englishman, but by a Dutchman. Granted that he was an Anabaptist, and naturalised in England, yet he was not English. It is quite natural for a Dutchman to take up this position, for in the Netherlands there had been religious toleration since the days of William the Silent, the great Prince of Orange, whose memory was so fragrant at Delph. But hitherto we have complimented ourselves and have accepted compliments that the first clear enunciation of unqualified liberty of conscience ever made by an Englishman, was made by an English Anabaptist. We know of Jacob and Robinson, but saw grave limitations in their ideas, and it was pleasant to think that the precursors of the Baptists were the pioneers of religious freedom.

We must give up the name of Busher now, and rest our case on the work of another Anabaptist leader, John Murton, who in 1615 published "Obiections Answered by way of Dialogue, wherein

is proved By the Law of God: By the Law of our Land: And by his Maties many testimonies That no man ought to be persecuted for his religion, so he testife his allegiance by the Oath, appointed by Law." A word about this author may be welcome.

John Murton or Morton was a Gainsborough man who followed his pastor, John Smith to Amsterdam, and there on 23 August, 1608, married Jane Hodgkin, of Worksop, he being 25 years old and she 23, as the registers of the city show; Professor de Hoop Scheffer published relevant extracts in 1881. He was baptised by Smith, but declined to apply with him to the Dutch Anabaptist Church in Amsterdam, preferring to return with Helwys to London. Whether he continued to follow his Amsterdam craft as a furrier we cannot tell; he certainly became the General Baptist leader. No one can read this little book of his, which went to a second edition in 1620, and a third in 1662, without seeing that the classical English plea for toleration is indeed of Anabaptist origin, though not due to a citizen of London, but one of Gainsborough.

While Professor Masson was slightly wrong as to the English pioneer, he gave rein to his fancy as to the surroundings, in imagining a dingy meeting-house in Newgate. Not only had Busher nothing at all to do with Helwys and Murton, but these men settled in Spitalfields, according to the autograph of Helwys in his little book at the Bodleian. And that they were able to have a meeting-house is wildly improbable: conventicles then met in private houses.

Mark Leonard Busher must figure henceforth in our annals not as the pioneer English Anabaptist, but as one of the latest of those Dutch refugees for conscience sake, who found an asylum for awhile, but felt the call of home and returned to plead in his native land for real brotherliness between Christians.

W. T. WHITLEY.

Baptist Literature till 1688.

BAPTIST history cannot be understood apart from its literature. It is true that local churches have their own story to unfold, often most interesting and full of illustration; yet often it is found that a movement springs up, not in consequence of the visit of any evangelist, but from the arrival of some book or even a pamphlet. The English Bible produced the Reformation, a gospel in some native tongue has frequently won over a village to Christ; Mitchell's "Jachin and Boaz," is directly responsible for the formation of Baptist Churches in the north-west. Thus some acquaintance with Baptist books will occasionally throw a welcome light on the turns in our history. Garbled stories, and even baseless slanders about the Continental Anabaptists, were repeated by standard British divines, and English Baptists were supposed to be of the same stripe. But the appearance in 1643-4 of a Confession of Faith by some London Baptist Churches, and their steady repudiation of the name "Anabaptist," brought about a better understanding of their nature and aims.

There have been Baptists of many types, even in England. The first to emerge were indeed linked closely with the saner Dutch Anabaptists, yet declined to follow them in many respects. From 1611 till the present day this group has maintained an organized existence, and is still known as the "General Baptist," not to be confounded with the "New Connexion" of 1770 onwards. Although most of its churches gradually lapsed into Unitarianism yet they were the Baptist pioneers, and their literature deserves registration. It will here be marked with an asterisk.* The doctrines of this body were from the first akin to the Arminian, and the churches never held fellowship with the great mass of Baptist Churches. Typical names are John Smith, Henry Denne, Thomas Grantham, Joseph Wright. The stronghold of the body was in Lincoln, Northants, Bucks, Kent and Sussex, besides London, which was the usual place of the Annual Assembly.

A second important group evolved from the Calvinistic Separatist Churches, often headed by ex-clergymen, such as Tombes, Jessey. It is marked by an unwillingness to close the door on those true believers who did not see the importance of Believers' Baptism, and therefore formed Open-membership Churches. These were once dotted about in many places, on the Furness fells, in the Bedfordshire fens, but most of them have in practice become either Congregational Churches, or ordinary Baptist Churches. The name of Bunyan will redeem this group from insignificance.

