

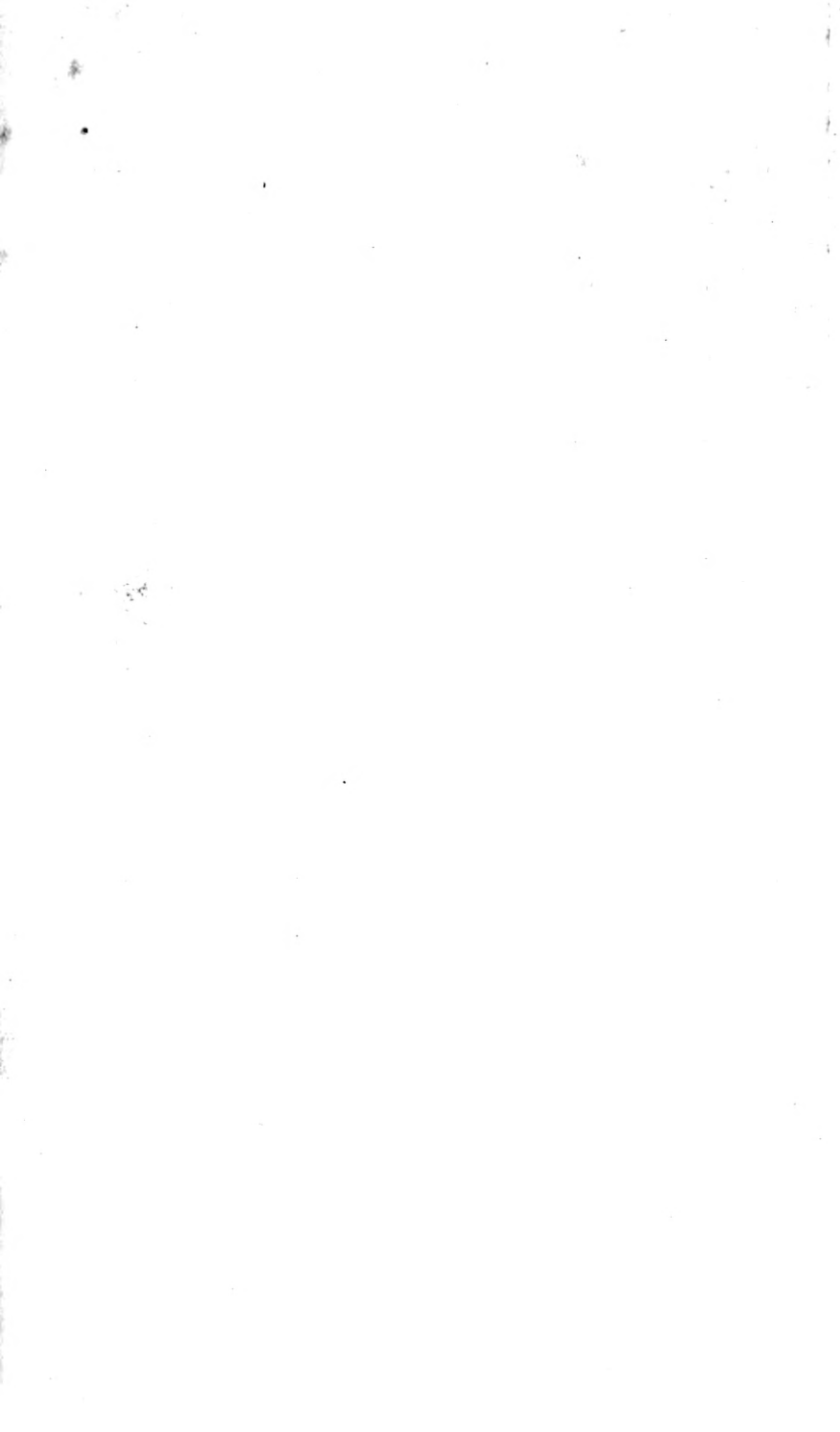
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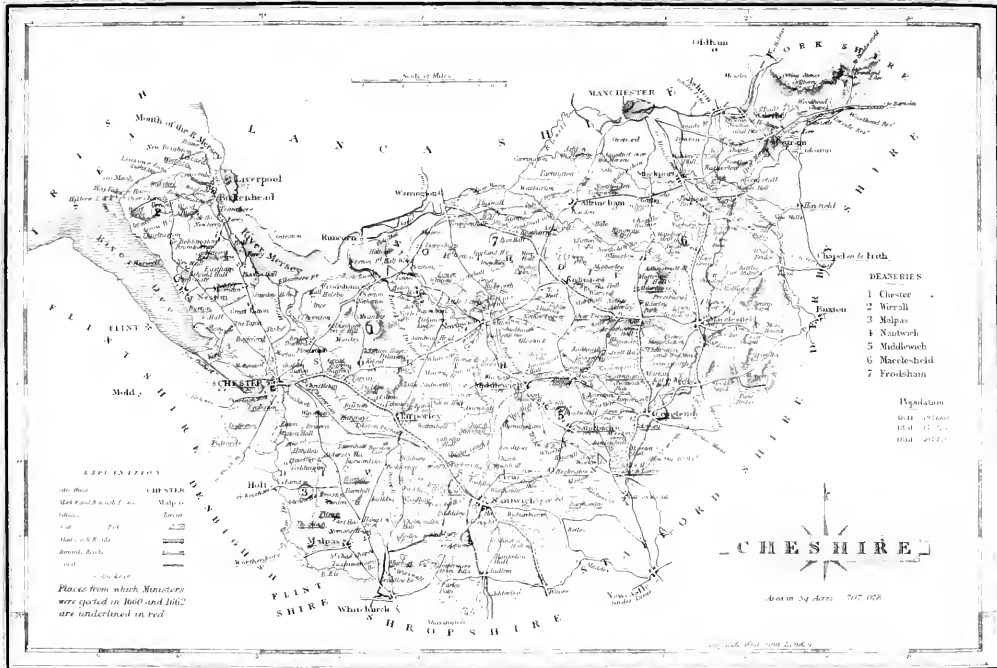
Scara

Historical Sketches

OF

Nonconformity in Cheshire.





Scale of Miles

EXPLANATION

Blue Lines CHESHIRE
 Red Lines Flintshire
 Dotted Lines Derbyshire
 Solid Lines Lancashire
 Dotted Lines Flintshire
 Dotted Lines Derbyshire
 Dotted Lines Lancashire

Places from which Ministers were elected in 1660 and 1662 are underlined in red

- DEANERIES**
- 1 Chester
 - 2 Wirral
 - 3 Malpas
 - 4 Nantwich
 - 5 Middlewich
 - 6 Macclesfield
 - 7 Frodsham

Population

1841 272,000
 1851 275,000
 1861 275,000



Area in Sq Acres 707,000

Wm. and A. S. 1861, 1861, 1861, 1861

HISTORICAL SKETCHES

OF

NONCONFORMITY

IN

The County Palatine of Chester.

BY


VARIOUS MINISTERS AND LAYMEN IN THE COUNTY.

LONDON: KENT & Co., 23, *Paternoster Row.*

MANCHESTER: SEPTIMUS FLETCHER, *John Dalton Street.*

MDCCCLXIV.

P R E F A C E .

HE origin of the present volume may be briefly told. At a meeting of Ministers and Delegates from the Independent Churches of Cheshire, held early in 1862, to celebrate the Bi-centenary of English Nonconformity, three short papers were read upon the rise of Dissent at Knutsford, Tintwistle, and Hatherlow, and a suggestion was made that a series of similar papers should be prepared by ministers in the county upon Nonconformist history in their respective localities. The suggestion was adopted, a publication committee chosen, and a list of contributors prepared. The Rev. C. CHAPMAN, M.A., who undertook Chester, Wirral, and Malpas, was obliged, through ill-health, to relinquish his part, which consequently devolved upon me, together with the superintendence of the rest; and the work has grown to a much larger size than was at first anticipated. Cheshire, though not so rich in Nonconformist memorials as Lancashire or Yorkshire, has a share of interest proportionate to its size. Among the contributors to the volume are the Revs. A. CLARK of Stockport, S. ELLIS of Wilmslow, J. JOHNS, B.A., of Northwich, S. W. McALL, M.A., of

2072375

Preface.

Macclesfield, W. B. Mc.WILLIAM of Middlewich, R. G. MILNE, M.A., of Tintwistle, W. RHODES of Sandbach, J. PYWELL, Baptist Minister, of Stockport, J. TURNER late of Knutsford; Doctor BEALES of Congleton, Messrs. T. RIGBY of Over, and JOSEPH THOMPSON of Bowdon. The name of each contributor is attached to his paper, and each is responsible only for his own. Other ministers have furnished notices of particular churches.

Regarding these contributions my work has been to prevent repetition, to supply information occasionally, and to secure unity. In addition to printed sources of information, including the treasures of the Chetham Library in Manchester, I have searched the Registers in several parishes, and the MSS. in Dr. Williams's Library, Lambeth Palace, the British Museum, and the Record Office. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of many friends in collecting materials for the work, particularly that rendered by Mr. Mc.ALL, in preparing the Index.

WILLIAM URWICK.

Hatherlow, March 1864.

CONTENTS.



	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION	i—lxix
LISTS OF NONCONFORMIST MINISTERS	lxvi
DEANERY OF CHESTER	1—64
City of Chester:—	
§ I. The Bishops	1
§ II. The Nonconforming Ministers of 1662	12
§ III. The Nonconforming Churches since 1688	28
§ IV. Queen-street Independent Chapel	38
§ V. Common Hall-street Independent Chapel	47
Barrow	49
Bruera and Christelton	50
Doddleston	51
Eccleston, Farndon, Hargrave	52
Plemondstall	53
Pulford, Tarporley	54
Tarvin	58
Thornton	63
Waverton	64
DEANERY OF WIRRAL	65—94
Backford	66
Bebington	68
Bidston, Burton	69
Eastham	70
Heswall and Neston	72
Shotwick	73
Thurstaston, Wallasey	75
West Kirby	76
Woodchurch	82
Brombrough	83
Overchurch, Upton	88
Birkenhead:—	
Woodside Independent Chapel	90
Oxton Road Independent Chapel	91
Liscard Independent Chapel	93

Contents.

	PAGE.
DEANERY OF MALPAS	95—114
Malpas	95
Independent Chapel, Malpas	98
Independent Chapel, Thrapwood	100
Aldford	100
Coddington, Handley, Harthill	101
Shocklach	102
Tattenhall	103
Independent Chapel, Tattenhall	104
Tilston	107
Worthenbury	108
DEANERY OF NANTWICH	115—150
Acton, Nantwich	115
Baptist Chapel, Nantwich	134
Independent Chapel, Nantwich	135
Wrenbury	138
Audlem	140
Baddiley	141
Barthomley	142
Bunbury	144
Coppenhall	148
Crewe Independent Chapel	148
Church Minshull	148
Weybunbury	148
Wistaston, Marbury	150
DEANERY OF MIDDLEWICH	151—202
Astbury, Congleton	151
Independent Chapel, Congleton	159
Church Lawton	161
Davenham and Moulton Independent Chapels	162
Middlewich	163
Independent Chapel, Middlewich	170
Over, Minshull	175
Independent Chapel, Over	180
Independent Chapel, Minshull	183
Sandbach	186
Wheelock Heath, Chapel	191
Independent Chapel, Sandbach	193
Independent Chapel, Brereton	193
Independent Chapel, Haslington	194
Independent Chapel, Wheelock	195
Goostrey	196
Holmes Chapel	197
Swettenham	200

Contents.

	PAGE.
DEANERY OF MACCLESFIELD	203—364
Gawsworth	203
Note—Rev. H. Newcome	217
Macclesfield	223
Townley Street Independent Chapel	236
Roe Street Independent Chapel	248
Bollington Independent Chapel	251
General Baptist Chapel	253
Prestbury	255
Bosley	256
Chelford	257
Wincle	259
Wilmslow	260
Dean Row Chapel	270
Wilmslow Independent Chapel	277
Alderley	278
Baptist Chapel, Warford	280
Mobberley	283
Independent Chapel, Knowles Green	285
Stockport	286
Tabernacle Independent Chapel	291
Orchard Street Independent Chapel	302
Hanover Independent Chapel	306
Particular Baptist Chapel	307
Norbury	310
Hazelgrove Independent Chapel	312
Hatherlow Independent Chapel	312
Independent Chapel, Marple Bridge	332
Cheadle	335
Independent Chapel, Gatley	337
Independent Chapel, Cheadle	338
Disley	338
Dukinfield	340
Independent Chapel, Dukinfield	347
Hyde	348
Union Street Independent Chapel	349
Zion Independent Chapel	350
Mottram	350
Independent Chapel, Mottram	351
Independent Chapel, Staleybridge	352
Tintwistle, Independent Chapel	352
Note—Rev. W. Bagshaw	361
Northenden	363
DEANERY OF FRODSHAM	365—464
Ashton-on-Mersey	365
Cross Street Chapel	366
Sale Independent Chapel	367

Contents.

	PAGE.
Bowdon	369
Partington Independent Chapel	376
Bowdon Independent Chapel	380
Altrincham Independent Chapel	382
Ringway	382
Hale Chapel	387
Heyhead Independent Chapel	390
Northwich	390
Independent Chapel, Northwich	396
Great Budworth	398
Whitley	404
Allostock	412
Rosthern	417
Bucklow Hill Independent Chapel	437
Knutsford	437
Independent Chapel, Knutsford	448
Baptist Chapel, Millington	450
Frodsham	450
General Baptist Chapel, Kingsley	451
Grappenhall	453
Lymm	454
Independent Chapel, Lymm	455
Warburton, Runcorn	456
Independent Chapel, Runcorn	457
Hill Cliffe Baptist Chapel	459
Daresbury, Weaverham	461
Over Peover	462
Nether Peover	464
NOTES	465—492
INDICES	493—504

INTRODUCTION.



§ I. 1540—1640.

WHEN Henry VIII. threw off the yoke of Rome and made himself Supreme Head of the Church of England, he devised Ten Articles embodying the doctrines and ceremonies of Romanism, “to establish Christian quietness and to avoid contentions among us.” These articles show that the King though no longer a Papist was still a Roman Catholic. They were not enforced; Cranmer’s books, the *Institution* and *Erudition* of a Christian man, became the standards of doctrine; but Henry, while he persecuted Romanists for keeping fealty to the Pope, enforced conformity upon Protestants by means of “the Bloody Statute, the whip with six strings.” Before his death he assisted Cranmer in the preparation of another code of Articles, thirteen in number, Protestant in their tendency and resembling the Augsburg Confession. Henry VIII.
1535.

In the beginning of Edward VI.’s reign the First Book of Homilies was issued, and Somerset the Protector took the lead in the popular movement against Romanism. A law was made to extirpate from wall and window in churches every picture or image of saint. The disfiguring of churches often attributed to Roundhead soldiers was really the performance of edicts in this and Elizabeth’s reign. The first prayer book of Edward VI. was imposed by an Act of Uniformity in 1549, and an effort was thus made to check the Anabaptists and convert the Papists. The second service book, more Protestant than the first, was published in 1552, and the Forty-two Articles, Edward VI.
1547.

afterwards reduced to Thirty-nine, agreed to by the bishops and other learned men in the synod at London, were set forth by royal authority in 1553.

Hooper's Non-conformity. 1550.

The key-note of Puritanism in England was struck by Bishop Hooper. Nonconformity began with his objections to the Anglican articles and ceremonies. Cranmer submitted the draft of the forty-two articles to the several prelates for their approval in 1550. These articles teach the Augustinian and Lutheran doctrine that the sacraments *confer grace*, but a strong party among the English Protestants held Calvin's doctrine that the sacraments are only signs and seals of grace, and Hooper lately returned from Geneva and Zurich became the leader of this the Puritan party. When offered the bishopric of Gloucester, he objected to three of Cranmer's articles. The 26th (now the 25th) upon the sacraments was specially obnoxious to him, because while avoiding the Romanist *continere gratiam* it embodied the Augustinian *conferre gratiam*, a doctrine condemned by Calvin, who called the sacraments *seals*, and by Zwingli, who held them to be only *signs*, of grace. Hooper and his party objected to an article which taught the efficacy of the sacraments to confer grace, and herein lay the germ of Puritanism *doctrinally* considered.

As to Doctrine—Article 26.

As to Ceremonies—Articles 35, 36.

The other two articles objected to by Hooper were those which relate to the Ordinal and Prayer Book. The young King Edward struck out with his own pen the words Hooper stumbled at in the oath of supremacy; but Hooper's dislike of the ceremonies and vestments (which he held to be Popish) for some time hindered his conforming. Cranmer was inclined to yield to his reasons; Bucer at Cambridge, and Peter Martyr at Oxford, sided with him, yet they recommended him to acquiesce for a time, till the vestments were abrogated by law. Hooper was firm however, was silenced and even committed to the Fleet; and after the lapse of about nine months the matter was compromised; Hooper consenting to be robed at his consecration as bishop of Gloucester and on public occasions, but receiving permission to dispense with the vestments afterwards; as did

also Latimer, Coverdale, and Ridley. Herein we have the germ of Puritanism in relation to *ceremonies*.

The reaction of Mary's reign checked the advance of Puritanism in England. Protestant bishops were ejected; Gardiner, Heath, and Bonner restored; and Roman Catholic services re-established. It was decided by Mary's first Parliament that no punishment should be inflicted on any who declined to attend those services; but Cardinal Pole having come to England as the Pope's legate, and being established as the Queen's adviser, the fires of Smithfield were kindled, and the noble army of English martyrs lighted a candle in England which has never been put out.*

Elizabeth did not at once subvert the hierarchy that Mary had re-established. The Protestant exiles returned home,† but the priests held their livings and went on celebrating mass.

The Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity passed in the first year of her reign are the fetters by which the Anglican Church is bound to the State; the first transferring all power from the clergy to the crown, the second prohibiting all changes of rites and discipline except by Act of Parliament. Elizabeth's design was manifestly to bring about a comprehension of Romanists and Protestants, and while the Articles satisfied the latter, the Service Book met the sacramental views of the former. Though the Catholic bishops refused the oath of supremacy, and were consequently deprived, very few parochial priests resigned their

Mary, 1553.

Elizabeth,
Nov. 17, 1558.

Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity,
1559.

* At Chester, one Hook, a true witness of the Lord's truth, was burned for the same.—*Clark's Martyrologie*, page 481; see also the account of *Marsh*, page 2.

† Among the exiles was *William Whittingham*, A.M., born at Chester 1524, educated in Brazenose College, Oxford, Fellow of All Souls in 1545. He fled to Frankfort, and thence to Geneva, where he became pastor of the English church, and was employed as one of the translators of the Geneva Bible. Though a firm Puritan he was appointed Dean of Durham, and held that preferment till his death in 1579. Also *Christopher Goodman*, B.D., born at Chester 1519, educated at Brazenose College, Oxford. He accompanied Whittingham to Frankfort and Geneva. On his return from exile he settled in Scotland, and was appointed minister of S. Andrew's 1560. In 1571 he was cited before Archbishop Parker. In 1584 he lived in his native county, where he was probably silenced for his nonconformity. Archbishop Usher visited him on his deathbed. He died in Chester 1602, and was interred in the Cathedral.

William Whittingham.

Christopher Goodman.

Elizabeth's
Protestantism.

livings. Elizabeth's Protestantism was not against altar candles, vestments, or even mass, but against the jurisdiction of the Pope in her realm. On this ground only, and by the strength of her character, she won the homage of her people as the Protestant Queen. In the popular regard she was not only the head but the strength and support of the church, without whom it must fall. This belief is quaintly expressed in one of the *Emblems* of Whitney,* the Cheshire poet of her reign. The device is an obelisk or spire, with ivy twined round and clinging to it, with the motto underneath *Te stante, vircho*, and the following explanatory lines:—

A mightie Spyre, whose toppes dothe pierce the skie,
An iuie greene imbraceth rounde about
And while it standes, the same doth bloome on highe
But when it shrinkes, the iuie standes in dowl;
The pillar great, our gracious Princes is:
The braunche, the churche whoe speakes unto hir this:
I, that of late with stormes was almoste spent,
And brused sore with Tirants bluddie bloes,
Whome fire, and sworde, with persecution rent,
Am nowe sett free, and ouerlooke my foes,
And whiles thow raignt, oh most renowned Queene,
By thie supporte my blossome shall bee greene.

Spread of
Puritanism.

During the first ten years of Elizabeth's reign the Puritans habitually disregarded the Act of Uniformity, and refused the Popish ceremonies and vestments—cope, surplice, alb, and stole. A proposition to abolish these was lost only by a single vote in Convocation. In one church might be seen the Romanist altar with crucifix and candle, and a priest performing mass; in the next the altar dismantled, a plain communion table of wood set up on tressels, and a Puritan minister in black Geneva gown officiating. The Queen hated the Puritan innovations and commanded Archbishop Parker to enforce Uniformity. He summoned the London clergy; thirty-seven out of ninety-eight refused the vestments and were consequently deprived. Conformity was enforced in other parts of the

* See page 116 of this volume. The Rev. H. Green of Knutsford has kindly furnished the extracts here and elsewhere given from Whitney's *Emblems*, which is a very scarce book.

country with similar result. "Alas my Lord," said Whittingham, dean of Durham, to Archbishop Parker, "that such compulsion " should be used towards us and such great lenity towards the " Papists." Everywhere the most earnest and praiseworthy ministers were, on account of their nonconformity, deprived of their livings.

The University of Cambridge was "a nest" of Puritans, and foremost therein the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity began to lecture not against the vestments merely but against Episcopacy. Cartwright introduced a new element into the Puritan cause, adopting, with the Calvinistic creed, the Genevan form of church government. He maintained that bishop and deacon are the only orders named in Scripture, that the government of the church rests in Presbyteries, that the bishop should be pastor of one congregation, and should be chosen by the church itself. Whitgift entered the lists against Cartwright and a severe controversy ensued, the issue of which was that Cartwright was deprived, silenced, and imprisoned. The party espousing his views was strong both at Cambridge and throughout the country, as the manifesto entitled "An Admonition to Parliament" proves. The *jus divinum* was now for the first time claimed for one particular form of church government—the Presbyterian. The opponents of Cartwright, who may be called the prelatical party, contented themselves at first with simply maintaining the right of the state to adopt any form of church order and ceremonial not explicitly prohibited by Holy Scripture. Hooker was one of this party, though he maintained that as far as the testimony of Scripture favours any polity it favours Episcopacy rather than Presbyterianism. As the controversy continued, however, the assertion of a *jure divino* Presbyterianism was met by the counter assertion of a *jure divino* Episcopacy.

Meantime the famous bill imposing subscription to the Articles upon the clergy of the Establishment was passed by Parliament and received the Royal assent; but through the influence of the Puritans who objected to the Ordinal, the

Thomas Cartwright, 1570.

Puritan views of Church Government.

Stat. 13, Eliz. c. 12, 1571.

subscription required was limited *to all the Articles of religion which ONLY concern the confession of the true faith and the doctrine of the sacraments.* The Act was thus ambiguously worded by the House of Commons in order to relieve the Nonconforming clergy from subscription to any other Articles except those relating to doctrine—leaving it to individual opinion to decide, which these were. Not more than a hundred of the Puritan clergy throughout England refused this easy subscription.

Grindal, Arch-
bishop, 1575.

While Grindal was Archbishop, Puritanism flourished. Open attempts were made to form Presbyteries according to Cartwright's model, and Prophesyings, *i.e.* lectures against Popery, etc., were set up in various counties. "It seemed good to the Lord," says a Cheshire minister at this time, "having compassion on
" His people to raise up and establish many holy exercises of
" religion both in *Cheshire* and *Lancashire*, which were kept
" constantly every month and maintained worthily by the godly
" labours of the faithful ministers and messengers of God in
" those parts with great and comfortable success and fruit."*

Whitgift,
Archbishop,
1583.

Whitgift, on his elevation to the see of Canterbury, demanded subscription to three Articles, commonly called *Whitgift's Articles*, relating to the Royal Supremacy, the Prayer Book and Ordinal, and the Thirty-nine Articles. These afterwards received a formal sanction in the 36th Canon, but they were now enforced by the Archbishop's authority, and in opposition to the House of Commons. He also introduced a most un-English weapon against the Nonconforming clergy, the oath **EX OFFICIO**, by which commissioners had power to examine accused persons upon their oaths for the better trial and opening of the truth, obliging them to answer to twenty-four inquisitorial articles of impeachment whereby they might criminate themselves. Those who refused to take the oath and bear witness against themselves were liable to the severest punishment. The Lord Treasurer Burleigh said of it, "I have read your twenty-four articles formed in a Romish style to examine all manner

The *Ex officio*
Oath, 1584.

* Hinde's Life of Bruen, page 100.

“ of ministers, to be executed *ex officio mero*. And I find them “ so curiously penned, so full of branches and circumstances, “ that I think the Inquisition of Spain used not so many ques- “ tions to comprehend and to trap their priests.”* Whitgift vindicated it by saying “ it is hard to get witnesses against the “ Puritans, because most of the parishioners favour them, and “ will not appear against them.” Bishop Chadderton, though Puritanically inclined and a promoter of the Prophesyings, very stringently enforced the Queen’s supremacy upon Romanists, and withal the use of clerical vestments and conformity to the rubric upon the Puritans of his diocese. Richard Vaughan also, who held the see of Chester for eight years—from 1596 to 1604—cited many Lancashire and Cheshire ministers before him in the Parish Church of Aldford, and required of them conformity to the ceremonies and subscription to the canons. The majority of them refused and were silenced. During this season of oppression, the Papists in different parts of the country rejoiced. Mr. Goodwin of Chester says, “ the Papists in Cheshire rejoiced at “ Whitgift’s proceedings and severity.” The excellent Puritan already quoted, William Hinde of Bunbury, says that “ Popery “ and prophaneness, two sisters in evil, had consented in Tarvin “ parish, as in many other places, together to advance their “ idols against the ark of God.”

Enforced by
the Bishops of
Chester.

James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, who is described in the Dedication which still disgraces our English Bible as a *most tender and loving nursing Father* of the Church was, according to the plain witness of impartial history, a “ learned, foolish, and slobbering Scotchman, wallowing in “ beastly delights.” During his reign the court and nobility of England sank into the slough of debauchery, and Puritanism became the synonyme for common decency.† He was quite intoxicated by the powers which the royal supremacy gave him when he ascended the English throne. “ Do I mak the judges?

James I. 1603.

* Neal’s Puritans, vol. i., page 338-9.

† Forster’s *Grand Remonstrance*, Introductory Essay, page 90. Sanford’s *Great Rebellion*, page 86.

The Millenary
Petition.

Hampton
Court Confer-
ence, Jan. 14,
16, 18, 1603.

Bancroft,
Archbishop,
1604.

“Do I mak the bishops? Then, God’s wauns! I mak what likes me, law and gospel.” The Puritans of England presented modest and moderate petitions signed by 750 ministers in twenty-five counties, and by many more in other counties,* amounting to upwards of one thousand, desiring *reformation of certain ceremonies and abuses of the church*; and James, though he despised them, complied so far as to appoint a conference at Hampton Court, to consider the Puritan objections. On the prelatial side were nine bishops and as many dignitaries; on the Puritan side, four ministers, viz., Drs. Raynolds and Sparks, professors of divinity in Oxford, and Messrs. Chadderton† and Knewstubbs of Cambridge. On the first day the King heard the bishops graciously; on the second, when the Puritans began to explain their grievances, he interposed with violent abuse; on the third the prelates explained the oath *ex-officio* to His Majesty’s satisfaction, and the only request the Puritans obtained was the new translation of the Scriptures.

Bancroft being raised to the primacy on the death of Whitgift, engrafted the “Whitgift Articles” on the code of Canons which were now formally enacted. By the absolute order for subscription which this code embodied, a large number of the Puritan clergy were driven to relinquish their cures. Their number was 746 in twenty-four counties, and Neal reasonably infers that in the fifty-two counties of England and Wales there were twice as many. In Cheshire there were twelve non-subscribers, some of whom were imprisoned or fled to Holland. Their principles were nevertheless embodied in Mr. Bradshaw’s treatise, “English Puritanism,” which maintained that every congregation of men ordinarily joining together in the true

* Neal, quoting Clark, names 800 as the total number of signatures; but Clark intimates that *other petitions* to the same purport accompanied those, subscribed by 750, from twenty-five counties; so that the total number of signatures was probably above 1000.

† Lawrence Chadderton was born in Lancashire in 1546, and belonged to the same family as the Bishop of Chester. He was chosen one of the translators of the Bible, held the mastership of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, for many years, and died in 1640.

worship of God, is a true visible church of Christ; that such churches are not subject to any other superior ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and that every church should have liberty to choose its own officers.

The synod of Dort brought into view the growing Arminianism of the English prelates. The King indeed sided with the decisions of the Calvinistic divines, but this was owing chiefly to his friendship with the Prince of Orange. Baxter declares it to have been the most excellent assembly the world had seen since the days of the apostles. While favouring the Puritans, it roused the persecuting spirit of the bishops. In Chester diocese Bishop Lloyd had suffered the Nonconforming clergy to preach without annoyance. Nicholas Byfield, a powerful preacher and writer on behalf of the doctrinal Puritans, was suffered to remain several years as pastor of S. Peter's in Chester. John Bruen of Stapleford was one of his hearers and patrons.* But Lloyd's successor, Bishop Moreton, acted with great severity. He drew up the *Book of Sports*, which the King issued to encourage recreations on the Lord's Day, such as dancing, archery, leaping, May-games, and Whitsun-ales, and he enforced the reading of it in the churches of his diocese. Among those who suffered by his severity were William Hinde, minister of Bunbury, who was esteemed the ringleader of the Nonconformists in the county; Julines Herring, and Robert Nicholls of Wrenbury, Joseph Midgley of Rochdale, and Thomas Paget of Blackley Chapel, in Lancashire. These ministers were summoned before the High Commission, and suffered fine and suspension. The last named Thomas Paget gives an interesting account of the Bishop's severity, and informs us that many of the most worthy knights and gentlemen of the diocese espoused

Synod of Dort,
1618.

Book of
Sports, 1618.

* See page 59. Nicholas Byfield was born in Warwickshire 1579, and educated in Exeter College, Oxford. He was son to Mr. Richard Byfield, who became minister of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1596. In the year 1615 he removed from Chester to Isleworth in Middlesex, where he laboured for fifteen years, till his death. He was a Nonconformist to the Ceremonies, a strict observer of the Sabbath, and a Calvinist.—See *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. iii., page 286; *Neal's Puritans*, vol. ii., page 118; *Hinde's Life of John Bruen*.

the cause of the distressed ministers, and wrote an appeal in which they expressed themselves as follows :—

Laymen's Letter in behalf of Cheshire Puritans. 1610.

Right Reverend, &c.—Whereas we understand that divers of our painful and discreet ministers are lately, by letters missive from your lordship and others of His Majesty's High Commission for causes ecclesiastical within the diocese of Chester, enjoined to appear before you, to answer such matters as shall be objected against them; We, whose names are subscribed have thought it fit to acquaint your lordship with our opinion of those ministers, for the preventing, if need require, of such sinister and malicious informations; which, in these cases are frequently stirred up against men of their sort and quality, sometimes by lewd and profane persons; and many times by the disguised, subtil, and superstitious Romanists and Church Papists, whose hearts are wholly against us, all the while their faces are seemingly for us. We have observed, so far as we are able to judge, in these our ministers, integrity of life and conversation, orthodox soundness of doctrine, diligence and painfulness in their places, sobriety and peaceableness in their dispositions, and freedom from faction. Also, the great good and profit which our congregations, where they live, have abundantly received from their ministry; therefore we are emboldened to entreat your favour, &c.

Severity towards them.

This letter was delivered to his lordship at Stockport, of which parish he was rector; but after reading it he observed: "They whom the letter concerneth are the worse to be liked for the good testimony here given of them;" and accordingly they were forced to make several expensive journeys to Chester, were exposed to the rudest abuse of the bishop's officers, and were afterwards silenced. Their objections as Nonconformists were particularly against the cross in baptism, the use of the surplice, and kneeling at the Lord's Supper.* About two years afterwards, hoping the storm was blown over, they sought to obtain liberty of preaching from Bishop Bridgeman, but instead of this, attachments were brought from the High Commission to apprehend and bring them to York and there to imprison them. In this strait they withdrew and hid themselves. The storm had yet to spend its fury.

Charles I., 1625.

Charles I., though he had received Presbyterian baptism, had grown up to manhood with a hatred of Calvinism and a

* See *Defence of Church Government* in the Presbyterian, Classical, and Synodical Assemblies, by John Paget, late able and faithful pastor of the reformed English church in Amsterdam. To which is prefixed *An Advertisement to the Parliament*, by T. P. (Thomas Paget). London, 4to, 1641.

strong inclination to Arminianism and Romanism. His domestic life was without blemish, but his Roman Catholic wife Henrietta Maria encouraged him in his unconstitutional and unprotestant career. Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, was his faithful adviser and servant in his traitorous course in affairs of State; and Dr. William Laud of S. John's College, Oxford, who was successively advanced to the Bishoprict of London and Archbishopric of Canterbury, was his chief minister in ecclesiastical matters. Despotism and High Churchism were thus naturally linked together in opposition to constitutional government and Puritanism. While the King violated the constitution and the engagements of the petition of right, holding despotic sway in England without calling a Parliament for eleven years, imprisoning the foremost of England's statesmen and levying taxes by force of arms, the High Church clergy preached passive obedience and non-resistance, and the bishops, with Laud at their head, enforced conformity by the fines, the imprisonments, and the tortures of the High Commission.

No Parliament
1629—1640.

A scheme was set on foot by the Puritan laity to promote preaching in the country by establishing lectures in the market towns of England, and a number of feoffees were chosen to purchase church property which had fallen into private hands, in order to provide adequate salaries for the lecturers. Laud instituted proceedings against this movement, and the property the feoffees had purchased was confiscated to the King; but in spite of this injustice the lecturings were continued with success in different counties. In Cheshire in particular "the ministers " had their spiritually glorious monthly exercises at Northwich, " Namptwich, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Bowden, Frodsham, " Budworth, Torporley, Tarvin, Ince, Motteram, &c.; and " solemn assemblies, besides their blessed Sabbaths, frequented " by sundry of the renowned gentry and very many well-disposed " people, whereby they purchased to themselves a good degree " in Christianity."* Among the ministers engaged in these

The Feoffees
1627.

* Paget's *Defence*, Preface.

exercises were Samuel Eaton and Samuel Clark of Wirrall, Sabbath Clark of Tarvin, Thomas Langley of Middlewich, Julines Herring and Robert Nicholls of Wrenbury, William Hinde of Bunbury, and Thomas Paget of Blackley and Stockport. But the High Commission at York* was more tyrannical and unprincipled than that in London, and Bridgeman, then bishop of Chester, lent his aid in prosecuting, fining, and silencing from time to time these zealous ministers.†

Et caetera
Oath,
June 30, 1640.

The crowning act of prelatical tyranny was the *Et caetera Oath*, embodied in the canons of that convocation which illegally sat after the dissolution of the Parliament of April 1640. This oath, which obtained its name from a vague *etc.* in the middle of it, contained the following words:—

“I, A. B., do swear that I approve the doctrine, discipline, or government established in the Church of England, . . . nor will I ever give my consent to alter the government of this church by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, ET CAETERA, as it stands now established. . . . If any beneficed person in the church shall refuse this oath, he shall after one month be suspended *ab officio*; after a second month he shall be suspended *ab officio et beneficio*; and after a third month, if he continue to refuse, he shall be deprived.”

Petitions
against it.

The Puritan clergy in London, and in several counties, petitioned against this Oath with the accompanying Canons, and through the influence of the nobility, who presented a petition to the King at York, complaining of this and other innovations,‡ prosecutions on the strength of it were postponed; but Laud, true to the policy called *Thorough*, caused many ministers to be deprived for refusing it.

* Richard Neile, Archbishop of York, is described by Mr. Prynne as “a Popish Arminian prelate, and a persecutor of all orthodox and godly ministers.”

† Eaton had to fly to New England; Samuel Clark was driven hastily from his parish, but found an asylum at Coventry; Thomas Langley was exiled from Middlewich for five years, and found a refuge with Julines Herring, Robert Nicholls, and others, at the house of John Ball of Whitmore, and at Lady Margaret Bromley’s of Sheriff-Hales, in Shropshire.

‡ Forster’s *Grand Remonstrance*, page 251.

§ II.—THE LONG PARLIAMENT, 1640—1648.

THE new Canons and the *Et Caetera* Oath, together with the attempt to impose Episcopacy upon the Scots, brought to an end the reign of civil and religious tyranny in England. The Scots were already in arms, and patient England could no longer endure. The King was obliged to call Parliament again, and that assembly now met which, to use the words of Lord Macaulay, "in spite of many errors and disasters is justly entitled to the reverence and gratitude of all who in any part of the world enjoy the blessings of constitutional government."* One of its first ecclesiastical acts was the assertion of the principle (December 15th) "that the clergy have no power to make any canons whatsoever, or otherwise to bind the clergy or laity of this land, without common consent of parliament;" and "that the canons of 1640 contain matters contrary to the King's prerogative, to the fundamental laws and statutes of the realm, to the rights of parliament, and to the property and liberty of the subjects." Laud was committed to the tower and the bishops were openly threatened. Bishop Hall put forth his *Humble Remonstrance* in behalf of Episcopacy, upon which an outspoken reply appeared, contrasting the primitive with the prelatical church, condemning Episcopacy and advocating Presbyterianism, by SMECTYMNUS, a word composed of the initial letters of the authors' names.† Petitions from various counties against the dominant Episcopate were sent to Parliament. In Cheshire, the Puritans were foremost in petitioning against abuses in Church and State, and a document signed by the bulk of the common people was presented to Parliament.

The Long
Parliament,
Nov. 4, 1640.

Episcopacy
threatened.

* The members for the county of Chester were Sir W. Brereton and Peter Venables; Venables being a Royalist withdrew and was succeeded by George Booth. The members for the city of Chester were Thomas Smith and Francis Gamul, who being Royalists were succeeded by William Edwards and John Radcliff.

† The authors were Stephen Marshall, Edward Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow.

Hereupon the Royalists in the county drew up a counter petition to the King in favour of Episcopacy. These documents are of so much interest that we give them here in full :—

Cheshire Petition *against* Episcopacy, 1641.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE FREE-HOLDERS, AND THE REST OF THE INHABITANTS WITHIN THE COUNTIE OF CHESTER.