A third group held that the fourth commandment was still in its original force, and became known as "Seventh-day Baptists." The Stennetts were the best known of this type. Most of their churches have died out, or changed their opinion on this detail, though old "Mill Yard" still meets in Canonbury every Saturday.

The great mass of Baptist Churches have been Calvinistic in doctrine, and represent the last stage in the evolution of the Puritans. Originally they were all Close-Communion, but many have in process of time weakened on this point, and they now exist in all shades of practice on this head. The extreme Calvinists to-day decline to hold fellowship with the great mass of Baptists.

Since 1770 a fifth group has arisen, sprung from the Methodist stock, with an intense corporate feeling, and strong evangelistic proclivities. It has at intervals gleaned a few evangelical churches which dropped off from the Old General Baptists, but despite the similarity of name, must by no means be confounded with that ancient body, which still retains its own corporate existence. The "New Connexion" in 1891 loosened its own ties, in order to come into closer fellowship with the majority of the Particular Baptists.

In attempting to catalogue the literature of these groups, we find three natural dividing points which break up Baptist history into four periods. The first is 1611—1688, the period of formation, triumph and persecution. Then 1689—1770 is the time of organization, of lethargy, of decay. With 1770 we enter on a period of revival, off-set in the case of the Old General Baptists by rapid decay, while a certain fossilizing set in generally in two generations. About 1855 new life was breathed into the denomination, and inaugurated the modern era.

For a full comprehension of the Baptist movements the books of their opponents ought to be studied. To some extent such books have been enumerated by these opponents, and pending the publication of a full Bibliography, it may be a help to present

a list of books on the Baptist side, which have been scarcely ever enumerated. If in the Angus Library at Regent's Park College, in the British Museum, in the Congregational Library at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, or in Dr. William's Library, at Gordon Square, the fact is noted.

Baptist Authors 1611—1688;

those marked * being General Baptists.

*HENRY ADIS, Upholsterer, of London.

- 1648 A cup for the Citie and her Adherents. British Museum.
- 1648 A Spie sent out of The Tower Chamber in the Fleet. (The Author, Henry Adis, late of Covent Garden, Upholder, being imprisoned in the Tower Chamber of the Fleet by an arbytrarie power and ruined by that powerful man, William Lenthal not as Speaker but as a Commissioner for the custody of the Great Seal and Master of the Rolls). Partly in verse. British Museum.
- 1648 The symptoms of ruin.
- 1660 A Declaration of a small Society of Baptized Believers, undergoing the name of Free-Willers, about the City of London. A broadside issued 12 January. Angus Library. British Museum.
- 1660 A Fannatick's Mite cast into the King's Treasury: being a sermon printed to the King, because not preach'd before the King. British Museum. A second edition followed soon, corrected and amended; Angus Library.
- 1661 A Fannatick's Address, humbly presented to the King and his peers, by Henry Adis, a baptized believer, undergoing the name of a Free-Willer. Angus Library.
- 1661 A Fannatick's Alarm given to the Mayor in his Quarters, By one of the sons of Zion, become Boanerges, &c. Angus Library.
- 1661 A Fannatick's Letter sent out of the Dungeon of the Gate House Prison of Westminster: To All His Brethren in the three Nations at liberty. Angus Library. British Museum.
- 1661 A Fannatick's Testimony against Swearing, being an Answer to four Books published by John Tombes, Jeremiah Ives, Theophilus Brabourne and Henry Den. Angus Library. British Museum.

WILLIAM ALLEN, Tradesman, of London. He was of the Tombes type, open communion. Under Baxter's influence he dissolved the church he was pastor of, tried to convince other Baptist ministers, then abandoned separatism, and wound up by conforming and writing bitterly against separatism. His biography was written by Bishop Williams in 1707.

1653 An Answer to Mr. J[ohn] G[oodwin] his XL. Queries, touching the Lawfulness or unlawfulness of holding Church Communion between such who have been Baptized after their Beleiving, and others who have not otherwise been Baptized then in their Infancie. pp 96.

British Museum.

1653 Some Baptismal abuses briefly discovered; or a cordial endeavour to reduce the administration and use of Baptism to its primitive purity. pp 119.

British Museum.

1657 [Falsely attributed to him, and published under his name, but probably due to Colonels Sexby and Titus].

Killing Noe Murder. Briefly discoursed in three Quaestions.

British Museum.

1658 The Captive taken from the Strong.

Angus Library. British Museum.

1658 A Relation of the Release of Mrs. Deborah Huish from under the Power of the Tempter.

Congregational Library.

1658 A Glass of Justification: or, The Work of Faith with Power, wherein the apostles' doctrine touching Justification without the Deeds of the Law is opened, p. 170.

Angus Library. British Museum.

1659 A Faithful Memorial of that remarkable Meeting of many Officers of the Army in England at Windsor Castle. As also a discovery of the goodness of God in answering their suit.

British Museum. Query, by an Adjutant General of the same name?

(His numerous other books were written after his change of views).

? HENRY ARCHER, otherwise unknown.

1642 The personal Reign of Christ upon Earth. pp 59.

British Museum.

FRANCIS BAMPFIELD, ex-clergyman. Of a Devonshire county family, and educated at Oxford, Wadham College. Quitted his living of Sherborne in Dorset in 1662. A royalist in politics. In ecclesiastical matters occupied a platform of his own: when licences were issued in 1672, he declined to classify himself and took out a special licence on June 29,

as "a Nonconforming minister." He held Baptist views, and superadded the tenet that the sabbath was still binding. He died in Newgate during 1683, aged 69.

1672 The Judgment of Mr. Francis Bampfield, late Minister of Sherborne in Dorsetshire, for the Observation of the Jewish, or seventh day, Sabbath. With his Reasons and Scriptures for the same. Sent in a letter to Mr. Benn of Dorchester. Together with Mr. Benn's sober answer to the same; and a Vindication of the Christian Sabbath against the Jewish. British Museum. Published at sixpence.

1675 The open Confessor, and The Free-Prisoner. Mentioned by Crosby, I., 368.

1677 Pangnosia. Pantechnia. Pansophia. All in one. All usefull Sciences and profitable Arts in one Book of Jehovah Aelohim &c. The first part. Folio.

Angus Library. British Museum. Dr. William's Library.
1677 Sabbatike Hemera. Hemera Himera. Septima Dies, dies desirabilis, Sabbatum Jehovahae. The Seventh Day-Sabbath, the desirable Day, the closing completing Day of that first erected Week &c. The Second Part. Folio.
British Museum.

1681 A Name, a new one; or, an historical declaration of his life, especially as to some eminent passages relating to his call to the ministry.
Angus Library.

1681 Beth Chokhmoth. The House of Wisdom. Folio.
Angus Library.

1683 A just appeal from lower Courts on Earth to the highest Court in Heaven; or, the case of Francis Bamfield the Lord's free Prisoner. Truly in the main reported as to the matter of fact at his examination and trial. Folio.
Angus Library. British Museum.

1683 A Continuation of a former just appeal &c. Folio.
British Museum.

1683 The Lord's free Prisoner. Folio.
British Museum.

1684 Miqra Qadosh. The Holy Scripture Kethibh Emeth the Scripture of Truth, Ta Hiera Grammata, the Holy Letters, a Grammatical Opening of some Hebrew Words and Phrases in the beginning of the Bible. Folio.
British Museum.

*EDWARD BARBER, a merchant tailor. He probably entertained a church on his own premises at first, till it was possible to erect a meeting house: the community is heard of at a great house in Bishops-

gate, the Hospital, and in Norton Folgate, then in Bell alley, and then at White's alley off Moorgate. Barber was one of the most prominent of the ministers, if not a pastor. He and his colleagues, Thomas Lamb, held a celebrated debate against Kiffin and Patient in Kent, during 1644. Barber was strong for the practice of laying on of hands, and generally was a leader among the General Baptists. Crosby's statement that he was once a minister in the Established Church is unsupported by evidence, and seems improbable.

- 1641 To the King's Majesty. The Petition of many of his subjects, some of which having beene miserably persecuted by the Prelates and their adherents for their consciences.
Single sheet. British Museum.
- 1642 A small Treatise of Baptisme, or Dipping.
Angus Library. British Museum.
- 1648 A Declaration and Vindication of the carriage of Edward Barber at the Parish Meeting House of Benetfinck after the morning exercise of Mr. Callamy was ended, &c
British Museum.
- 1649 An Answer to the Essex Watchmens Watchword, Or a discovery of their Ignorance, in denying liberty to tender consciences in religious Worship.
British Museum.