Sheweth,—That whereas the manifold unsupportable burdens where-withal our consciences and estates have been long oppressed, with a continuall increase thereof, have at last so tyred and feebleed our strength, that we find ourselves unable to subsist any longer under the weight thereof; wee dare not now neglect to take the present opportunitie of serving the Lord's providence in the use of this meanes, which we hope is of His owne appoynting for our reliefe. But as we have in some measure implored God, who is the blessed Author; so wee thought our selves bound humbly to Petition this honourable and renowned Assembly (convened in Parliament) for redresse of our miseries, being the likeliest instrument, so farre as we apprehend (not limiting the Holy one of Israel) for that end and purpose, which we humbly pray may be duly considered, as we make bold to tender them in these few lines following.

Tyranny of the Prelates.

Our miseries are such as are either Ecclesiastical or Civill; first Ecclesiastical, and that in regard of the usurping Prelates, their lawlesse dependent officers, and their irregular manner of worshipping God prescribed unto, and cruelly imposed upon us by them: for as touching the Prelates themselves, we conceive them to be *the Popes substitutes (per accidens) at the least, if not by solenne covenanted allegiance*; as it may appear by their Lording it over God's heritage, both Pastors and People, *and assuming the power of the Keyes onely to themselves*, contrary to God's sacred word.

Dissolution of their Offices desired.

Therefore we humbly Petition you this honourable Assembly, as you tender the glorie of God, the King's Prerogative, the Subject's libertie, the purity of God's sacred Ordinances, and the welfare of Posteritie, or with the downfall of Antichrist and his adherents, to stirre up the zeale and strength wherewith the Lord hath endued you, and courageously proceed (unto your immortall praise) against these *His mightie enemies, and secret underminers of the good estate of our Church and Common wealth, and utterly dissolve their Offices* which give life to the most superstitious practises in or about the worship of God: And so together *with the ruine of their Antichristian Offices and Government*, we also humbly pray may fall to the ground their impious Courts, with all their dependant Officers (even from the Chancellors to the Parators), their corrupt *Canons, booke of Articles, the English refined Masse-booke of Common Prayer*, with all their popish significant Ceremonies therein contained; the strict imposing whereof, hath driven out of this our English nation many of our most godly and able Ministers, and other his Majesties loyall Subjects, able both for person and estate to have done good service to God, our King and Countrie.

Wee most humbly beg that the revealed will of God contained in the Books of the Old and New Testaments, and recorded for our practise in the

dayes of the gossell, may be that Rule which your Honors would be pleased to follow. O what glory would it be unto our God, our King, and Nation, what beauty unto our Church, what honor unto this Noble Parliament, and what confusion to the enemies of his Majesty and loyall Subjects: if wee might see the morall Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles made old England's Canons, then might our Ministers have liberty to preach God's word, and administer 'the Sacraments according to the mind of Christ, and our Congregation power to execute Ecclesiastical Censures within themselves: Then might his Majesties Subjects meete together, and pray for the King and Queene and their posterity, without punishment and false calumination. O this would make our peace with God, and good men: This would make our Land impregnable, and our Soldiers courageable; This would unite our Kingdome in peace, and cause us and our little ones to sleepe in safety: This would cal backe the banished, and release the Lord's imprisoned: This would advance our Mordecais, and hang our wicked Hamans: This would replant our conscionable Ministers, and supplant the Lordly Prelacy: This would take away illegal exactions, and bring our people to due subjection; this would take away extorted Herriots, excessive fines, and unlimited boones, for it would learn land-Lords more compassion, and Tenants due submission; yea, this would make a sweete Harmony betwixt Rule and Obedience in all Relations.

Which that it may now happily be effected, we earnestly implore the Lord of Heaven to bend your noble spirits to this great work of God, which so sweetly ushereth al other comforts.

And so we shall ever pray, &c.

THE CHESHIRE PETITION FOR ESTABLISHING OF THE COMMON PRAYER BOOK AND SUPPRESSION OF SCHISMATIKES PRESENTED TO THE KING'S MAJESTY, AND FROM HIM RECOMMENDED TO THE HOUSE OF PEERS BY THE LORD KEEPER.

Cheshire Petition for
Episcopacy,
1644.

Your Petitioners, &c., Do humbly present to your mature consideration that the present disorders of many turbulent and ill-disposed spirits are such as give not only occasion of present discontent to your Petitioners, but seeme to import some ill event without early prevention.

The pure seed of our Faith (the Doctrine of the true reformed Protestant Religion, established by so many Acts of Parliament, and so harmoniously concurring with the Confessions of all other Reformed Churches) being tainted with the tares of divers Sects and Schismes lately sprung up amongst us. . . The Liturgy wherein the famous Church of England, our dear mother, hath just cause to glory; and may she long flourish in the practise of so blessed a liturgie; yet it is now not only depraved by many of those who should teach conformity to established laws, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All these daily practised, with confidence, without punishment, to the great dejection of many sound Protestants, and not only seem to portend but menace some great alteration. And not occasioning so great insultation and rejoicing in some separatists, as they

The Bible the true Book of Canons.

containing themselves within the bounds of civil government do commit many tumultuous (if not sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers churches.

Revision dan-
gerous.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehensive of the dangerous consequences of innovation, and much scandalized at the present disorders, Do all unanimously pray that there be admitted no innovation of Doctrine or Liturgy, that holy public service being so fast rooted by a long settled continuance in this Church, that in our opinions and judgments it cannot be altered (unless by the advice and consent of some National Synod) without an universal discontent. And that some speedy course be taken to suppress such Schismatiques and Separatists whose factious spirits do evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray.*

Puritan Ani-
madversions.

In reply to this latter petition, the Puritan, Thomas Paget, published certain animadversions. He speaks of it as "that unworthy Remonstrance," and says, "This is a sad consequence of Prelacy in Cheshire. Ah and alas! that Cheshire—the *chief shire*—not long ago reputed and deservedly esteemed for the profession and power of religion more excellent than their neighbours, should now turn to a degenerate plant of a strange vine to the Lord. But yet it may be thought in a charitable construction, that the most of them subscribed the Remonstrance in their simplicity, not knowing whereto it tended, or else in an inconsiderate haste, being urged to do so quickly what they did, since dispatch was the life of the business and no copies permitted to be taken. Howbeit it is not to be doubted that He that walketh amid the golden candlesticks doth graciously take knowledge of many names in Cheshire, it may be 7,000, that, as Juda, do yet rule with God and are faithful to the saints." This writer also intimates that the framers of the other petition "do not seek for Presbytery, but seem rather to affect a popular government." That petition indicates an Independent, rather than a Presbyterian bias.

The Grand
Remonstrance
Dec. 1, 1641.

On the re-assembling of Parliament the Grand Remonstrance was debated, agreed upon, and presented to the King. It

* Published together with a letter to the Bishops, by Sir Thomas Aston, Bart., 1641. Annexed to the Petition were two extracts from sermons preached at S. John's, Chester, and at Knutsford, by Samuel Eaton, who was just returned from New England.

contained the strongly-worded charge against the bishops that "they tell the people that our meddling with the power of Episcopacy hath caused sectaries and conventicles, when it is Idolatry and the Popish ceremonies introduced into the Church by command of the Bishops, which have not only debarred the people from them, but expelled them from the kingdom." It further declares, "Our intention is to reduce within bounds that exorbitant power which the Prelates have assumed unto themselves, so contrary both to the word of God and to the laws of the land."

It is not needful here to trace the King's suicidal conduct upon receiving this Remonstrance; the successive acts of force whereby he sought to sustain his unconstitutional despotism, especially the attempted Arrest of the Five Members. The Parliament had marked out for itself in the Remonstrance its future course, and in accordance therewith there followed the impeachment of the twelve bishops for treason, and the organization of the Militia, together with the appointment of Deputy Lieutenants in the several counties to carry out the decrees of Parliament. A division now became manifest in most English counties between the Royalists and Prelatists on one hand, the Parliamentarians and Puritans on the other. Cheshire sent up to Parliament two Declarations to the effect that "as it is a sacred truth that a kingdom divided cannot stand, so it is a legal principle that his Majesty is the head and the Parliament the representative body of his kingdom, and in the cordial union of his Majesty and his Parliament consists the safety, glory, and happiness thereof." "The King and Parliament are like Hypocrites' twins; they laugh and cry, live and die together, and both of them are so rooted in our hearts that we cannot disjoin them."

December 30,
1641.

July 20, 1642.

August 12.

The prevailing feeling of the county was decidedly in favour of the Parliament, and the Royalists were in a small and hopeless minority. Being people of influence however, noblemen and landlords, they sought to coerce their tenants and to muster an army for the King. The following extract from an account

Majority in
Cheshire for
the Parliament

written at the time shows the state of parties in the county :—

The Array
versus the
Militia.

The Commission of Array, for the county of Chester, having long oppressed the country by taking their money, arms, horses, and compelling the inhabitants between sixteen and sixty years of age frequently to meet at places by them appointed, under great penalties; some gentlemen in the county, of generous spirits, began to raise up a body for their own defence, and this course proved successful. Many thousands discovered themselves which way their hearts inclined, who formerly durst not appear for the militia. The Commission of Array were forsaken of their own tenants, over whom they had cruelly tyrannized, and the body of the county in a short time grew so vast that they possessed themselves of divers towns most considerable for the securing of themselves and the whole county: Nantwich was the chief, and this was their rendezvous.

The Array fled to Chester for sanctuary, Master Bridgeman taking the government of the city, who was as imperious as the Bishop his father among the ministers. The recorder, the two Gamuls, and Master Thorp, were the leaders of the Malignant party. A council was holden at the Palace, where the Bishop, his sonne, and the Lord Kilmurray were chief, but the Lady Cholmondely was to hold up all, without whom nothing could pass. These were the devisers, but Sir Edward Savage and other papistical and malignant persons were expeditious to execute.

Conduct of
Royalist
troops.

When they perceived the citizens offended at their usurpations, the hearts of their soldiers turned against them, they sought a *Pacification* between them and the Deputy Lieutenants, Mr. Marbury and Mr. Mainwaring. Tarporley, midway between Chester and Nantwich, was the place, and Monday, 19th December, the time. . . . Colonel Hastings sent his troops to Mr. Lancaster's house, the pastor of Tarporley, a painful and pious preacher. Thither the Lord Cholmley, who is Mr. Lancaster's parishioner, sent many of his and Lord Rivers' horse, that fed upon his hay and corn, and carried Mr. Lancaster's hay and barley in the sheaves and littered their horses with the barley, though there was plenty of oat-straw in the barn close by. Lord Cholmley said that Mr. Lancaster lost too little if he lost all, and called him a stinking rascal, with other such opprobrious speeches. . . . In the same town they have plundered the hay, fuel, and all the household goods of Mr. Ley, to the veriest bed cords: and at Utlington they have beaten the servants and taken rich apparel and furniture to the value of 200*l.* and more. They have plundered Stapleford, Mr. Bruen's house, and Mr. Judson in Rushton, of all that he had, which they rate at 100*l.*, and William Welde of the same town to the value of above 15*l.*; Mr. Torshell's house also, the pastor of Bunburie. In a word, there is not an household in all these parts reputed religious, but less or more they have pillaged them.*

* The *Unfaithfulness of the Cavaliers*.—Civil War Tracts, British Museum.

The Treaty of Pacification referred to in this extract was an attempted resolution of neutrality that the Royalists wished to enforce upon the county in order to check the Parliamentarians.

Treaty of
Pacification at
Bunbury,
December 23.

It was to the effect "that there be an absolute cessation of arms
" from henceforth within this county, and that the fortifications
" of Chester, Namptwich, Stopford, Knutsford, or any town,
" lately made by either part be presently demolished. That the
" Commissioners of Array procure from his Majesty a letter
" declaring that he will send no forces into the county. Signed,
" Robert Kilmurrey, Orlando Bridgeman; William Marbury,
" Henry Mainwaring." Immediately upon the adoption of this
resolution the Royalists broke it, and the Parliamentarians
perceived that they had been deceived. A protest was printed,
entitled "Neutrality Condemned," excusing the deputy lieutenants
for affixing their signatures, thus:—"The gentlemen
" that did subscribe are not so much blameworthy as those that
" did by importunate solicitation persuade them to it;" and
giving the following account of the opposing parties:—"The
" well affected of this county to the proceedings of Parliament
" being jealous of the safety of their Religion, Laws, and
" Liberties, and withal weary of their taskmasters, resolved to
" get up and be doing, and to crouch no longer like Issachar
" betwixt their burdens. In number and strength they presently
" exceed their adversaries, which makes their opposers first fly
" for refuge to Chester, and being there, for policy to the
" Bishop's palace, at the desire no doubt of the Popish party,
" who conceited that what came from thence was *e cathedra*,
" and not capable of error or miscarriage."

Neutrality
Condemned.

The Royalists in Cheshire were prompt in obeying the King's Commission of Array by seizing and imprisoning several Puritan ministers and laymen who sided with the Parliament. A Declaration was issued by the Lords and Commons "concerning the Releasing of divers worthy Ministers and other
" his Majesty's good subjects in the County of Chester who
" are imprisoned and bound over to the next Assise for refusing
" to obey the illegal Commission of Array, and yeelding

Declaration
Concerning
Cheshire,
Sept. 8, 1642.

“obedience to the Ordinance and Command of Parliament.”

“The Declaration thus begins :—

Plundered
Ministers.

Whereas information hath beene given, that divers persons wel-affected to the peace and safety of the King and Kingdome, have been seized, apprehended, and imprisoned, and divers worthy Ministers Attached and bound over to the next Assizes to be holden at Chester . . . the Lords and Commons do hereby declare all those to be enemies to the Commonwealth and disturbers of the peace of the Kingdome who seize or detain in prison any persons for obeying the Ordinances and Commands of Parliament, or for refusing the Commission of Array. And do require and command all Lieutenants, Justices of the peace, and the Keeper of the Castle of Chester and of other prisons in the said county, to take especial notice that so those that are already imprisoned may be discharged and no further prosecuted or molested by any usurped power or authority against the lawes of this Land.

Among the ministers thus imprisoned and plundered by the Royalists, according to a list published by themselves, were William Peartree late of Nantwich, Edward Burghall of Acton, Richard Fowler of Barthomley, Richard Oseley late of Waverham, Richard Eaton of Audlem, and Nathanael Lancaster of Tarporley.

Committee
for Plundered
Ministers,
1642.

These cases of violence on the part of the Royalists were so numerous, especially against the ministers who sided with the Parliament, that a Committee was formed in London “for the relief of such Godly and well-affected ministers as have been plundered;” which took a leading part in directing the appointments to the various parishes throughout England from 1642 till 1653. The minute books of this important Committee are some of them in the British Museum Library, and some in the Record Office,* and in the beginning of these interesting volumes we find the following entries describing its objects :—

Its Objects.

December, 1642. This Committee or any four of them are to consider of the fittest way for the reliefe of such godly and well affected ministers as have been plundered; and likewise to consider what malignant persons have benefices herein or about this town, whose livings being sequestered, there may others supply their cures and receive the profits.

October 18, 1643. It is this day ordered by the Commons assembled in

* Additional MSS., British Museum, 15669-72. Record Office, Domestic Interregnum, 286, 287, 319. Extracts from these volumes relating to Cheshire will be found in the Notes.

Parliament, that the Committee for Plundered Ministers shall have power to enquire after malignant schoolmasters.

October 21, 1643. Ordered, that it be especially recommended to the Committee for Plundered Ministers to take a great care that the Ministers of the Assembly of Divines be taken care of and provided for in the first place.

27th July, 1643. That the Committee for Plundered Ministers shall nominate none to any Parsonage or Benefice but such as first shall be examined by the Assembly of Divines or any five of them, and approved by certificate under their hands.

That the Committee shall have power to consider of the informations against scandalous ministers, though there be no malignancy proved against them; and shall have power to put out such as are of scandalous life, these scandals being proved against them.*

This committee sat in London, and possessed absolute authority in the appointment of ministers throughout England. When cases of dispute between the patron or former holder of the living and the minister nominated occurred, they sometimes required the contending parties to appear before them with their witnesses, but more frequently referred the dispute for settlement to the Committee of Parliament for the county. They could call in the help of the sheriff and justices of the peace in any place to aid and assist in enforcing obedience to their orders, and could require the Serjeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons or his deputy to bring any one who neglected their orders in safe custody to answer for his contempt. In all disputes the final appeal was to them. An Act was passed May 31st, 1650, limiting their power by the appointment of a Committee for Compounding Orders for Payment to Plundered Ministers. The orders of the Committee for Plundered Ministers were first sent to this committee, who upon approval confirmed them, entered them with their auditor, and forwarded them for execution to the Committees for Sequestration in the several counties. †

Its Powers.

Committee for
Compounding
Orders.

* Additional MSS., British Museum, 15669.

† The Minute Book of this Committee for Compounding Orders, containing entries from October 1652 to September 4th, 1655, is in the Record Office, Domestic Interregnum, No. 319. In 1654 the wording of the orders is altered and "Petitions to," "Presentations from his Highness the Lord Protector," are named. The signatures to the Orders are S.M., W.M., E.W., R.M., A.S., J.R., E.C., J.V.

Westminster
Assembly,
July 1, 1643.

The famous Assembly of Divines now convened by Parliament "to settle the government and Liturgy of the Church of England," consisted of thirty laymen, viz., ten Peers and twenty Commoners, and 121 Divines. John Ley, M.A., of Great Budworth, was the member of the Assembly for Cheshire. Thomas Case, another of the Divines, was for two years rector of Stockport. The Independents were represented by the "five Dissenting brethren," as they are called, who pleaded for Liberty of Conscience,—Thomas Goodwin, Sydrach Simpson, Philip Nye, Jeremiah Burroughs, William Bridge.

The Covenant,
27th August.

The Solemn League and Covenant was almost immediately prepared and adopted, and taken by the members of the House of Commons on the 25th September. The chief heads of the oath were, that we shall endeavour, 1st—The preservation of the Reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, the reformation of religion in England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the word of God and the example of the best reformed churches. 2nd—The extirpation of Popery and Prelacy. 3rd—To preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliaments, and the liberties of the kingdoms, and to defend and preserve the King's Majesty's person and authority.* Copies of the Covenant were sent to the Committees of Parliament in the several counties, to commanders-in-chief and officers in the army, and ministers were required to read it to the people "the next Lord's day after they have prepared the people to take it." Walker in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, a folio volume published in the latter end of Anne's reign, "with all the virulence and partiality of the High Church faction in that age," to adopt the words of Hallam, "endeavoured to support those who reckoned the clergy sequestered for refusing the Covenant at eight thousand; a palpable overstatement upon his own showing, for he cannot produce near two thousand names, after a most diligent investigation."†

"Sufferings of
the Clergy."

* Neal's History of the Puritans, Toulmin's edition, vol. iii., pages 59—62.

† Hallam's Constitutional History, vol. i., page 585.

Joseph Hall, bishop of Norwich, himself sequestered, and from his position well able to ascertain the truth, nor prone to err through prejudice for the Parliament, confesses that “the Covenant was generally swallowed of both clergy and laity.” ‡ The following are the names given by Walker of clergymen sequestered in Cheshire :—

Sequestered
Clergy
in Cheshire.

John Bridgeman, bishop ;	William Nicholls, Cheadle ;
George Snell, archdeacon ;	William Bispham,* prebend ;
Charles Duckworth, prebend ;	Edward Morton, Tattenhall ;
Robert Morgan, prebend ;	Thomas Mallory, dean ;
Henry Bridgeman,* Barrow ;	William Seddon,* Eastham ;
George Burges, Woodchurch ;	— Eaton, Aldford ;
— Wright,* Harthill ;	Thomas Bridges,* Malpas ;
Patrick Carr,* Audlem ;	John Saring, Nantwich ;
Thomas Huchinson,* Astbury ;	John Robinson, Brereton ;
John Ford, † Over ;	Samuel Shipton,* Alderley ;
Edward Wyrley, Mobberley ;	Peter Harrison, † Cheadle ;
William Hutchins, Gawsworth ;	Thomas Wright,* Wilmslow ;
— Smith, Bowden ;	Rowland Haywood,* Frodsham ;
— Morston, Christleton ;	Thomas Glover, West Kirby ;
— Essex, prebend ;	— Hunt, † S. Mary's, Chester.

This list contains only thirty sequestrations from upwards of a hundred parishes and chapelries in the county, so that, on Walker's showing, two-thirds of the Cheshire clergy complied with the Covenant. He is probably mistaken in three of the names given (those marked †), and he has omitted a like number who should be included, so that we may reckon the sequestered clergy of the county in 1643-4 to have numbered about thirty; most of them being sequestered, not as “scandalous ministers” for immorality, nor on religious grounds for refusing the Covenant, but as delinquents, or Malignants, *i.e.* champions for the Royalist cause in opposition to Parliament. Thirteen of them (marked with an asterisk) lived till the Restoration, and were reinstated in their livings.

‡ Hall's Life, attached to his Works, folio edition, page 17.

- The Directory,
Jan. 3, 1644-5.
- Aug. 23, 1645.
- June 6, 1646.
- Self-Denying
Ordinance,
April 3, 1645.
- Letter about
Cheshire,
Oct. 10, 1646.
Petition of
Cheshire
Independents.
- Parliament did not set aside the Common Prayer Book until the Assembly of Divines had prepared the Directory for public worship, which was not a form of devotion, but contained general directions regarding public prayer and preaching. It was enacted that all ministers should read the Directory to their people the next Lord's Day after their receiving it, and that persons using the Common Prayer Book should be fined, for the first offence 5*l.*, for the second 10*l.*, and for the third a whole year's imprisonment. Petitions were now sent up from various counties, praying for the establishment of the Presbyterian form of church government; and accordingly an ordinance was passed by Parliament ordering the formation of classes and the election of elders, and the division of England and Wales into classical Presbyteries. But the plan was not carried out excepting in London and Lancashire. The Independents were already gaining influence, and were checking the intolerance of the Presbyterians, who in the Westminster Assembly had an overwhelming majority. One of the most important clauses in the Self-denying Ordinance was that religious men might now serve in Parliament without taking the Covenant as a first preliminary; and the liberty herein allowed was strongly advocated by the Independents throughout the land. A Presbyterian, writing from Lancashire, 10th October, 1646, says:—
- Since our Petition was received into the House of Commons the Sectaries have promoted an *anti-petition* in Cheshire; they style it 'The Petition of the peaceable and well affected, that desire *liberty of conscience*, as was promised by the House of Commons in their declaration which they ordered formerly to be read in the churches.' They have inserted some other plausible things in it the better to draw on hands, promote it with great secrecy, shew it to none but such as beforehand they have some assurance will sign it. It was framed and set on foot by the members of the church at Duckingfield, but I am confident they admit to sign it Seekers, Soul-sleepers, Anabaptists, rigid Brownists, &c. We hear of one minister in our county who hath signed it that is a common drunkard, and two or three young scholars who have begun to preach without ordination; one of which affirmed to me and some others that he would defend Independency with his blood. Master Taylour and Eaton are wonderfully active both in Cheshire and Lancashire. They much improve —, who is become a great zealot for them, and hath threatened some of the Godly ministers that live near him to make their place too hot for them for denying their pulpits to Mr.

Eaton. We have through the mercy of God a learned and active clergy in our county; but Cheshire is miserably become a prey to the Sectaries; they have set up already there two or three Independent churches, and are setting up two or three more. — hath so far encouraged them, discouraged and borne down the orthodox and well affected, that they could never to this day get anything done against them.*

This curious epistle illustrates the correctness of the witness of Adam Martindale, who says regarding 1646, "This was that bustling yeare wherein the Presbyterial and Congregationall governments were like Jacob and Esau strugling in the wombe. The latter not waiting for a civill sanction as the former did was got into possession at Duckenfield, in Cheshire . . . at Gorton . . . and at Birch. The Presbyterians were as busie (especially some) to get their government settled all over the county [Lancashire], and that all separate congregations might be suppressed. A *Petition* was set on foot that summer to that purpose, subscribed by 12,578 hands; though (as is usual in these cases) multitudes of the subscribers were drawne on by the persuasions and example of others, and some of them soon after subscribed an *anti-petition* to it; but at last leave was got and an establishment, with some limitations, of the Presbyteriall government throughout the county."†

The Busting Year, 1646.

Presbyterial Government set up in Lancashire, 1646.

Upon this temporary ascendancy of Presbyterianism, the ministers of Cheshire, after the example of their brethren in London and in other counties, adopted and signed an attestation, which had been drawn up by Mr. Ley of Astbury. It was entitled "*An Attestation to the Testimony of our Reverend Brethren of the province of London to the Truth of Jesus Christ, and to our Solemn League and Covenant*;" resolved on by the ministers of Cheshire at their meeting May 2nd, and subscribed at their next meeting [at Northwich, according to page 10] July 6th, 1648." One of the sections of this essay is headed thus:—"Divers of the Independent way, learned, godly, and charitable to their godly brethren, though Presbyterians. Yet

Cheshire Attestation, 1648.

* Edwards's *Gangræna*, page 167.

† Autobiography, pages 61, 62; published by the Chetham Society.

Presbyterian
judgment of
Independency

“Independency an error, and, as some enlarge the tenet, the
“nurse if not the mother of many dangerous deviations both
“from truth and piety.” The following is an extract from this
section:—

Though we acknowledge divers of our brethren of the Independent way to be learned, godly, charitable, and kind to their Presbyterian brethren (and some of them to be adverse in a great measure to such a toleration as you might truly term intolerable and abominable, which that Catholic advocate and patron of all irreligious religions proposeth), yet as we take the tenet of Independency to be an error in itself, so do we find it by sound reason and sad experience to be, if not the natural mother, yet such a tender nurse and patroness to heretical opinions of all kinds that to it we may (for a great part) ascribe the luxuriant growth and spreading of errors, heresies, &c., so far over this kingdom. We hope the godly, both Presbyterians and Independents, will be so wise as to beware of such a breach as may encourage and confirm their enemies, whether Popish, prelatical, or profane, against them both.

Signatures to
the Cheshire
Attestation.

The following is a list of the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation—fifty-nine in all:—

JOHN LEY, for the present preacher at Astbury;
THOMAS LANGLEY, minister at Middlewich;
HENRY MASY, pastor of Oswald's in Chester;
JOHN GLENDOLE, pastor of Peter's in Chester;
THOMAS UPTON, pastor of Trinity in Chester;
WILLIAM PEARETREE, pastor of Mary's in Chester;
BENJAMIN BALL, pastor of John's in Chester;
HUGH BURROUGHS, pastor of Christleton;
JOHN MARIGOLD, pastor of Waverton;
JOSIAS CLARK, pastor of Tattenhall;
RICHARD CHAPMAN, pastor of Thornton-in-the-Moores;
GEORGE COTTINGHAM, pastor of Plemstall;
JAMES HUTCHINSON, pastor of Dodlestone;
RANDALL GUEST, pastor of Poulford;
WILLIAM ANDERTON, pastor de Coppenhall;
JOSHUA GOLBORNE, pastor of Eccleston;
RANDALL ADAMS, minister of Wallasey;
WILLIAM GLEGGE, minister of Haswall;
BRYAN LASCELLS, minister of Thurstaston;
RALPH POOLE, minister of Bebington;

SAMUEL MARSDEN, minister of Neston ;
ROBERT FRECLETON, minister at Backford ;
RICHARD HOPWOOD, minister of Burton ;
WILLIAM HEWETSON, minister of Shotwick ;
HENRY HATTON, minister of Overchurch ;
JOHN MURCOT, minister of West Kirby ;
DANIEL SUNDERLAND, pastor of Bunbury ;
NATHANAEL LANCASTER, pastor of Tarporley ;
SABBATH CLARK, pastor of Tarvin ;
JOHN BOYER, pastor of Barrow ;
SAMUEL BOWDEN, pastor of Frodesham ;
GEORGE MAINWARING, pastor of Malpas ;
WILLIAM HOLLAND, pastor of Malpas ;
JOHN FORD, pastor of Over ;
JOHN ROBERTS, pastor of Aldford ;
WILLIAM BRIDGES, pastor de Farndon ;
SAMUEL CATHARALL, pastor of Hanley ;
JAMES MARBURY, pastor of Davenham ;
RICHARD FOWLER, pastor of Barthomley ;
EDWARD BURGHALL, pastor of Acton ;
JOHN PEMBERTON, pastor of Congleton ;
JOSEPH COPE, pastor of Sandbach ;
RANDALL SILLITOE, pastor of Lowton ;
THOMAS JEINSON, pastor of Presbury ;
JAMES WATMOUGH, pastor of Bowden ;
RALPH HALL, pastor of Knotsford ;
EPHRAIM ELCOCK, pastor of Runckorne ;
JOHN HULME, minister at Great Budworth ;
ROBERT STRINGER, minister at Macclesfield ;
NICOLAS STEPHENSON, minister at Alderley ;
NEHEMIA WORTHINGTON, minister at Chelford ;
NEHEMIA POTTE, minister at Wincle ;
RICHARD JACKSON, minister at Namptwich ;
DA. KERR, minister at Audlin ;
HUMPHRY WHITTINGHAM, pastor at Wistaston ;
THOMAS SWAN, pastor of Baddiley ;

Signatures to
the Cheshire
Attestation,
1648.

HENRY GRIFFITH, minister at Wrenbury;
 EDWARD MERCER, minister at Burldam Chappel;
 HENRY NEWCOME, minister at Goosetree.

Hopes of Pres-
 byterians.

The fact that so many ministers in Cheshire as in other counties put their names to an attestation so thoroughly in favour of the Covenant and against toleration, shows how general was their opinion that Presbyterianism would now be firmly established in England. The King was in the hands of the Scots; he had even pledged himself to the Covenant; the whole of Scotland was with the English Presbyterian Royalists, and they were confident of ultimate triumph.

Strength of
 Independents.

In reality their overthrow was at hand. Indications from time to time had appeared of the growing influence of the Independents—the advocates of toleration, and only a few months after the Cheshire ministers adopted their attestation, the army published by way of probation, and tendered to the consideration of the people, a paper called the AGREEMENT OF THE PEOPLE, proposing to change the form of government into a Commonwealth, without a King or House of Lords; and that “all who profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, however
 “ differing in judgment from the doctrine, discipline, and worship
 “ publicly held forth, shall be protected in the profession of their
 “ faith and exercise of their religion according to their con-
 “ sciences, so as they abuse not this liberty to the civil injury of
 “ others, or the disturbance of the public peace.” The Presbyterians of Lancashire were prompt in replying to this paper, resolving its proposals in the negative and declaring “for the
 “ satisfaction of the conscience and guiding of the practise of
 “ our churches, and for the general good of this church and
 “ nation,” the unlawfulness of subscription to it.*

The Agree-
 ment of the
 People,
 Dec. 11, 1648.

Presbyterians
 oppose it.

* “The paper called the Agreement of the People taken into considera-
 “ tion, and the lawfulness of subscription to it examined and resolved in the
 “ negative, by the ministers of Christ in the province of Lancaster. With
 “ fifty-four signatures,” bearing date March 6th, 1648-9. See also Neal,
 vol. iii., pages 417, 447.

§ III. COMMONWEALTH, 1648—1660.

EVENTS now transpired in quick succession, which altered the position of religious parties and prevented the ascendancy of the Presbyterian Royalists. The Scotch army, led by Duke Hamilton, marched southward into Lancashire, were defeated at Preston and routed at Warrington by Cromwell and the Roundheads, and fled across Cheshire to Nantwich, where the remnant were made prisoners. Cromwell then marched victorious into Scotland, as far as Edinburgh, and obliged the Scots to renounce their engagement against England. Upon his return the army presented to Parliament its humble unanimous Remonstrance, followed by its Declaration, which Parliament after much debating declined to consider, receiving the King's concessions at Newport as a ground of settlement. Whereupon Colonel Pride, with his regiment of foot, guards the entrance to the House of Commons, and purges it as the members enter of forty-one Presbyterian Royalists on the Wednesday, and others, making in all a hundred, afterwards. The trial of Charles Stuart followed in the month of January; his death warrant was signed on the 29th, Judge Bradshaw, a Cheshire man, taking the lead; and on the day following, as the Prayer Book by law established says, "the blessed martyr suffered." The abolition of Monarchy, together with the House of Lords, and the setting up of the COMMONWEALTH and COUNCIL OF STATE caused as great a change in the Church as it did in the State. Presbyterian Royalism was no longer dominant. In place of the Solemn League and Covenant, a new and very short oath was appointed, called the ENGAGEMENT, viz., *I do promise to be true and faithful to the Commonwealth as it is now established, without a King or House of Lords.* This was to be subscribed by all persons of eighteen years of age and upwards; and those who refused it were excluded from holding any place of trust in the Commonwealth, and even from the benefit of the law. It was to be taken by all civil and

Army Remonstrance,
Nov. 20, 1648.

Pride's Purge,
December 6.

Charles I.
beheaded,
Jan. 30, 1648-9.

The Engagement to
the Commonwealth.

Stumbling-
block to the
Presbyterians.

military officers within a limited time on pain of forfeiting their places, and it was to be sworn to and subscribed by all ministers, heads of colleges, &c. "No minister was to be admitted "to any ecclesiastical living, or to enjoy any preferment in the "Church unless he qualified himself by taking the Engagement "within six months, publicly in the face of the congregation."* The Presbyterian ministers who had taken the Covenant, and had so recently ratified their oath by adopting and signing an Attestation thereto, felt this new test to be a serious stumbling-block.† It gave rise to bitter discussion among them, and though as in other counties many of the Cheshire ministers took it, some of them were ejected from their cures for refusing it. Adam Martindale of Rosthern gives the following interesting account of the debates in Cheshire regarding it.

Cheshire
debates about
the Engage-
ment.

"This (the Engagement) occasioned many little pamphlets "pro and con, but little to my satisfaction. I thought Mr. John "Durie's discourse‡ for it had more words than weight, and the "bitter answer to him more malice than matter. Much of that "sort of papers was spent in a charge of usurpation upon the "governors by one partie, and warding it off by another, which "signified little to me who was satisfied of the usurpation, but "doubted whether, notwithstanding that, the engagement was "unlawful. All the ministers of any account for ability and "good conversation in the neighbourhood that I used to con- "verse with, save onely one, whose parts lay more towards "prayer and practicall preaching than such mixed controversies, "were for subscribing it. So also were my friends generally in "Rotherstone parish, who would have been sadly grieved if I "had been sent from them for refusing, *as some good ministers*

* Neal, vol. iv., page 8. Walker, page 146.

† Baxter says "the Sectarian party swallowed the Engagement easily, and "so did the King's old cavaliers, so far as I was acquainted with them, but "the Presbyterians and the moderate Episcopal men refused it."

‡ "Considerations concerning the present Engagement, whether it may "be lawfully taken, Yea or No? By John Dury. London, 1650." Also, "A "Case of Conscience concerning Ministers meddling with State matters in "or out of their Sermons."

“*were.*” Martindale then gives a full account of a meeting of ministers at Warrington, at which he was the only champion for signing the Engagement, arguing with them upon Jeremiah xxix. 7, Romans xiii. &c. He continues:—

Many that were employed by the imposers of this new engagement assured us that the design was no more than that we should behave ourselves peaceably under that government, so long as it should continue . . . And indeed it was rationally to believe that by people’s being true and faithful to them they could mean no more but that they would live quietly and peaceably without plotting against them : . . . for they deserve to be try’d for fools if they believed that either the Royalists (which yet generally subscribed, so farre as I can heare,—I am sure some high ones did) or the Presbyterians, which generally were more averse to it, would ever be their cordial friends, so as to suffer with or for them, or to help them up again if once thrown down. . . . About the same time came out an answer to the Exercitation by Mr. Rous, and a learned (though little treatise) called the Northern Subscribers’ Plea, which gave many satisfaction and something furthered mine. So that at last, being called on by the Justices, five or six ministers in our neighbourhood subscribed, whereof I was one.

Reasons for signing it.

Besides the Northern Subscribers’ Plea mentioned by Martindale in this extract, a Discourse was published by Samuel Eaton, the Independent, of Dukinfield, entitled “The oath of allegiance and the National covenant proved to be non-obliging.” This was the substance of a private letter written to a friend which had been opened before it reached its destination, copied, and widely circulated in Lancashire and Cheshire. Mr. Gee of Eccleston, in Lancashire, prepared a Treatise entitled “A plea for Non-subscribers, or the Grounds and reasons of many ministers in Cheshire, Lancashire, and the parts adjoining, for their refusal of the late Engagement; modestly propounded either for receiving of satisfaction (which they much desire) or of indemnity till satisfaction be laid before them which they cannot but expect.” Printed in the year 1650. This book “came out too late to prevent any in our parts subscribing the Engagement,” says Martindale, “but though it did not convince me fully that I had sinned by subscribing, it bred in me some doubts and scruples.”*

Reasons for refusing it.

* Autobiography, page 101. He adds:—“In one of these fits of sickness my scruples concerning subscribing the Engagement became heavy, so
Qualms of conscience.

Chief ground
of objection.

That which made the Engagement so distasteful to the Presbyterians was the circumstance that they had by taking the Covenant bound themselves by solemn oath "to have before their eyes the honour and happiness of the King's Majesty and his posterity, and to maintain and defend the power and privileges of Parliament," *i.e.* consisting of two Houses, Lords as well as Commons. The Engagement required them to be true to a Commonwealth *without* either King or House of Lords. This hindrance was not felt by the Episcopalian ministers who had refused the Covenant; for them the terms of Conformity were easier than ever. Many of them, therefore, gathered Episcopal congregations, or obtained parishes and used the Common Prayer-book.* In like manner many Independent ministers who had been kept out by the Covenant now obtained cures, and by them the pulpits, vacated by the non-engaging Presbyterians, were filled.

First Association of
Cheshire
Ministers,
Oct. 20, 1653.

Presbyterian government had not been established in Cheshire; the Independent element was too strong in the county to permit it. But a friendly spirit prevailed among the ministers, and a VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION was formed among them of both ministers and churches for mutual comfort and advice. Adam Martindale gives the following account of it.