CHRISTOPHER BLACKWOOD, a clergyman in Kent, who laid down his living on adopting Baptist principles, under rather dramatic circumstances. Apparently he became a chaplain in the New Model Army, and gathered a church in Dublin, which, however, he had to quit at the Restoration.

- 1644 The Storming of Antichrist, in his two last and strongest Garrisons: Of Compulsion of Conscience, and Infants Baptisme, &c.
Angus Library. British Museum. Dr. William's Library.
- 1646 Apostolicall Baptisme, or, a sober Rejoinder to a Treatise by Thomas Blake, intituled Infants Baptisme freed from Antichristianisme. pp 83.
British Museum.
- 1648 A Treatise concerning Deniall of Christ. pp 84.
Angus Library. British Museum.
- 1652 A brief catechism concerning baptism.
Reprint from the Storming of Antichrist, for the satisfaction and information of the people of God in Lancashire. Apparently by the church in Manchester.
- 1653 A Soul-searching Catechism; wherein is opened and explained, not only the six fundamental points, Heb. vi. 1.,

but also many other questions of highest concernment in the christian religion.

The date is of the second edition which is in Dr. Williams' Library.

- 1653 Four treatises: The first setting forth the excellency of Christ; the second, containing a preparation for death; the third, concerning our love to Christ; the fourth, concerning our love to our neighbours.

Mentioned by Crosby, I., 352.

- 1653 A treatise concerning repentance; wherein also the doctrine of restitution is largely handled: with a solution of many cases of conscience concerning it.

Mentioned by Crosby, I., 352.

- 1654 Some Pious Treatises. Being, 1. A Bridle for the Tongue; 2. The Present sweetness and future Bitterness of a delicious sin. 3. A Christians groans under the body of sin. 4. Proving the Resurrection of the same body committed to the dust. 5. Tractatus de Clavibus Ecclesiae. pp 103.

Angus Library. British Museum.

- 1659 Expositions and sermons upon the ten first chapters of the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew. pp 901.

Angus Library. British Museum.

- 1661 (Signed the Humble Apology to Charles, dissociating the Baptists from the insurrection of the Fifth-Monarchy men under Venner).

JOSIAH BONHAM.

- 1674 The Churches Glory: or, the Becoming Ornament.

Angus Library.

SAMUEL BRADLEY.

- 1660 A Reply to a Scandalous Paper [concerning a dispute between Quakers and Baptists in Southwark, answered by George Whitehead in 1660].

- 1664 The Cause of the Innocent pleaded: his accusers pretended charge confuted.

British Museum.

WILLIAM BRITTEN, resigned from the Establishment after 1649.

- 1654 The Moderate Baptist; briefly shewing scripture-way for that initiatory sacrament of baptism: together with divers queries, considerations, errors and mistakes, in and about the work of religion &c.

JAMES BROWN, of Oriel College, Oxford.

- 1673 Scripture redemption freed from Mans Restrictions.

Angus Library.

Notes and Queries.

Thomas Collier.

This great evangelist of the West has never had his life and work properly studied, although he is known to have founded several churches, and to have taught a peculiar type of doctrine that deserves attention. Twenty of his works, 1645—1690, are in the Angus Library and the British Museum, while the Bristol College is certain to have others. Anthony Wood says he was "an husbandman, sometime teacher in the church at York &c." The York reference is out of line with everything else known about him, and is not supported by any evidence.

Edwards in his *Gangræna* tells of him as expelled from Guernsey with many followers, and publishes complaints about him from Lymington, Southampton, Waltham, telling that he was once imprisoned at Portsmouth. Two of his letters were stolen; one shows him writing in 1645 from Guildford to Taunton and referring to a church established by him at Poole, the other shows him in London next year. Edwards sums him up as a "mechanicall fellow," which seems to show Wood was mistaken as to the identity. In 1647 he preached a sermon at the Army headquarters in Putney, and showed himself of the Millenarian type; next year he was still active in politics. In 1649 he issued a third *Generall Epistle* to all the saints, which thoroughly bears out Edwards' statement that he was a man of great power, sending emissaries to supply his place in his absence from the West. In 1650 he was debating at Axbridge in Somerset; in 1652 was conducting a printed controversy as to baptism and lay-preaching; Wood heard of him at Westbury this year. In 1656 he was disputing with the Quakers, defending the admission of the Jews to England. He also presided at Wells over a meeting of sixteen churches in Somerset, Wilts, Devon, Gloucester and Dorset, which issued a circular letter printed in this number, and published a confession of faith, preferring not merely to endorse the London confession of 1644, but expressly to disclaim freewill, falling away from grace &c., as he had been accused of spreading some Arminian principles. In 1659 he returned to politics discussing the limits of civil authority.

In 1672 we find him licensed to preach at North Bradley in Wilts, and this seems to fix his residence. Two years later he published a *Body of Divinity*, and this evidently stirred controversy, for Broadmead recorded that in 1676 he had been holding forth some unsound doctrine or new notions, so that Nehemiah Cox, Captain Deane, Captain Kiffin, Titten of the Jessey Church and Moreton were coming to settle the disorder. In this they failed, for when Cox's colleague next year put out a revision of the Westminster Confession in a Baptist sense, Collier at once challenged it in a Confession of 1678. Perhaps we may attribute it to his influence that the Western Churches were so jealous of London, declined to accept it as the sole place for Assemblies, and declared again their own faith in distinction from the reiterated Confession of 1689. While most of his churches remained Calvinistic, a few developed in other directions, Taunton and Trowbridge to Socinianism being the most conspicuous examples.

Will students in the West send any other gleanings, especially from their own Church records? And will some scholar in the West, or elsewhere, gratify one of the Churches due to Collier, by undertaking a sketch of his career?

Marriages before 1754.

By Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act, which came into force with Lady Day, 1754, all marriages except those of Jews and Quakers, which were not had under licence, or after publication of banns, as well as marriages not solemnized in churches or chapels of ease, were declared null and void to all intents and purposes in law whatsoever. Hence since that date, no marriage could be legally celebrated in any Dissenting Chapel till 1836.

But the question has often been asked how the law stood before 1754. It is well known that during the Commonwealth, marriages could be solemnized before justices of the peace; this law was treated as obsolete at the restoration of Charles, and it is a matter of some interest what was customary among Baptists between 1660 and 1754, and how far their customs were legal.

Thomas Grantham, the famous General Baptist, published a piece "Of the Manner of Marriages among the Baptized Believers," from which Rippon copied a few paragraphs in his Register, III., 452. "We are not against, but for, the public solemnization of Marriages according to the law of the land, save that there are some ceremonies used therein which we cannot comply with. And because some of the Priests will not marry us at all, and others will not do it, unless we conform to all the ceremonies required in the service-book; this puts us upon a necessity to have it done without them, and the manner thus:

"The parties to be married, being qualified for that state of life, according to the law of God, and the law of the land, as to the degrees, &c. therein limited, they call together a competent number of their relations and friends; and, having usually some of our ministry present with them, the parties concerned declare their contract formerly made between themselves, and the advice of their friends, if occasion require it; and then taking each other by the hand, declare, That they from that day forward, during their natural lives together, do enter into the state of marriage, using the words of marriage in the service book, acknowledging the words to be very fit for that purpose. And then a writing is signed by the parties married, to keep in' memory the contract and covenant of their marriage."

Grantham gives specimens of the writings with signatures of the witnesses, and concludes, "After these things, some suitable counsel or instruction is given to the parties, and then prayer is made to God for his blessing upon the parties married, &c."

Many such entries are to be seen in old church books; but among the Particular Baptists there was a decided inclination to magnify the office of the pastor, and Rippon quoted from his own church book six entries of marriages "by Mr. George Barrett, Rotherhithe parish," or by Hansard Knollis or by Benjamin Keach or by Richard Adams.

Some members were hardly willing to forego the stately ceremonies at the parish churches, and the question was debated often at many places, usually with the decision to disown any who resorted to the parish church.

The legality of these proceedings is rather doubtful. Blackstone commented that till 1754 any contract of marriage made in words of the present tense was deemed valid marriage for many purposes. An appeal case to the House of Lords found the lords equally divided on the question whether the marriage was good enough to legitimate children or to ensure the descent of property, though they agreed that for other purposes it was a good and indissoluble marriage.

Early Statistics.