"In September 1653, at a meeting of ministers at Wilmeslow, the 14th day of that month, a motion was made, and a letter drawne to invite many other ministers to give them the meeting at Knutsford on the 20th of October, being the

"that I had a desire that two of my brethren that were of contrary persuasion would discourse in my chamber, for which I was as fit, considering the weakness of my body and braine, as to hear a lecture in Arabicke. After some time, when I was perfectly well again, and had leisure calmly to consider the thing, though I was not able to say it was absolutely sinfull, yet having suffered so much trouble of conscience by that unhappie thing, I took occasion in the pulpit to complain how hardly those tender people that pretended so much to liberty of conscience had dealt with their brethren in imposing burdens upon them; and mentioning the Engagement, I told the people that had I known so much as I now did, I beleeve I should never have meddled with it." Henry Newcome had similar qualms of conscience about having signed it. See page 206 of this volume.

*Neal's Puritans, vol. iv., page 55.

“ exercise day, as accordingly many did ; and there they agreed upon a voluntary association of themselves and their churches, if it could be done, for mutual advice and strengthening one another. Into this societie I quickly after fell, and met with much comfort and assistance ; but by this meanes our worke was encreased by meeting frequently about classically businesse, and preaching in our turnes a lecture when we so met. If it be asked how I got satisfaction to act with them now, when I had scrupled some things concerning *classicall government* at the time of my being at Gorton, I answer, *the case was not the same*. Here was onely a VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION of such as were desirous to advise and assist one another, nor did we look upon ourselves as having any pastorall inspection over one anothers’ congregations ; but onely to be helpful to them in a charitable way ; we pretended not to any power to convent any before us, or suppress any minister because dwelling in such a place, within such a verge, and differing from us in practice.” This Association worked well, and a similar one was formed in 1659 at Manchester among the Lancashire ministers, but upon the Restoration both were dissolved.

Not authoritative but voluntary.

In the same year that this religious and peaceful movement was begun in Cheshire, great changes were transpiring in national affairs. On the 20th of April Cromwell had dismissed the Rump ; on July 4th he summoned the Little (Barebones) Parliament, which dissolved itself on December 12th, and four days afterwards Cromwell was elected LORD PROTECTOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH, with the “ *Instrument of Government* ” and “ *Council* of fifteen or of twenty-one.”

Cromwell Protector, Dec. 16, 1653.

Four out of the Forty-two Articles which made the Instrument of government related to religion. They were similar to those embodied in the “ Agreement of the People ; ” providing that none should be compelled to conform to the public religion by penalties or otherwise, and that Christians differing in judgment shall be alike protected in the profession of their faith.

According to these articles Cromwell devised a scheme for Church government in the country, which in its working proved

The Triers,
March 20,
1653-4.

more liberal and satisfactory than the Committee for Plundered Ministers and the Presbyteries had been. "Thirty-eight chosen men, the acknowledged flower of English Puritanism, are nominated a SUPREME COMMISSION FOR THE TRIAL OF PUBLIC PREACHERS. Any person pretending to hold a church living, or levy tithes or clergy dues in England, has first to be tried and approved by these men.*" Nine of them were laymen, twenty-nine clergymen—Independents, Presbyterians, and two or three Baptists. Any five were sufficient to approve, but no number under nine had power to reject.

The Expurgators,
Aug. 28, 1654.

A second ordinance was made in the August following, by which lay commissioners (*Expurgators* they were called) were nominated in all counties in England, from fifteen to thirty in each county, whose duty was to inquire into and eject scandalous, ignorant, insufficient ministers. Ten or more of the gravest and most noted ministers were to work with these commissioners in each county, to assist them in judging of cases of ignorance or insufficiency, but not to take part in judging cases of scandalous life. The ministers thus chosen acted also as assistants to the Commissioners for the Approbation of Public Ministers.†

Liberty of
Conscience.

Under the guidance and control of these two commissions—the Triers and the Expurgators—the Church Establishment in England became more national than ever it had been before. Episcopalians, Independents, and Presbyterians, alike received clerical appointments. Many Episcopalians who had been ejected for refusing the Covenant in 1643, many Presbyterians who had been deprived for refusing the Engagement in 1649, were by the Triers examined, approved, and appointed to livings. None were excluded but the "scandalous, ignorant, or insufficient." The aim of Cromwell was to realize liberty of conscience with purity of life, and the success of his

* Carlyle's Cromwell, vol. iii., page 6.

† Thomas Langley, Samuel Langley, Thomas Edge, Samuel Eaton, Henry Newcome, and George Moxon, were among the assistant commissioners for Cheshire.—*Newcome's Autobiography*, pages 47, 373.

method is witnessed to by foes as well as friends. "Liberty of conscience," said the Protector in his first Parliament, "is a natural right; and he that would have it ought to give it. Every sect saith, 'Oh, give me liberty!' But give it him, and to his power he will not yield it to anybody else. Where is our ingenuousness? Liberty of conscience truly is a thing that ought to be reciprocal. . . . All the money of this nation would not have tempted men to fight upon such an account as they have here been engaged in, if they had not had hopes of liberty of conscience better than Episcopacy granted them, or than would have been afforded by a Scots Presbytery,—or an English either."* These were Cromwell's views, to realize them was his aim; and his commissioners—men of known integrity and piety, "the flower of spiritual England," did much to accomplish it. He honestly declares: "There hath not been such a service to England since the Christian religion was perfect in England." Baxter, one of their boldest adversaries, says of the commissioners: "To give them their due they did abundance of good to the church. They saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, drunken teachers, . . . and admitted any that were able, serious preachers, and lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were." Of the ministry he says, "I do not believe that ever England had so noble and faithful a ministry since it was a nation as it hath at this time. Sure I am the change is so great within these twelve years, that it is one of the greatest joys that I ever had in the world to behold it."†

This happy state of things was terminated by the death of Oliver Cromwell; for upon the accession of his son Richard, a good, harmless, but very weak man, the old feuds began to re-appear, and the Presbyterian Royalists, longing for ascendancy, sought the restoration of monarchy. Cheshire became notorious among the English counties through the agitation

Cromwell's sentiments.

Baxter's testimony regarding the Triers;

regarding the Ministry in 1656.

Death of Cromwell, Sept. 3, 1658.

* Carlyle's *Cromwell*, vol. iii., page 54.

† Baxter's *Life*, page 72. Reformed Pastor, pages 104-8.

The Cheshire
Rising,
August 1659.

headed by Sir George Booth, which led to the Cheshire Rising. In a letter to a friend, printed and widely distributed at the time, Sir George Booth thus expresses his designs :—"Consider what " it is we ask, and consider whether it be not the same thing we " have asserted with our lives and fortunes—a *free Parliament*. " And what a slavery is it to our understandings that these men " that now call themselves a Parliament should declare it an " act of illegality and violence in the late aspiring General " Cromwell to dissolve their body in 1653, and not make it the " like in the garbling the whole body of the Parliament from " four hundred to forty in 1648? What is this but to act what " they condemn in others? *A new free Parliament*: This is our " cry." Although no mention was made of the restoration of royalty, the subsequent discovery of two commissions from the King, dated July 22nd and August 9th, proved that this was the real design. Through the influence of Mr. Cook, a Presbyterian minister in Chester, Sir George Booth and his troops gained admission to the city, but the Parliament's forces held the castle. Marching therefore out of Chester, he was met by a body of disciplined troops under General Lambert and totally routed at Winnington Bridge, near Northwich. Many Presbyterian ministers knew of the Rising, but abstained from avowing their sympathies before the Restoration. Philip Henry wrote in his diary, "Lord own them if they truly own Thee." Martindale says, "Had I been so affected I could easily have spoiled " all the sport, for I knew of it a good while before, as my " revered brother Mr. Henry Newcome of Manchester, very " well knows, and could with a post letter easily have prevented " all." Martindale gives a set of reasons why he did not actively engage, two of which are very sufficient. "So soon," he says, "as they were on foot it was easie, without a spirit of prophesy, " to see they were not like to stand." And again, "This army " (if I may call it one) was like Mahomet's Angellical Cockes, " made up of fire and snow; for many, both of the commanders " and soldiers, were not only different but contrariant in their " principles; so as they were no more like to soder firmly

The Rout near
Northwich.

Ministers who
knew of the
Rising.

“together than the iron and clay feet of Nebuchadnezzar’s “image.” This comparison was as applicable to the laymen and clergy at the bottom of the movement as to the soldiers; some were for Parliament and Covenant, others for King and Prelates.

Several of the officers and soldiers under Lord Lambert engaged in quelling the Cheshire Rising, prepared and published a paper entitled *Twenty-one Cheshire Queries*, some of which though coarse are witty. Take for example the following:—

Cheshire
Queries.

1. Whether a man can ever be sure of his meat till he have it in his mouth?

2. Whether the late insurrection in Cheshire was not like a hog shearing, where there is a great cry and but little wool?

3. Whether he that penned the first Declaration for “a free Parliament” were a Cavalier, a Jesuit, or a Fifth-Monarchy man? and whoever ’twas whether he had not better never have barked than not have bitten?

4. Whether the countrymen had not more mind to get in their harvest than to fight?

5. Whether *Jee-ho* be not a better word than *have at all*?

11. Whether it would not be prudently done of the Parliament for the better undeceiving of posterity to make an Act to make void and of none effect the old proverbial speech—*Cheshire, chief of men*?

In reply to the third query it may be said that though Sir G. Booth’s Declaration was ambiguous and jesuitical, his “barking without biting” won for him a title and a fortune at the Restoration. The Cheshire Rising was wittily called the Cheshire Race, but it was soon followed by the accomplishment of the design it failed in. The secluded members of the Long Parliament were restored, and the Convention Parliament recalled Charles II.

The Restora-
tion,
May 29, 1660.

§ IV. CHARLES II. AND JAMES II., 1660—1688.

PRESBYTERIAN Royalism now again thought its triumph complete. It had brought back a King who had sworn allegiance to the Covenant, and who, in the Breda declaration, promised a general pardon and liberty to tender consciences. But the delusion was greater than before. An Act was passed

Act for the Restoration of Sequestered Clergy, Sept. 1660.

for the Confirming and Restoring of Ministers; according to which "every ecclesiastical person, being ordained by ecclesiastical persons before December 25th last, and having not renounced his ordination, who hath been formally, since January 1st, 1642, presented to any ecclesiastical benefice which hath become void to the patron, shall be and continue the real and lawful incumbent." By this Act hundreds of the Royalist clergy were restored, and Presbyterian and other ministers ejected to make way for them. Character was not thought of; Royalism was the one qualification needful. "Nothing was to be seen at court but feasting, hard drinking, revelling, and amorous intrigues, which engendered the most hardened vices. From court the contagion spread like wild-fire among the people, insomuch that men threw off the very profession of virtue and piety. The old clergy who had been sequestered for scandal, having taken possession of their livings, were intoxicated with their new felicity, and threw off all restraints of their order."*

The Pensionary Parliament May 8, 1661.

The new Parliament of Church and King men consisted of persons thoroughly corrupt. The court kept in pay one hundred of them, who went by the name of the Club of Voters.

The Savoy Conference, May--August, 1661.

The Savoy Conference, between twenty-one Anglican and as many Presbyterian divines, lasted for four months, and was conducted with great bitterness; the bishops wrangling against every plea of the Puritans, brow-beating them, and refusing every proposed alteration and scheme for comprehension. Convocation afterwards met by royal command to revise the Book of Common Prayer. The prelatial party had the game now in their own hands, and they were not slow to avail themselves of their opportunity. "Care was taken," says Bishop Burnet, "that nothing should be altered as it had been moved by the Puritans, for it was resolved to gratify them in nothing."

Revision of the Prayer Book, Nov. 20, 1661.

It is a striking fact that while the oaths imposed in the Anglican Church have been made more stringent by each

* Neal's Puritans, vol. iv., page 247.

successive Act of Uniformity, the language of the Prayer Book and Rubric has retrograded from the principles of the Reformation at each successive revision. This particularly is manifest in the Liturgical changes, and the terms of conformity introduced in 1662. Among the alterations made in the Prayer Book were the following:—

(1) The word *priest* in the Liturgy was substituted for minister. (2) The words *sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin*—words which Cranmer had excluded as sanctioning the Romish doctrine *ex opere operato*—were now introduced into the introductory prayer in the public office for baptism. (3) The words *We yield Thee hearty thanks that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit* were inserted in the form for *private* baptism—words to be pronounced where nothing but the *bare act* of baptism has been performed, the prayer for divine grace not being a necessary part of the private service. (4) The Rubric was added to the public office “It is certain by God’s word that children *which are baptized* dying before they commit actual sin are undoubtedly saved.” The unbaptized were classed with the excommunicated and suicides, as those for whom the Burial service is not to be used. (5) In the Rubric appended to the Communion service condemning adoration of “any real and essential presence” of Christ the word *corporal* was inserted in place of “real and essential,” thus deliberately rejecting the denial of the real and essential presence. (6) In the form of *Ordering of Priests* the Bishop is to say: “Receive the Holy Ghost *for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands.*” “Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained.” (7) A similar alteration in the form of consecration of a bishop, with the addition “Stir up the grace of God, *which is given thee by this imposition of our hands.*”

Alterations
made therein.

Many other alterations were introduced, and some undoubted improvements were made, but the tendency towards Romanism and the design to exclude Puritanism were obvious. The work was done speedily and stealthily. Convocation began the revision on the 21st November, and on the 20th December the revised Prayer Book was adopted and subscribed by the clergy of both houses.

Parliament had been discussing an Act of Uniformity during its first session, but the fatal step which has perpetuated Non-conformity in England was not adopted till the second session. The bill enforcing the revised Prayer Book, by means of a new Act of Uniformity, passed the House of Commons by a majority

The Act of
Uniformity,
May 19, 1662.

of six; the numbers being—yeas, 186; noes, 180. The Lords would have exempted schoolmasters, and allowed *fifths* to such as should not conform; but the Commons, while agreeing to many minor amendments, rejected this compromise. The Lords then acquiesced, and passed the bill with no great majority. It received the Royal Assent on the 19th of May, and has been the law of England ever since. It runs as follows:—

Terms of the Act.

2. And to the end that uniformity in the public worship of God (which is so much desired) may be speedily effected, be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every parson, vicar, or other minister whatsoever who now hath and enjoyeth any ecclesiastical benefice or promotion within this realm of England or places aforesaid, shall in the church, chapel, or place of public worship belonging thereto upon some Lord's Day before the feast of S. Bartholomew 1662, openly, publicly, and solemnly read the morning and evening prayer appointed to be read, and after such reading thereof shall openly and publicly, before the congregation there assembled, declare his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in the said book, contained and prescribed in these words and no other:—"I, A. B., DO DECLARE MY UNFEIGNED ASSENT AND CONSENT TO ALL AND EVERY THING CONTAINED AND PRESCRIBED IN AND BY THE BOOK ENTITULED THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS AND OTHER RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO THE USE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, TOGETHER WITH THE PSALTER OR PSALMS OF DAVID, POINTED AS THEY ARE TO BE SUNG OR SAID IN CHURCHES, AND THE FORM OR MANNER OF MAKING, OR DAINING, AND CONSECRATING OF BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS."

The Oath imposed.

The penalty.

And that all and every such person who shall (without some lawful impediment, to be allowed and approved of by the ordinary of the place) neglect or refuse to do the same within the time aforesaid (or in case of such impediment) within one month after such impediment removed, shall *ipso facto* be deprived of all his spiritual promotions. And that from thenceforth it shall be lawful to and for all patrons and donors of all and singular the said spiritual promotions or of any of them according to their respective titles to present or collate to the same as though the person or persons so offending or neglecting were dead.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every person who shall hereafter be presented or collated or put into any ecclesiastical benefice or promotion within this realm of England and places aforesaid, shall in the church, chapel, or place of public worship belonging to his said benefice or promotion, within two months next after that he shall be in the actual possession of the said ecclesiastical benefice or promotion, upon some Lord's Day openly, publicly, and solemnly read the morning and evening prayers appointed to be read by and according to the said Book of Common Prayer, and after the reading thereof shall openly and publicly before the

congregation there assembled declare his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things therein contained and prescribed according to the form before appointed.

Provided always and be it enacted that from and after the feast of S. Bartholomew 1662, no person who is now incumbent and in possession of any parsonage, vicarage, or benefice, and who is not already in holy orders by episcopal ordination, or shall not before the said feast day of S. Bartholomew be ordained priest or deacon according to the form of episcopal ordination, shall have, hold, or enjoy the said parsonage, vicarage, benefice, with cure or other ecclesiastical promotion within this kingdom of England and Wales, but shall be utterly disabled and *ipso facto* deprived of the same, and all his ecclesiastical promotions shall be void as if he was naturally dead.

Episcopal
Ordination
required.

Such were the terms of the Act of Uniformity, an Act which still disgraces our Statute book. It imposes the most stringent oath required in the Anglican church. The subscription to the Articles enjoined in 1571 required only that at ordination the minister shall "declare his assent and subscribe to all the Articles of religion which only concern the confession of the true faith and the doctrine of the sacraments;" and which these Articles are has never been determined. The subscription required to the three Articles of the Thirty-sixth Canon (1603) involved the stricter declaration on the minister's part "that the Book of Common Prayer containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God, and that he himself will use the form in the said book prescribed, in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, and no other." Some of the early Puritans, as we have seen, refused to subscribe this article; but the terms of conformity then required were easy in comparison of the explicit, oppressive, and tyrannical terms imposed by this last Act of 1662.

Increased
Stringency in
the terms of
Conformity.

To the very last the Presbyterians cherished the delusion that the King would at least grant them toleration. So late as the Saturday evening before the famous 24th of August, a report reached Cheshire, and was credited, that the King was about to grant an Indulgence for Nonconformers. It was a forlorn hope, a vain delusion. The Act was a two-edged sword against them. Even had they taken the oath required regarding the Prayer Book, they would have been deprived by the last

Delusion of the
Presbyterians.

clause above quoted, unless they submitted to re-ordination at the hands of a bishop ; because most of them had never been episcopally ordained. The same remark applies to the Independents who held preferments. But in addition to these, many who had been episcopally ordained now refused to conform ; though staunch Episcopalians they disliked the altered Prayer Book, and though willing to take the oaths formerly required, they could not conscientiously submit to the fetters now imposed.

Number of
Ministers
ejected in
Cheshire.

The number of ministers ejected from their cures in Cheshire between 1660 and 1662 was at least SIXTY-TWO. There were probably more, whose Nonconformity we could prove, had we the necessary data for every parish. The number computed by Calamy was fifty-two. Throughout England and Wales his calculation was 2,188. He has probably underrated them in other counties besides Cheshire.

Occasional
Conformity.

Many of the Nonconforming ministers, recognizing the distinction between lay and clerical conformity, went as laymen to the services at their parish churches, and in the evenings held " Repeating " in their own families—repetitions, that is, of the discourses that had been preached by the Conformist. Some ministers were courageous enough to hold separate services for those in their former congregations who sympathized with Nonconformity. The King wished to give them toleration, but rumours of conspiracy and insurrection on political grounds were sedulously propagated against them ; and these were cited as the pretext for an Act " for suppressing seditious Conventicles, which " inflicted on all persons above the age of sixteen, present at any " religious meeting in other manner than is allowed by the " practice of the Church of England, where five or more persons " besides the household should be present ; a penalty of three " months' imprisonment for the first offence, of six for the " second, and of seven years' transportation for the third, on " conviction before a single justice of peace."*

Conventicle
Act,
July 1, 1664.

The Oxford or
Five Mile Act,
Oct. 31, 1665.