When tracing out the history of a church, the student often wishes to know where he can lay his hand on masses of statistical material. A few of the most obvious may be mentioned as a guide to the beginner. The returns for 1665, 1669, 1672, 1676, were mentioned in our last issue. The General Baptist information from 1656 till 1811 is being digested for our subscribers, and part is already in the press. The list of Particular Baptist Churches in 1689 was reprinted by Rippon in Vol. IV. of his Register, and again by Ivimey in his first volume at page 503. A manuscript list of the dissenting churches in 1715 is at

Dr. Williams' Library. Maitlands' History of London tabulates the dissenting meeting houses of 1739 on page 516. Mr. John Ryland in 1753 drew up a list of Baptist Churches, and the managers of the Particular Baptist Fund printed another in 1763, which Ivimey combined in his fourth volume at page 13. Josiah Thompson, a wealthy Baptist minister, drew up a list in 1773, to be seen at Dr. Williams' Library. Rippon printed three lists of churches and ministers, with notes, in 1790, 1794, 1798. In 1838 a Royal Commission inspected the records of births, marriages, burials, &c., kept by dissenters, whether at meeting houses or in the great Register at Dr. Williams' Library: the report schedules 2264 registers from Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, with an indication of their dates and contents; the originals are now at Somerset House. In 1882 a return was published of all places registered for religious worship in England and Wales, showing the denominations; this runs to 400 foolscap pages, but fails to give dates of registration. New Connexion information is very well available and well indexed; Associations often preserve valuable material in their minute books and deed boxes.

Baptists in Northants Livings, 1655.

George Fox mentions in his diary, "I passed into Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. At Wellingborough I had a great meeting, in which the Lord's everlasting power and truth was over all; and many in that country were turned to the Lord. . . . Great spoiling also there was of Friends' goods for tithes, by . . . some Baptist priests, that had got into the steeple-houses." It is hard to identify these Baptists. At Wellingborough itself the vicar, Thomas Andrews, was certainly Presbyterian. The only names in Calamy that call for re-examination are: Dell, of Caius College and Yelden, who was attracted by the doctrines of Fox; Donne, of Pertenhall, who is expressly said not to have taken the tithes; Martyn, of Weedon Beck. Apparently whatever was true in 1655, only one of these tithe-taking Baptists remained till 1662. But there is nothing to hinder the idea that Fox was slightly exaggerating.

Anthony Palmer a Baptist?

On page 33 it was left uncertain whether Palmer, of Bourton-on-the-Water, was a Baptist in 1662, or at any time. One fact has a bearing on the question: a letter of his in 1658 is extant, acceding to a request of the Congregational elders in and about London, that he would notify the pastors and messengers of the Gloucestershire Congregational Churches to come to a meeting at the Savoy. But though this seems at first sight to settle the matter, we find Vavasor Powell, an undoubted

Baptist, promising to let the Congregational Churches in Wales know; this may indeed be explained by his being the "Approver" for Wales, but it renders the argument as to Palmer less conclusive.

Gabriel Camelford a Congregationalist.

The evidence for this was omitted by an oversight from page 30. He took out a licence in 1672 for his house in Furness Fell, and another for his friend, William Rowlingson, both for Congregational worship.

The Church to which he ministered entitled itself at first "Broughton, furness fells and Cartmel," but organized at the house of William Rawlinson, of Tottlebank in Coulton-in-Furness. All the persons concerned then seem to have been Pædobaptists, but the covenant did not stipulate for or against baptism of infants.

Claridge, rector of Peopleton.

Exact copying of authorities caused a mistake on page 31 of our last number, as to the exact name of the place where Richard Claridge had held a living. It was and is spelt Peopleton, as Mr. Ford points out. Claridge and Fisher are better known among the Friends, to whom they ultimately passed over.

The Indulgence of 1672, and the Licences.

We announced last issue that Professor Lyon Turner is preparing to publish the original documents. Before the year was out, Mr. Frank Bate issued a book of 143 pages, describing the events of 1660-1672, supplemented by an index to all the licences, covering 69 closely printed pages, and some other appendixes. Special attention has been paid to Lancashire, and the whole book is in most scholarly style. Mr. Bate does not give dates for the licences, he does not index all the places, he does not know all the licences extant, one being in our Library at Bristol; but no student of the period can yet afford to dispense with the book, which may be had for 6s. net., from Constable & Co.

Congregational Historical Society.

Our members will often find useful gleanings in the publications of this society. In particular, the four important papers in the Gould manuscript, the "Jessey Records," the "Kiffin Manuscript," the "Knowles Debate," and the "Southwark Story," have been printed in full, the latest appearing in Vol. III., completed last year.

In our next issue these will be reprinted from the Gould MS., with notes and introduction; together with other documents used by Crosby in compiling his history.

Preserve Our History.

The Committee of the Baptist Historical Society commends the following article to the attention of Baptists and others in possession of literature relating to the Denomination.—1909.