In the next session of Parliament, which was held at Oxford on account of the plague that ravaged the capital, another Act

* Hallam's Constitutional History, vol. ii., page 47.

was passed "to restrain Nonconformists from inhabiting corporations." It was enacted that all persons in holy orders who had not subscribed the Act of Uniformity should take the following oath :—

I, A. B., do swear that it is not lawful upon any pretence whatsoever to take arms against the King, and that I do abhor that traitorous position of taking arms by his authority against his person or against those that are commissioned by him; and that I will not at any time endeavour any alteration of government either in church or state.*

It was further enacted that "those who shall refuse this oath shall be incapable of teaching in any public or private schools, or of taking any boarders, under pain of 40*l.*; and shall not come or be within five miles of any parish, city, town corporate, or borough, or within five miles of any parish, town, or place wherein they have been parson."

Revenge and fear were the unmixed passions which prompted the church party to enact these persecuting statutes. Most of the Nonconformists refused the oath which the Five Mile Act imposed, and their sufferings were severe. The gaols were filled not only with ministers but with members of their congregations. Yet in spite of this cold-blooded persecution they stood their ground, and kept up as far as possible fraternal intercourse. The following letter not only illustrates the system of espionage to which they were subject, but witnesses to the extent and number of their congregations.

Cruel Enforcement of these Acts.

The Presbyterian party hold their Conventicles dayly and have their fasts every weeke once or twice, and have their frequent conferences and collections of money whereby to hold their party together, and to be in a readiness for an opportunity to reform the church and the court.

Royalist account of Nonconformists, 1664-5.

To these purposes there are frequent meetings of the principall men of their party at the lodging of Colonel HUNT of Shropshire, an active and subtle zealot who lodgeth at the house of Mr. Benbowe of the same character, merchant, who lives in the open space between Lawrence Lane and Ironmonger Lane. This house is the centre of their intelligence and correspondence. The intelligencers to the party are *Mr. Lye*, late parson of — in Lombard-street. He hath been lately in Scotland, and is returned and teacheth a school in his house at Clapham; and *Mr. Yorke*, who hath been some months in Wales; and *Mr. Woodcocke*, of whom Dr. Bates said

Nonconformist Intelligencers.

* Neal's Puritans, vol. iv., page 367.

merrily "Mr. Woodcocke doth not flye abroad for nothing;" *Mr. Oliver Calderwood*, late of Shipton Mallet in Somersett, who was also sent into Scotland. Mr. Yorke aforesaid had 50*l.* given him by an alderman who lives in or neare Wood-street toward the expense of his journey. *Morgan*, a Welshman, is his correspondent here, as *Mr. Inys*, a Scot, is for Scotland. *Mr. Stubbs* of Wells is intelligencer for those parts; he is oft here in this city and preaches every day at Conventicles. *Mr. Hughes* is for Plymouth and those parts.

Mr. Cook for West Chester, who was lately imprisoned there. In Dublin *Doctor Winter*; *Colonel Thomas Ceely*, sometime governor of Lime Regis in Dorsetshire; and *Mr. Maddens* an Independent; *Doctor Moore* a physician in Cheapside is their correspondent for Ireland. They boast that they have intelligence of all matters that pass in the court, and having heard a while since that the King would rayse three regiments more of horse, in their meeting at Colonel Hunt's they laught at the inconsiderable number and boasted that they have assurance of fifty thousand men in London.

The eldest son of Colonel Hunt keeps at his house in Shrewsbury thirty geldings to be in readiness for service. At a Lord's house seventeen miles distant from London towards Oxford do often meet — *Hamden*, Esq., *Mr. Baxter*, and *Dr. Manton*, to conferre on y^e plott. A dinner is provided for the party at Colonell Hunt's lodging, which is called y^e parson's ordinary, every Tuesday. Before y^e discovery made of y^e conspirators in Yorke they boasted y^e plot had been carried so closely, and y^e party so firmly united, that all y^e wisdom of y^e counsell should never be able to disappoint it.

Their private gatherings.

They said OLIVER had a quicker scent for discovering a plott than any now have. When they in Yorke were discovered 'twas bewayled here that many godly men were likely to suffer there. Since then they have bin more reserved, and admitt none to their meetings without bringing a ticket; and sometimes they forbid any servants to come, and sometimes their daughters are prohibited, and sometimes their wives also, as at a meeting in Lombard-street last weeke. Great persons were desired to have their coaches come privately. They have often collections for their brethren in distresse, and if they hear of any who for poverty or other respect declines to conforme, they stave him off with their gifts, as lately they did *Dr. Bryan* of Coventry. 500*l.* was lately delivered to Mr. Calamy to be distributed.

Their preachers.

1. These often preach at their Conventicles. *Mr. Baxter* at y^e house of — Hamden, Esq., which he hath near S. Jones fitted for y^e purpose, and at a gentleman's house in Black Fryars. *Mr. Jacom* at y^e Countess of Exeter's; there also *Mr. Whittaker* and *Mr. Poole* who advised that every one of y^e ejected presbyters should take his own pulpit again, and try if y^e people will not stand by them.

Mr. CALAMY was wont to preach constantly at his own house every Sunday, after evening service ended, before his sickness; and also frequent fasts have been kept at his house. At Mr. HUNT's house at Harrow-on-the-Hill preached lately in one day, and prayed at a fast there kept, *Doctor Staunton*, *Jenkins*, *Stanley*, *Pateman*, *Griffith*, and *Vincent*, who ordinarily prayeth down popery and prelacy.

The rest of the preachers at Conventicles are *Mr. Jackson*, at whose house have been Conventicles weekly; also *Mr. Totenhill*, *Mr. Needley*, *Young Jackson*, *Mr. Stocom*, *Mr. Porter*, *Mr. Rowe*, *Mr. Brooks*, *Mr. Watson*, *Mr. Doelittle*, *Mr. Vaughan* who is going to Bermudas, *Mr. Fisher of Nottingham*, *Mr. Groundman* a German, *Doctor Bates*, *Mr. Havylan*, *Dr. Manton*, *Mr. Cloxton*.

2. Divers of y^e coffee houses are made meeting places for the brethren, one in Soper Lane on the west side, and some taverns, as y^e Three Taverns, in Paul's Church Yard.

3. Doctor WILD is their poett.*

4. Booksellers who are intrusted by the party are *Samuel Gellibrand* in Fisher's Church Yard, and *Francis Titon* against S. Dunstan's in y^e West.

Alderman Webb and *Alderman Justice* are friends to y^e party. At y^e Blue Anchor in Old Fish-street preaches *Mr. Caryll* and *Griffith*.†

The political aspect given to the movements of the Non-conformists in this letter is manifestly unjust and absurd, but it is a witness, all the more valuable as coming from an enemy, to their numbers, energy, and concord, and to the hatred and cruelty of the dominant church party. The ministers named were the most learned and pious men of their day, "the flower of spiritual England," as they have been justly called. As to Cheshire in particular, the following letters from Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, one of the deputy-lieutenants for the county and governor of Chester Castle, shew the avidity and hearty hatred of that ignoble Royalist against the Chester ministers.

Persecution in Cheshire 1665.

"I shall be well satisfied with my Lord Arlington's letter in His Majesty's name for my countenance and encouragement of what I have or shall regularly do in pursuance of His Majesty's service against Nonconformists and disobedient persons; for what I have already done in this city was as

Sir Geoffrey Shakerley's letters.

* Robert Wild, D.D., of Oxford, was born at S. Ives in Huntingdonshire. He was appointed minister of Aynho in Northamptonshire, in 1646, and was ejected thence in 1660 to make way for Dr. Longman, the former rector. He afterwards resided at Oundle, where he died in 1679. He was a man of piety and wit, and of poetical genius. His published poems were "The Tragedy of Mr. Love at Tower Hill.—Iter Boreale; or, Monk's March from Scotland to London.—The Imprisonment of Mr. Calamy.—To the Memory of Jer. Whittaker.—On the Death of many Rev. Ministers.—On the Death of Mr. Vines.—On the Death of Mr. Calamy.—The Grateful Nonconformist.—The Loyal Nonconformist."

The Nonconformist poet.

† Account by *Edmund Potter of Conventicles*, about the year 1664. MS. in Record Office, Domestic, Charles II. 109, 56.

“ deputy-lieutenant, for I am no justice of peace there, but I
 “ required the assistance of some of their justices, who have
 “ convicted the persons named in the enclosed ; and much
 “ favouring them in their fines being the first conviction (and
 “ all of this city, as I formerly hinted, being nearly linked in
 “ affinity) they submitted and readily paid their fines. And I
 “ have not heard of the least clandestine meeting either in city
 “ or country since, but shall be very vigilant to prevent them.
 “ 17th July 1665.”—Sir Geoffrey Shakerley to Williamson.

Meeting
 in Chester
 dispersed.

“ It appears that the pest of disobedience and Noncon-
 “ formity continues in the city, for yesterday, in the evening, in
 “ the very heart of the city, in the house of THOMAS HARRISON,
 “ commonly called Dr. Harrison, sometime chaplain to Harry
 “ Cromwell, were assembled and met together in a conventicle
 “ at least one hundred persons, men and women, who being
 “ discovered and heard at their prayers (which were performed
 “ by the said Harrison, as some of them afterwards confessed)
 “ refused to open the doors, so that I was forced to break them
 “ down ; whereupon they fled and got away, as many as could
 “ (they so much outnumbered those with me that took them).
 “ Some we took hid under beds, others locked up in closets
 “ and hid in corners and private places of the house ; in all I
 “ met with the number of sixty men and women and brought
 “ them before the Mayor. Those of the most eminent of the
 “ men were last night examined, and to save imprisonment
 “ paid their monies, being the first conviction, viz., the afore-
 “ said Harrison, Edward Bradshaw, and Peter Lee, late alder-
 “ man, Mr. Gregg the examiner in the Exchequer, James
 “ Jolly formerly Mayor Jolly under the late usurpers, one
 “ Richard Kirby lately come out of Ireland, one Cross, and
 “ one Williams. More of them will be examined this morning,
 “ and dealt with accordingly. These are not of the Anabap-
 “ tistical crew I lately told you of, but are of the first and
 “ therefore worst stamp of Sectaries, the original from whence
 “ all others have lately sprung, and therefore require the more
 “ strictness and severity to be used to them. But, as I have

Eminent Non-
 conformists
 there fined.

“lately told you, they have such affinity and are so linked
 “together of all parties throughout the city, that it will prove
 “very difficult and hard to suppress them, unless there may
 “be an instrument directed to me and some of no relation or
 “affinity empowering us to apprehend and punish all offenders
 “in their kind according to law; which I could wish might
 “speedily be sent down. GEOFFREY SHAKERLEY.

“Chester, 3rd July 1665.

“Some of them more confidently hardy than the rest
 “threaten to complain for my breaking down the doors and
 “disturbing them.”*

The persecuting spirit these letters breathe was allowed full play by the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts, and the Nonconformists' sufferings were all that ecclesiastical bigotry desired. Prelacy and profligacy joined hand in hand while patronizing each other to persecute Puritans; but there were men who, actuated by political motives only, began to see the impolicy of this reckless course. Hear one of the voices raised in the midst of this roaring time:—“The Nonconformists are
 “everywhere spread through city and country; they make no
 “small part of all ranks and sorts of men; by relations and
 “commerce they are so woven into the nation's interest that it
 “is not easy to sever them without unravelling the whole.
 “They are not excluded from among the nobility, among the
 “gentry they are not a few, but none are of more importance
 “than the trading part of the people and those that live by
 “industry, upon whose hands the business of the nation lies

Discourse on
 the Religion of
 England 1667.

* MS. Record Office, Domestic, Charles II., 126, 13; 127, 7. The following order occurs in the same set of MSS., No. 132, 24:—“At
 “Northwich, September 4th, 1665, It is ordered that Thomas Harrison of
 “the city of Chester, Mr. Trevis, Mr. Bullen of the same city, and Mr.
 “Blackwell of Bidston, be forthwith secured and kept prisoners till further
 “orders; and that security be taken for the peaceable demeanour of Mr.
 “Jolly of the city of Chester, Robert Wilson of Bidstone, Thomas Pick,
 “John Linaker and Peter Cade of Frankby, George Ball of Erby, William
 “Lee of Moreton, Robert Nickock of Laughton, Thomas Kerkes of Mol-
 “lington, and Mr. Wilson of Backford. Given under our hands and seals
 “the day and year aforesaid. Signed P. Leicester, Rich. Brooke, Jo.
 “Ardern, Pe. Brooke, Thomas Cholmondeley, Henry Legh. For Sir
 “Geoffrey Shakerley, Knt., Governor of the Castle of Chester.”

Imprison-
 ments.

The workers
in England
Nonconform-
ists.

“ much. . . . In them no small part of the nation’s sobriety,
“ frugality, and industry, doth reside. They are not the *great*
“ *wasters*, but mostly in the number of *getters*. To purge a
“ nation of this people may be to purge out more of its vitals
“ than the strength of this state can bear. To suppress those
“ that are reckoned among the chief in trading, and whose
“ commerce is so general, may beget a general diffidence and
“ insecurity in traders, and may help to drive away trade itself,
“ and send it to an emulous and encroaching nation. If no
“ greater latitude can be allowed than is at present, a race of
“ Nonconformists is likely to run parallel with the Conformists
“ to the world’s end.” In the spirit of these warnings a move-
ment was made for a comprehension of the Nonconformists, in
which Bishop Wilkins of Chester took a leading part. He drew
up a paper of proposals, very liberal in its concessions, which
was submitted to the leading Nonconformists;* but Arch-
bishop Sheldon hearing of it caused it to be suppressed, and
April 11, 1670. succeeded in carrying through Parliament a bill adding two
clauses to the Conventicle Act, imposing penalties more cruel
and inhuman.

Declaration of
Indulgence,
March 15,
1671-2.

At length Charles II. himself, with the advice of the CABAL,
stayed this prelatial persecution by the exercise of his royal
prerogative. His motive, according to general opinion, was
purely the establishment of Popery, but the words of the
Declaration contradict this, and the tenour of his frequently
expressed wishes, since the Breda promises, had been in favour
of a general Toleration. Papist and libertine as he was, this
acknowledgment must be made regarding him. The Declara-
tion was to the following effect :—

“ It being evident by the sad experience of twelve years
“ that there is very little fruit of all these forcible courses. . . .
“ We do declare our will and pleasure to be that the execution
“ of all penal laws, in matters ecclesiastical, against whatsoever
“ sort of Nonconformists or recusants be immediately suspended ;

* Given in full by Neal, vol. iv., pages 382—385.

“ . . . and that we shall from time to time allow a
 “ sufficient number 'of places as they shall be desired, in all
 “ parts of this our kingdom for the use of such as do not con-
 “ form to the Church of England, to meet and assemble in
 “ order to public worship and devotion, which places shall be
 “ open to all persons. We do further declare that this our
 “ indulgence as to the allowance of the public places of worship
 “ and approbation of the preachers shall extend to all sorts of
 “ Nonconformists and recusants, except the recusants of the
 “ Roman Catholic religion.”

Objections were raised against accepting this Indulgence, because it was an arbitrary exercise of the dispensing power of the King, but many of the Nonconformists availed themselves of the liberty it gave. The Licence Book,* containing the names of places and ministers registered, furnishes the following list of eight Presbyterian and four Congregational licences for Cheshire:—

Licences in
Cheshire 1672

“ PRESBYTERIAN.

“ Sandbatch parish, Thomas Leadbeater, in his house, 16th
 “ April '72.

“ Wibunbury parish, John Ravenshaw,† in his house, 30th
 “ April '72.

“ Chester, William Cooke, the house called the White Fryars,
 “ 8th May '72; the house of John Glendole,‡ 10th June '72; the
 “ house of Hugh Harvey,§ 10th June '72.

“ Ashbury parish, Andrew Barnett, in his house, 13th May '72.

“ Castle Hill, in the parish of Bowden, John Brereton, in
 “ his house, 22nd May '72.

“ Bartomley, the house of Rob. Steele,|| 10th June '72.

* Record Office, Domestic Interregnum, 186.

† The fact that John Ravenshaw took a licence in 1672 proves that the
 “ Catherine Ravenshaw, widow,” in the Holmes Chapel register for 1664
 was not his wife. See page 198.

‡ He must have returned to Chester from Budworth, whither he had
 gone in 1665. See page 13.

§ If not meant for John Harvey, this was probably a kinsman of his.

|| Probably Richard Steel the ejected minister of Hanmer, Flintshire,
 the friend of Philip Henry, Newcome, and Machin. He belonged to a

“ Flintshire, Malpas parish, Philip Henry, in his house, 30th April '72.

“ CONGREGATIONALL.

“ Asbury parish, George Moxon, in his house, 30th April '72.

“ Chester, John Wilson, in the house of Catharine Booth in Northgate-street, and Dame Hames, 1st May '72; William Cooke, in the house of Anthony Henthorne, 16th May '72.”

The Nonconformists did not long enjoy the tranquillity and liberty secured by the King's Indulgence. In the course of the next year he cancelled it, and the fear of Popish ascendancy prompted Parliament to pass the *Test Act*, which rendered the reception of the sacrament according to the Established Church, and a renouncing of the dogma of transubstantiation, necessary conditions for government appointments. In supporting this Act the Nonconformists sacrificed their own rights for the sake of averting the common danger then threatening. Though the latitudinarian clergy, who then were called the Low Church party, wished to exempt the Nonconformists from the penal laws, the High Church or court party preached passive obedience, and enforced these laws against them in their full rigour. Thus persecution, with Judge Jeffries as its minister and the clergy as its abettors, continued till the death of the King. He died a Roman Catholic. Eight thousand Nonconformists perished in prison during his reign, their only crime being their Dissent from the dominant Establishment.

During the first year of James II.'s reign the Episcopal clergy of England continued their obsequious betrayal of the liberties of their countrymen. Love of power and hatred of Nonconformists were their ruling motives. But the latitudinarian party in the Establishment, now growing in influence, wrote and preached against Popery, and thus they awoke the hostility of the King. The King, who was a Papist, relaxed

Test Act,
March 25,
1673.

James II.,
February 6,
1684-5.

family residing in Barthomley parish, and Newcome often met him at Leek and Newcastle. Though he removed to London, he was probably residing at Barthomley in 1672, and contributed to the erection of a school there in 1675.—See *Notitia Cestriensis*, page 213.

the penal statutes against the Roman Catholics, and the Non-conformists obtained, from motives of policy on the part of a Romanist king, the freedom which, in opposition to the principles of Protestantism, the Church party had refused them. A dispensation or licence office was set up, where all who applied might obtain an indulgence, on payment of a small fee. These concessions were followed by the King's Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, in which, after expressing his hearty wish that his subjects were Catholics, he declares, 1st, that he will protect the prelates and clergy and laity of the Church of England, in the full exercise of their religion by law established; 2nd, that all penal laws for Nonconformity shall be immediately suspended; and 3rd, that all acts which impose any religious test as a qualification for any office shall be abrogated. This declaration was repeated the year following in terms more favourable to the Papists; and Bishop Cartwright, who had been appointed to the see of Chester by the King, drew up an address of thanks for it, which was signed by some of the bishops and several of the Cheshire clergy.* Though not himself a Papist, Cartwright advanced the designs of the King, and was in constant communication with the Jesuit Father Petre. During his episcopate James II. visited Chester, and it was thought fit by some of the Nonconformists of the county that "something should be said to him" by way of a loyal address from them. "It fell to me," says Henry Newcome, "as the "senior, but I was utterly averse unto it. Mr. Jolly accepted it. But it pleased God to order it that His Majesty "came by us," they had been waiting six hours for him on Rowton Heath, "and stayed not; but put off his hat and "passed on. And so there was nothing said and all was well."† The Nonconformists perceived the aims of the King, and while they used their liberty for worship, they generously joined hands with their fellow-Protestants within the Establishment

Declaration
for Liberty of
Conscience,
April 4, 1687.

Visit of
James II. to
Chester,
Aug. 27, 1687.

* Cartwright's Diary, page 47; Neal, vol. v., page 54.

† Newcome's Autobiography, page 265.

Trial of the
seven bishops,
June 29, 1688.

who before had persecuted them against the common danger now threatening the country. The Protestant bishops and clergy who hitherto had preached passive obedience, and in alliance with a Popish court had shown only intolerance to the Nonconformists, now saw their error. Seven bishops refused to recognize the King's dispensing power, and were therefore prosecuted and sent to the Tower. Conformists and Dissenters joined in sympathy with them, and rejoiced in their acquittal.

§ V. 1688—1806.

William and
Mary crowned
April 11, 1689.

The Toler-
ation Act.

THE news of the landing of the Prince of Orange was hailed with joy by the Nonconformists, and upon the coronation of William and Mary they presented addresses of congratulation. In the first year of their reign the Toleration Act was passed, not without murmurs from the High Churchmen who wished to limit it to a term of seven years. The Toleration Act was entitled AN ACT FOR EXEMPTING THEIR MAJESTIES' PROTESTANT SUBJECTS DISSENTING FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FROM THE PENALTIES OF CERTAIN LAWS. "It exempts from
" the penalties of existing statutes against separate conventicles
" or absence from the established worship, such as should take
" the oath of allegiance, and subscribe the declaration against
" Popery, and such ministers of separate congregations as should
" subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles (excepting the 34th, 35th,
" 36th, and the beginning of the 20th). Those who object to
" oaths are to subscribe a declaration of fidelity to the King
" and Queen, together with a profession of their Christian
" belief, in the following words:—*I, A.B., profess faith in God*
" *the Father, and in Jesus Christ His eternal Son, the true God,*
" *and in the Holy Spirit, one God blessed for ever more; and do*
" *acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testa-*
" *ment to be given by divine inspiration.* Provided always that
" this Act shall not extend or be construed to extend to give
" any ease, benefit, or advantage, to any Papist or Popish

“recusant whatsoever, or any person that shall deny in his preaching or writing the doctrine of the blessed Trinity as it is declared in the aforesaid Articles of religion.”

In the strength and under the protection of this Act the Nonconformists throughout England began to erect Meeting-houses. In most of the trust deeds of these chapels the Nonconformists describe themselves simply as *Protestant Dissenters*, and it has been argued from this circumstance that they intended not to bind the ministers or worshippers who should occupy the place to any particular doctrines, and that in some instances they were themselves disbelievers in the Trinity. But the terms of the Act under the protection of which they built their chapels, distinctly demanded belief in the Trinity on the part of all who shared its protection, and expressly excluded Socinians and Arians. Accordingly the wording of the trust deeds, “to be used for and as a place of meeting or assembling together of Protestant Dissenters for the public exercise of religious worship, pursuant and agreeable to the authority given by an Act of Parliament heretofore made in the first year of the reign of their Majesties William and Mary entitled,” &c., is sufficient proof that the founders of these chapels were believers in the Trinity; the terms of the Act referred to requiring that belief.

Chapels built
by Trinitarian
Dissenters.

Together with the Toleration Act, King William wished to secure for the Dissenters a general comprehension. A commission was issued to thirty divines, ten of whom were bishops, “to prepare such alterations of the liturgy and canons as will conduce to the reconciling of differences.” The Commission met in the Jerusalem Chamber, and the alterations deemed expedient were agreed upon; but the bill was thrown out by the House of Commons, one party voting against it, because they thought it degrading to the Establishment to yield to the desires of the Nonconformists, and an opposite party, the friends of the Dissenters, opposing it, because they looked upon the Nonconformists as the guardians of the liberties of Englishmen, and feared that if they entered the Establishment

Comprehen-
sion Bill
thrown out.

they, or at any rate their successors, would acquire the *esprit de corps* of the clerical order, who they said were never the friends of liberty.

Union of
Presbyterian
and Congrega-
tional Minis-
ters, 1690.

The Presbyterians who had been so hostile to the Independents during the Interregnum, learnt much from the persecution through which they had passed. They had been taught to value that toleration which once they condemned, and their views regarding church government had been modified. Under the protection of the Toleration Act the London ministers, Presbyterian and Independent, formed a UNION, which they designed should be general throughout the country. They resolved that the ministers of the two denominations should henceforth go by the name of THE UNITED MINISTERS, and they drew up a writing comprising such common principles as both parties could agree to subscribe, of which the following is an abstract:—

Heads of
Agreement.

“The following Heads of Agreement have been resolved upon by the united ministers in and about London, formerly called Presbyterian and Congregational.

I. Of Churches and Church Members.

1. We acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ to have one catholic church or kingdom, comprehending all that are united to him in heaven or earth.
2. We agree that particular societies of visible saints who, under Christ their head, are stately joined together for ordinary communion in all the ordinances of Christ are particular churches.
3. That none shall be admitted as members but such as are knowing and sound in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, without scandal in their lives.
4. A competent number of such visible saints do become subjects of stated communion in all the special ordinances of Christ, upon their mutual declared consent and agreement to walk according to gospel rule.
5. The members of a particular church ought to live near one another.
6. Each particular church hath right to choose its own officers.
7. It belongs to the pastors and other elders to rule and govern.
8. That all professors are bound in duty to join, as fixed members of some particular church, in professed subjection to the gospel of Christ.
9. That a member leaving is to seek a recommendation to another church.

II. Of the Ministry.

1. The ministerial office is instituted by Jesus Christ for the gathering, guiding, edifying, and governing of his church.

2. They who are called to this office ought to be endued with competent learning and ministerial gifts; as also with the grace of God.

3. That ordinarily none shall be ordained to the work of the ministry but such as are called and chosen thereto by a particular church.

4. In calling and choosing a pastor we judge it ordinarily requisite that every church consult and advise with the pastors of neighbouring congregations.

5. The person chosen by that particular church over which he is to be set, and he accepting, be duly ordained.

III. *Of Censures.*

IV. *Of Communion of Churches.*

V. *Of Deacons and Ruling Elders.*

We agree the office of deacon is of divine appointment, and as divers hold that there is also the office of ruling elders, we agree that this difference make no breach among us.

VI. *Of Synods.*

That in order to concord and in any other weighty and difficult cases a synod be called, consisting of smaller or greater numbers, to whose judgment particular churches ought to have a reverential regard.

VII. *Of our Demeanour towards the Civil Magistrates.*

VIII. *Of a Confession of Faith.*

As to what appertains to soundness of judgment in matters of faith, we esteem it sufficient that a church acknowledge the Scriptures to be the word of God, the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; AND OWN EITHER THE DOCTRINAL PART OF THOSE COMMONLY CALLED THE ARTICLES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, OR THE CONFESSION OR CATECHISM (SHORTER OR LARGER) COMPILED BY THE ASSEMBLY AT WESTMINSTER, OR THE CONFESSION AGREED ON AT THE SAVOY TO BE AGREEABLE TO THE SAID RULE.

IX. *Of our Duty and Deportment towards them that are not in Communion with us.*

To bear a Christian respect to fellow Christians, to explain to the ignorant and vicious the doctrine of life and salvation, and to receive those who appear to have the essential requisites to church communion, not troubling them with disputes about lesser matters.

“As we assent to the forementioned Heads of Agreement, so we unanimously resolve, as the Lord shall enable us, to practice according to them.”

The ministers of Cheshire—Presbyterian and Congregational—were foremost in adopting these Heads of Agreement, and in forming an association upon the basis of them. Their first meeting was at Macclesfield, in March 1690-1, and the minutes of their meetings continue down to September

Cheshire
Association,
March 1699.

3rd, 1745. The MS. Book* containing these minutes is entitled *Some short Account or brief Hints of all Questions proposed, Cases discussed, Determinations made, and other Occurrences, at the severall Meetings of y^e Cheshire Ministers, held in that County. Anno Domini, 1691.* At the first meeting was considered the question regarding “the Gesture to be used by “the Minister in the Administration of the Lord’s Supper,” and at the second meeting the following month, April 14th, 1691, a letter on that subject was read from the celebrated John Howe, which is dated April 6th, 1691, and is inserted in full. At this meeting “Gamaliel Jones was desired by all present to “be y^e Scribe, which he consented to,” and, accordingly, the minutes for several years are in his clear and beautiful, though small, hand-writing. These preliminary meetings in March and April were followed by another *at Mr. Birch’s*, probably at Dean Row, near Wilmslow, when “y^e Agreement of “y^e London Ministers was deliberately read over, considered “and subscribed by all *Nem: Contrad:* in y^e following form:—

Agreement of
London Minis-
ters adopted.

“We, whose names are subscribed, have perused and “considered the Heads of Agreement assented to by y^e United “Ministers in and about London, and doe blesse God for that “Mercy; and give our unfeigned assent to the same unani- “mously resolving as the Lord shall enable to practise “according to them.

“WILLIAM BAGSHAW, Minister of y^e Gospel in Glossop Parish;

* This volume is kept in the Protestant Dissenters’ Chapel (now Unitarian) at Knutsford. With other writers in this volume I gratefully acknowledge the courtesy of the Rev. H. Green, M.A., of Knutsford, in giving extracts and information from this MS. relating to our churches. Some extracts from it regarding chapels now Unitarian had already appeared in contributions to the *Christian Reformer* and elsewhere. But among the MSS. of the late Rev. Joseph Hunter, now in the British Museum Library, there is a very full abstract—in the early part if not throughout a verbatim copy—of this interesting document, entitled “An Abstract of a small 4to “volume lent me by my valued friend the Rev. William Turner of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in July 1827. It is an original record, and the volume is about “one third written over. It was found in the vestry at Allostock in 1827.” By means of this MS. we have been able to give other interesting extracts. The MS. will be found in the British Museum, *Collectanea Hunteriana* Additional MSS. 24485.

“SAMUEL ANGIER, Preacher of God’s Word at Duckinfield;

“JOSEPH EATON, at Macclesfield;

“ROBERT MOSELEY, at Ringhay;

“ROBERT HOLLAND, at LOSTOCK;

“— STRINGER, at New-Chapel;

“THOMAS KINASTON, at Knutsford;

“ELIEZER BIRCH, at Deanfow;

“JOHN BYROM, at Stockport;

“THOMAS IRLAM, at Congleton;

“GAMALIEL JONES, at Chadkirk.”

At the next meeting of ministers, June 30th, 1691, referred to by Tong as “the first that I meet with in Mr. Henry’s papers,”* the Minute Book informs us that “the aforesaid Agreement was subscribed by

“RALPH AINSWORTH, at Whitley Chapel;

“MATTHEW HENRY, at Chester;

“SAMUEL LAWRENCE, at Nantwich;

“and afterwards

“Mr. HERVEY, of Chester;

“Mr. LEA, of Worrel, subscribed it.”

“A project was then drawn up for a Rule to be observed in the Admission of Members into Church Communion, particularly unto y^e Lord’s Supper for God’s Glory and Godly Edifying and approved of and consented to by all y^e Ministers then present, viz. :—

Rules for
Church Mem-
bership.

1. That such as do desire communion with us come to discourse the minister who upon satisfaction received concerning them is to propound them to y^e church and y^e church is to take competent time to consider of their fitness.

2. Upon y^e church’s satisfaction with them y^e persons to be received in manner following—(We take their silence for satisfaction).

Let y^e persons present themselves at a convenient church meeting and there acknowledge and renew their baptismal covenant and consent to walk in communion with that church according to gospel order.

3. Then y^e minister is solemnly to pray for them and admit them with y^e church’s consent, whereupon minister and people are mutually to discharge their duty to one another.

* Life of Matthew Henry, page 253.

Rules of the
Cheshire
Association.

At the next meeting, August 11th, 1691, the ensuing RULES were consented to for the promoting of peace and unity among themselves and their congregations, and for mutual edification.

1. That y^e united brethren of this county will meet as often as conveniently may be, at such time and place as by consent shall from time to time be determined of among themselves in greater or lesser numbers, and that if possible the general meetings shall be yearly the second Tuesday in May and August.

2. That y^e moderator be chosen y^e meeting before for y^e next meeting, who shall appoint one to preach, and shall begin and end with prayer; and to him all discourses shall be regularly directed.

3. That occasional matters relating to y^e congregations shall be first discoursed of, and then such subject or subjects as shall be before agreed upon.

4. That matters of difference especially relating to discipline shall not be debated without common consent, and then with all calmness and without reflection.

5. That in all debates when y^e Question is first put by y^e moderator y^e junior shall speak first.

6. That none shall be absent without reasonable cause, an account whereof shall be given to y^e satisfaction of y^e classis either at that meeting by proxy or y^e next meeting at furthest.

7. That the scribe keep minutes of what is done.

Sam. Angier,	John Byrom,	John Burnham,
Rob. Moseley,	Joseph Eaton,	G. Jones,
Matt. Henry,	Samuel Lawrence,	John Wilson,
Ralph Ainsworth,	Robert Holland,	Tho. Irlam,
Eliezer Birch,	Thos. Kinnaston,	John Sidebottom,
		Richard Edge.

Manner of
conducting
meetings.

Mr. Tong gives the following account of the manner in which these ministers' meetings were conducted :—

“ After the work of praying and preaching was over, the
 “ Ministers consulted together about the Affairs of their several
 “ Congregations; whatever Difficulties they met with about the
 “ Admission of any to church membership or suspension from
 “ it, about the Removal of ministers from one place to another,
 “ they were here proposed and Advice was given how to pro-
 “ ceed, but *not as authoritatively binding* the conscience of any
 “ particular person, minister, or other: affairs of the State or
 “ the Established Church were never meddled with; they kept
 “ themselves within their own line, counselling and comforting
 “ each other, and God was pleased to make their Consultations

“ a means of preserving and promoting love, peace and order
 “ amongst them ; and this prudent method was kept up by
 “ them all the time Mr. Henry lived at Chester, and is con-
 “ tinued to this day at the same place,” *i.e.* Knutsford.

Soon after the union of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers in London had been formed, a controversy arose which caused serious division among them, though it did not affect the Cheshire Association. The hyper-Calvinistic works of Dr. Crisp had been republished, and were ably answered by the celebrated Dr. Williams in his *Gospel Truth Vindicated*, a book recommended by many London ministers. The Rev. Isaac Chauncey, an Independent, published a large 4to volume in reply, and other eminent writers appeared on both sides. The debate became a party strife, the Presbyterians on one side charging the Independents with anti-nomianism, and the Independents on the other side charging the Presbyterians with Arminianism. Each party repudiated the charge, and Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester, was appealed to—he being a master in the controversy. He expressed full approbation of Dr. Williams’ statement, and confidence in his orthodoxy, and condemned Dr. Crisp’s error which “made the union between
 “ Christ and the believer to be of such a kind as actually to
 “ make a saviour of the sinner, and a sinner of the Saviour.” The controversy terminated with the publication by Dr. Williams of a treatise entitled *Peace with Truth, or an End to Discord*, in 1699. Mr. De la Rose, minister of Stockport in 1720, was an advocate of Dr. Crisp’s views.*

The
 Neonomian
 Controversy,
 1692.

The reign of Queen Anne was a time of much anxiety and trouble to the Dissenters. The High Church and Tory party was in the ascendant, and made continual attempts to deprive the Dissenters of the benefits of the Toleration Act. Dissenters were wont to comply with the provisions of the Test Act in order merely to qualify themselves for holding office, or entering into corporations ; while at the same time they

Anne, 1702.

* See page 293.

February 27,
1710-11.

Bill against
Occasional
Conformity,
1711.

Schism Bill,
June 25, 1714.

maintained their Nonconformist principles. This was called Occasional Conformity, and the High Church party introduced a bill against it. At first they failed, but before the end of Anne's reign they succeeded. The famous trial of the arrogant Dr. Sacheverell (for his sermon entitled *The Perils of False Brethren*, a tirade against Dissenters), which ended in his suspension only from preaching for three years, aroused the zeal and bitterness of the High Church party. The houses of Dissenters were plundered by the mob, and the pulpits and pews of many chapels torn down and burnt. The old bill against Occasional Conformity was again introduced and carried through both houses. It enacted that "any person who filled " an office of trust under Government, and common Council " man in corporations, who should be present at any meeting " for Divine worship where there were more than ten persons " besides the family, in which the liturgy was not used, should " upon conviction forfeit the said office." The Schism bill was afterwards introduced. It enacted that "no person should " keep any public or private school unless he subscribed a " declaration that he would conform to the Liturgy of the " Church of England as by law established, and obtained a " licence from a bishop or church ordinary. Anyone acting as " schoolmaster without this, or attending a conventicle, to be " liable to three months' imprisonment. If the person licensed " shall teach any other catechism than that set forth in the " Prayer Book, he shall be liable to the penalties of the Act." This bill passed with some modifications, but the death of the Queen prevented its execution, and in the year 1719 it was repealed together with the Occasional Conformity Act.

The following list of Dissenting chapels and ministers in Cheshire shews the strength of the Nonconformist body in the county about this time. The list was begun by the Rev. Dr. John Evans about the year 1715, and the MS. in Dr. Williams's Library contains entries of names down to the year 1729.

PLACES OF MEETING.	PREACHERS.	ORDAINED.	NUMBER OF HEARERS.			TOTAL.	VOTERS FOR THE COUNTY
			Gentle-men.	Trades-men.	Yeomen.			Labourers.
Chester	John Gardner	August 1714	39	75	16	15	1000
Namptwich	Joseph Mottershead	August 1713	10	29	23	23	300
Macclesfield	Adam Holland, M.D.	Sept. 27, 1692	20	90	52	44	500
Congleton	Thomas Irlam . . . . .	. . . . .	...	...	...	...	200
Tinsel <i>al.</i> Tingtwezel	Gilbert Taylor . . . . .	. . . . .	7	...	25	113	574
Stockport	Richard Milne . . . . .	. . . . .	20	85	70	13	629
Knutsford	Thomas Lea . . . . .	. . . . .	18	5	64	47	500
Chadkirk, Hatherlow	Gamaliel Jones . . . . .	. . . . .	10	39	26	8	300
Wheolock near Sandbach	Silas Sidebottom	Aug. 6, 1706	4	8	11	20	100
Duckenfield	William Buckley	June 1714	14	16	76	...	887
Kingsley near Frodsham	Thomas Holland	August 1714	...	...	20	...	30
Lostock near Northwich	Samuel Garside	May 7, 1707	...	...	...	...	220
Ringhay near Dunham	Nicholas Waterhouse	June 16, 1702	27	40	63	50	400
Hide (between Duckenfield and Stockport)	John Cooper . . . . .	. . . . .	10	39	70	2	674
Dean Row	Hugh Worthington	Sept. 2, 1707	40	...	100	234	1309
Brombro' and Upton in Wiral	Thomas Perrott . . . . .	. . . . .	12	9	26	16	180
Newton near Middlewich, <i>al.</i> Partington	William Hardings . . . . .	. . . . .	2	6	7	12	100
Cross Street (on ye Fund Books Ashton-upon-Mersey)	Michael Fletcher . . . . .	. . . . .	5	...	...	...	322
Northwich—a meeting set up in 1721	John Partington . . . . .	. . . . .	...	...	...	...	...
Middlewich	George Hammet . . . . .	. . . . .	...	...	...	...	...
			Total			8295	869
			Besides these; Voters for Cheshire:—			19	6
			From Warrington Congregation . . . . .			...	...
			From Manchester Congregation . . . . .			...	...
			Total			894	...