Revised from "The Friend," Philadelphia, Vol. 74 (1901), p. 286.

WE repeat, with suitable modifications, some counsel given in the *Presbyterian* concerning the preservation of manuscript data for the history of a religious society.

Sometime since, a wife in the work of putting her house in order after the death of her husband, who was a church officer, built a fire in the yard and destroyed papers and pamphlets, including the records of a church running over a period of forty years. Such an act was thoughtless, it was more, it was criminal. It was an act of ingratitude, for it showed a want of appreciation for the generation of faithful workers whose labours were ended. In a sense, it was an act of robbery, for it was the destroying of that which belonged to the generations which were to come.

And yet this is being repeated in some form almost every week, and oftentimes by those who know better. Precious things in book, pamphlet,

and letter, are being suffered to go to waste or are destroyed, and thus often make a blank in the history which it is impossible to fill. Thus valuable data for the future history of the church, in which we read the lives of faithful workers and the results of their labours, are lost to the world. Perhaps, it may be a pamphlet of which few were printed and fewer read; perhaps an article in some local newspaper, the only printed sketch of a minister or elder ever likely to be found in print; perhaps a discourse in which as the fruit of diligent and patient research we have the history of a church or an institution; perhaps it is only a bundle of old letters, in which are to be found much in hint, suggestion, or positive statement, that will greatly aid some future student to a clearer understanding of some man or church or period.

There is a sense in which all such things are not private property. And even the private collectors of his-

torical treasures for their own pleasure and profit owe a debt to the public. While they live or after their death, all such valuable collections should be given to the properly constituted depositories for such treasures, where they will be easily accessible to the student of history and so prove the greatest good to the greatest number. Thus their pleasure and profit are bequeathed to posterity, who will cherish them in grateful remembrance.

Such institutions for the keeping of that which makes, interprets, and preserves history from disappearing, we have in Historical Societies, or in a Strong Room under the care of our own Baptist Union.

To hand over historical papers or records to these is the duty and the privilege of all those who are making history, or have in their possession the documents from which such a record must come. There are good deacons who have in their possession valuable documents which they should make secure for the future, lest some thoughtless heir in a fit of cleaning should throw them into the waste-basket or destroy them in the fire. There are ministers who have documents in written or printed form, whose importance and value they fully recognise, that continue to jeopardize their perpetuity by not giving them into the care of the Society, where they can be classified and catalogued for use. There are wives, sons, and daughters of departed deacons and other noted and faithful men in the Church, who were makers of its history, that too often fail to appreciate the respon-

sibility upon them carefully to preserve everything in their possession that will throw light upon the lives of those they loved and the churches in which they laboured.

In these days there is a growing sense as to the very great importance and value of all historic facts and of everything that can throw light upon the men, the customs, and the records of any particular period. Even indirect evidence has often great weight in bringing one to a true conclusion, so we cannot be too careful or diligent in bringing together everything that in any way will throw light upon the history of the Church. It may be only a written or printed page, or private notes about persons or measures, or a manuscript sketch of the history of a particular meeting. All these have value, for they are the data on which all true history is based.

For the sake of the individual, the community, and the denomination, we should all have a care that none of these things be lost, but carefully collected and sent to our Historical Society. Thus they will all be easily accessible to the student in the years to come, and of priceless value to him as he writes about some pioneer preacher, some particular church and its historic struggles in its establishment and early progress, or the work of some meeting in its early endeavours to possess the land for Christ.

Then let the careless filling of waste-baskets cease. Let the reckless feeding of flames with this precious kind of fuel be stopped. If there was more thoughtfulness in

seeking for and preserving that adding to the classified collections of which is of historic value, there those things which are of vital importance would be fewer fires of burning importance to the student of the history treasure in back-yards, and a daily of our Church.

Wm. L. Ledwith.

Gifts of books, manuscripts, papers, etc., and of current issues from the press, written by or respecting Baptists, would be gladly received by the Secretary,

DR. WHITLEY,

53, West Cliff, Preston.

The present number completes the issue for the first year to subscribers of five shillings; in future there will be three numbers each year.

Guinea subscribers and Life subscribers will also receive part of the General Baptist Minutes, from 1656 to 1750, with introduction and notes; these are now in the press. The continuation from 1750 to 1811, with index, will be issued during the second year.

Subscriptions for the second year are now due, and may be remitted to the treasurer, JAMES WARD, Esq., Parade Chambers, Nottingham.