“This account from Mr. John Gardner of Chester, in a letter to Mr. Tong dated January 11, 1714; Wherein he adds y^e if
 “y^e Anabaptist brethren * (whom he supposed to have sent up their account separately) could make up, as he was informed they
 “could, 100 voters; then the Dissenters of Cheshire would make up near a fourth part of the voters for that county.”

* Namptwich, Samuel Acton; Hill Cliffe, Francis Turner; Warford, John Turner—Anabaptist.

List of Dis-
 senting
 Congregations
 in Cheshire,
 1715.

Theology of
the Eighteenth
Century.

The minutes of the meetings of Cheshire ministers terminate in the year 1745, when the Deistical controversy was at its height, and Arianism was embraced by many theologians both within and without the Established Church. The first half of the eighteenth century, at least from 1714 to 1750, has been described as "an age destitute of depth or earnestness, an age whose poetry was without romance, whose philosophy was without insight, whose public men were without character; an age of light without love." "During the eighteenth century," says the same author, "throughout all discussions, underneath all controversies, and common to all parties, lies the assumption of the supremacy of reason in matters of religion. The Churchman differed from the Socinian and the Socinian from the Deist as to the number of articles in his creed, but all alike consented to test their belief by the rational evidence for it. . . . The great majority of writers were employed in constructing a *via media* between Atheism and Athanasianism."*

Arian Controversy, 1718.

The Arian Controversy began among the Dissenters at Exeter, where Hallet and Pierce, men of learning and high character, advocated the views of the Episcopalians Whiston and Clarke. The London ministers were gradually drawn into the dispute, and a division took place among them upon the question of their adopting and signing an explicit declaration concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. Those who advocated the Declaration—about sixty in number—resolved to adopt the first article of the Church of England and the answers to the fifth and sixth questions of the Assembly's Catechism, as a form of sound words expressing the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity. They were called the *Subscribers*, and published their Declaration in a treatise entitled "The Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity stated and defended by some London Ministers, 1719." Mr. Tong wrote the

Subscribers
and Non-sub-
scribers.

* *Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688—1750*, by Mark Pattison, B.D., Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford.

Introduction. The number of subscribers was seventy-eight. The *Non-subscribers* published a Defence, in which they explain that their objection was not to the Doctrine or the statement of it, but to the demand of subscription to a creed. They say, "We were pressed to subscribe that we might clear ourselves from the suspicions of Arianism. But as we knew no just ground of suspicion, much less of any charge against us, we thought it would ill become us so far to yield to an unreasonable jealousy, as to take a step of this nature to remove it. . . . "We desire it may be more particularly remarked, that in our declining the subscription proposed to us, we apprehend we have taken a more effectual course to prevent the growth of errors concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, whether those of Arius or any other, than even our Brethren who so earnestly insisted on it." These statements are important as a conclusive reply to those who refer to this division among the London Ministers as if the one party were Arians and the other Trinitarians. The spread of Arianism must be dated some years later. In Cheshire the abrupt termination of the Minutes of Ministers' Meetings indicates the probable date of a division among the ministers upon doctrinal grounds, ending in the breaking up of the Association. The creeds of the Established Church, feebly as they checked the spreading Arianism, re-asserted themselves when the Evangelical movement began; but among the Dissenters, those who fell into Arianism went on into Socinianism, retaining the chapels and endowments of the Old Dissent—their possession of which was legalized by the Dissenters' Chapels Bill in 1845. The Evangelical movement among them became manifest in secessions from their churches, and the erection of new places of worship. Wesley and Whitefield were the leaders in this movement, and while each left behind him a sect—the Wesleyan and the Calvinistic Methodists—their influence was great within the Established Church as well as among the Nonconformists. The Independents derived great benefit from the ministrations of Whitefield, who more than once visited

Non-subscribers repudiate Arianism.

The Evangelical Movement, 1750.

The Cheshire
Evangelist.

and preached in Cheshire. The famous Captain Scott, however, may be justly called the Cheshire Whitefield. Having quitted the army he was ordained to the office of Evangelist, and devoted his energies, chiefly though not exclusively, to Cheshire. Several of the more modern churches of Evangelical Nonconformists in the county (at Chester, Nantwich, Congleton, Middlewich, Macclesfield, Northwich) were gathered and sustained by means of the energetic labours of this Christian soldier.

Application
for Enlarge-
ment of the
Toleration
Act, 1772.

An attempt was made early in George III.'s reign, simultaneously with Archdeacon Blackburn's movement for relaxation of clerical subscription, to obtain Parliamentary relief from the subscription required by the Toleration Act. Petitions were sent up to Parliament from several counties to this effect, and the three denominations in London succeeded in introducing a bill for the purpose into the House of Commons, where it was carried. It was thrown out by the Lords, and the purpose of it was not accomplished until 1828. The following is a list of the ministers in Cheshire who "approved of and concurred" in the application to Parliament for an enlargement of the "Toleration Act with respect to Dissenting ministers and "schoolmasters, 1772."

John Chidlaw, Chester;
William Broadhurst, Dean Row;
Joseph Booth, Stockport;
John Boulton, Congleton;
Robert Lord, Knutsford;
George Checkley, Hyde;
Robert Harrop, Hale;
James Green, Northwich;
George Booth, Tintwistle;
John Palmer, Macclesfield;
Richard Hodgson, Nantwich;
William Buckley, Duckingfield;
James Burgess, Hatherlow.

Dissenting
Congregations
in 1772.

To this we may append a list of the Dissenting congregations in Cheshire, collected in 1772, 1773, and 1774, by the

Rev. Josiah Thompson of London; distinguishing Paedobaptist from Baptist; "being the most correct account that could then be obtained."

	Paedo B.	Baptist.		Paedo B.	Baptist.
Allostock.	1	...	Knutsford	1	...
Bollington	...	1	Lymm	1	...
Brassie Green	...	1	Macclesfield	1	...
Chester	2	...	Nantwich	1	1
Congleton	1	...	Northwich	1	...
Dean Row	1	...	Partington	1	...
Dukinfield	1	...	Cross Street	1	...
Hale	1	...	Stockport	2	...
Hatherlow	1	...	Tingtwissel	1	...
Hill Cliffe	...	1	Willock	1	...
Hyde	1	...			
Kingsley	1	...	Total	21	4

In the year 1786 an Association was formed, consisting of Congregational ministers and churches in the parts of Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire bordering upon each other. The object contemplated was friendly intercourse and Christian union.* At a meeting of this Association held at Manchester, 22nd October, 1806, it was resolved "that in consequence of several ministers in the county of Chester having intimated that a separate Union in that county would tend more to the spread of the Gospel, it be recommended to them to form themselves into a distinct Union." Accordingly a meeting consisting of Ministers and Delegates from most of the congregations in the county was held at Macclesfield, on the 5th November, 1806, at which the Cheshire Union was formed.

Cheshire Congregational Union, 1806.

The Cheshire Congregational Union may be called the successor and representative of the *first* Cheshire Association of 1653, and of the *second* Cheshire Association formed in 1691.

* Cheshire Union Jubilee Report, 1856.

The *old* orthodox Presbyterianism is almost extinct in the county. Unitarians still cling to the name; but they reject doctrines which the old Presbyterians held as fundamental—the Trinity, and the Divinity of Christ—and their present church government is Congregational. The Cheshire Congregational Union resembles the *second* Association in doctrine as well as in dissent, and is, like the *first* (to use the words of Adam Martindale), “a voluntary association for mutual advice and “strengthening one another.”

Having thus rapidly sketched the history of English Nonconformity with special reference to Cheshire, giving a detailed account of the combined movements of Cheshire Nonconformists, we append the following lists of the early Nonconforming ministers more or less directly connected with the county.

Lists
of Cheshire
Ministers.

LIST OF EJECTED MINISTERS—1662.

Deanery of
Chester.

Thomas Harrison, D.D.	.	.	Cathedral.
Peter Leigh	.	.	S. John Baptist.
William Cook	.	.	S. Michael's.
John Glendole	.	.	S. Peter's.
Thomas Upton	.	.	Trinity.
John Boyer	.	.	Barrow.
* Richard Edwards	.	.	Christleton.
Mr. Baker	.	.	Doddleston.
Joshua Gelborne	.	.	Eccleston.
Samuel Slater	.	.	Hargrave.
Randal Guest	.	.	Pulford.
Sabbath Clark	.	.	Tarvin.
Samuel Fisher, M.A.	.	.	Thornton.
* Samuel Edgley	.	.	Thornton.
John Marigold	.	.	Waverton.

Deanery of
Wirrall.

John Wilson	.	.	Backford.
Mr. Wright	.	.	Bidston.
Hugh Bethel, M.A.	.	.	Burton.

Mr. Keyes	Heswall.	
Samuel Marsden	Neston.	
* Matthew Jenkins	Shotwick.	
Mr. Watts	Thurstaston.	
John Harvey, M.A.	Wallasey.	
John Cartwright, M.A.	West Kirby.	
Samuel Grastie	Woodchurch.	
George Mainwaring	Malpas.	Deanery of
* Thomas Burroughs	Harthill.	Malpas.
John Griffith	Shocklach.	
George Bonnyman, M.A.	Tilston.	
Philip Henry	Worthenbury.	
Edward Burghall	Acton.	Deanery of
Mr. Smith	Barthomley.	Nantwich.
Mr. Hassel	Haslington.	
Samuel Higginson	Church Minshull.	
Mr. Bruce	Marbury.	
George Moxon	Astbury.	Deanery of
Thomas Brook	Congleton.	Middlewich.
Richard Bowker	Middlewich.	
Joseph Cope	Sandbach.	
John Buckley	Goosetrey.	
John Ravenshaw	Holms Chapel.	
Samuel Langley	Swettenham.	
Thomas Edge	Gawsworth.	Deanery of
James Bradshaw	Macclesfield.	Macclesfield.
Hugh Henshaw	Chelford.	
* Nicholas Stephenson	Alderley.	
John Brereton	Wilmslow.	
Robert Barlow	Mobberley.	
Samuel Eaton	Stockport.	
John Jollie	Norbury.	

	John Jones	Marple.
	Francis Shelmerdine	Mottram.
	Peter Harrison, D.D. [?]	Cheadle.
	Mr. Cresswell [?]	Disley.
Deanery of Frodsham.	Mr. Ford	Ashton-on-Mersey.
	James Livesey	Great Budworth.
	John Machin	Whitley.
	James Cockayne	Frodsham.
	* Thomas Bradshaw	Grappenhall.
	Adam Martindale	Rosthern.
	* Robert Hunter	Knutsford.
	Robert Norbury, M.A.	Over Peover.
	John Garside	Nether Peover.
	Robert Eaton	Daresbury.
	Thomas Breck [?]	Runcorn.

Those marked with an asterisk afterwards conformed.

CHESHIRE PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS WHO DIED SHORTLY
BEFORE THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY.

Dunster, Henry	Northenden.
Lancaster, Nathanael	Tarporley.
Langley, Thomas	Middlewich.
Ley, John	Great Budworth.
Murcot, John	West Kirby.
Paget, Thomas	Stockport.
Poole, Ralph	Bebington.
Sillitoe, Randall	Church Lawton.

CHESHIRE MINISTERS WHO WERE EJECTED IN OTHER COUNTIES.

Bailey, John	[went to New England.]
Banne, Nathanael	Caldecot.
Case, Thomas, M.A.	London.
Clark, Samuel, B.A.	London.
Crofton, Zachary	London.
Gilbert, Thomas	Ealing.

Hall, Ralph	Mear.
Leadbeater, Thomas	Hinckley.
Marsden, Jeremiah	near Wakefield.
Newcome, Henry, M.A. . . .	Manchester.
Shaw, John	Hull.
Spurstowe, William, D.D. . . .	Hackney.

MINISTERS EJECTED IN OTHER COUNTIES WHO AFTERWARDS
LABOURED IN CHESHIRE.

Barnet, Andrew	Roddington.
Barnet, Joshua	Wrockerdine.
Fogg, John	Liverpool.
Fogg, Robert	Bangor.
Leadbeater, Thomas	Hinckley.
Steel, Richard	Hanmer.
Thomas, Zachariah	Tilstock.
Turton, William	Rowley.

SONS OF NONCONFORMIST MINISTERS, THEMSELVES NONCON-
FORMIST MINISTERS IN CHESHIRE.

Mr. Aspinwall	Son of	Peter Aspinwall.
Samuel Garside	„	John Garside.
Jonathan Harvey	„	John Harvey.
Matthew Henry	„	Philip Henry.
Gamaliel Jones	„	John Jones.
John Jones	„	Gamaliel Jones.
Thomas Kynaston	„	Mr. Kynaston.
James Newcome	„	Henry Newcome.
Nathanael Scholes	„	Jeremy Scholes.
John Wilson	„	John Wilson.
Dr. Samuel Lawrence	„	Samuel Lawrence.

To whom may be added

Samuel Lawrence. . . .	Nephew of	Edward Lawrence.
Samuel Angier	„	John Angier.

Sketches of Nonconformity in Cheshire.

DEANERY OF CHESTER.

(By the Rev. W. URWICK, M.A.)

CITY OF CHESTER.—§ I. THE BISHOPS.



THE ancient city of Chester bears evidence in its very name of its occupation by the Romans; the word Chester being plainly the Latin *castrum* or *castra*. Its chief streets cutting each other at right angles, and the remains of Roman masonry discovered, but particularly a votive altar to Jupiter Tanarus, raised by an officer of the twentieth legion, dug up in 1653, prove that the city was a Roman station, and the scene of heathen rites, in the beginning of the Christian era.

The earliest important ecclesiastical event known in its annals is the fact that, during the Danish invasion, in the year 875, the body of S. Werburgh (a Saxon saint, and daughter of the King of Mercia), which had been preserved as a sacred relic, was removed for security to Chester. S. Werburgh thenceforward became the tutelary saint of Chester; a religious community was founded, among whom she was held in especial honour, and in whose church her relics were sumptuously enshrined. The house continued to flourish through a period of six centuries and a half, one of the wealthiest of the monastic establishments in England. During the period from the Conquest to the Reformation, the black, the white, and the grey friars had each

an establishment in the city; a religious community of women was established within its walls, and numerous parish churches were founded. Hugh Lupus, nephew of William the Conqueror, and Earl of Chester, endowed the monastery with great possessions, and placed monks in it of the Benedictine order.

Randall III., the seventh earl, who built Beeston Castle, stands distinguished among the barons of the thirteenth century as the only one who stoutly refused to comply with Henry III.'s mandate for the collection of the tax called Peter's Pence throughout England. He not only forbade its collection in the county, but threatened the collectors with punishment if they dared to attempt it. He was the first to give a charter to the city.

Chester belonged originally to the diocese of Lichfield, and although Peter, bishop of Lichfield (1075), removed his seat thither and was commonly called bishop of Chester, Lichfield was the usual residence of the episcopate. The dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. caused a radical change in the ecclesiastical affairs of the city. In the thirty-third year of that reign the bishopric of Chester was established. The house of S. Werburgh was dissolved, and its revenues furnished a provision for the prebendaries, dean, and bishop. The clear value of the bishopric, after all deductions made, was then 269*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* according to Gastrell; 420*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.* according to the *Liber Regis*; it now amounts to upwards of 4,500*l.* per annum.

JOHN BIRD, D.D., descended from an ancient family in Cheshire, and educated as a Carmelite friar at Oxford, was appointed the first bishop in 1541. He was a man of learning and zeal, but did not advocate the king's supremacy till he saw the pope's power was waning; and on the accession of Queen Mary he tried to retain his see by accommodating himself to the changes which were introduced. He was, however, supplanted by the Romanist GEORGE COTES, who, during the few months he held the prelacy in the year 1554, evinced the most inveterate zeal and cruelty in behalf of popery. By his authority the pious George Marsh was burnt to death in Chester for nonconformity to the then established church, and the affecting story of his martyrdom deserves here to be told.

GEORGE MARSH was born at Dean, in Lancashire, and brought up as a farmer. On the death of his youthful wife he entered the University of Cambridge, and became curate to the holy martyr Lawrence

Saunders of Langton, in Leicestershire. He afterwards laboured in his native county as curate to William Rothwell, vicar of Dean. When Queen Mary came to the throne and re-established the Roman Catholic religion he refused to conform, and openly preached against the doctrines of Romanism. He resolved to stand firm, even unto death, for Christ and conscience sake. In one of his addresses to his congregation, whom he calls "the faithful professors of Langton," he writes: "Wherefore, my beloved in Christ, let us, on whom the ends of the world are come, take diligent heed unto ourselves that now, in these last and perilous times, we withhold not the truth in unrighteousness, believing doing or speaking anything against our knowledge and conscience, or without faith. For if we do, for whatsoever cause it be, it is a wilful and obstinate infidelity, and a sin unto death; and, as our Saviour Christ saith, 'If ye believe not ye shall die in your sins.'" Being urged by his friends to flee the country, in order to escape threatened imprisonment and persecution, he answered: "My life, mother, children, brethren, sisters, and friends, with other delights of life, are as dear and sweet unto me as unto any other man, and I would be as loathe to lose them as another would, if I might hold them with a good conscience and without the ignominy of Christ; and seeing I cannot do that, my trust is that God will strengthen me with his Holy Spirit to lose them all for his sake; for I take myself for a sheep appointed to be slain, patiently to suffer what cross soever it shall please my merciful Father to lay on me." Being imprisoned first in Lancaster Castle, Bishop Cotes sent for the gaoler, rebuked him because he suffered Marsh to fare so well, and ordered to have him more straitly kept and dieted; but, says Marsh: "If his lordship were tabled but one week with me, I do think he would judge our fare but slender enough." The poor prisoner was soon afterwards removed to Chester Castle, and the bishop sent for him and conversed with him, and also sent his chaplain and schoolmaster to him, in order to convert him. Transubstantiation was the theme of their argument, but Marsh was firm against it; bribes and threats alike failed to move him; and in a few weeks he was brought before the bishop and his colleagues, in Our Lady's Chapel in Chester Cathedral, to take oath upon the charges made against him, and to receive sentence of death. The chancellor stopt the bishop twice while reading the sentence, and, with the people, appealed to Marsh to recant. He answered: "I

“ would as fain live as you, if in so doing I should not denie my
“ master Christ, and again he should denie me before his Father in
“ heaven.” Having read the sentence, the bishop said : “ Now will
“ I no more pray for thee than I will for a dog;” and Marsh answered
that he would notwithstanding pray for his lordship. The officers
carried him to his dark prison in the North Gate, where he was very
closely kept till his death. Some of the citizens who loved him for
the gospel’s sake would in the evening, at a hole in the wall of the
city opening into his dungeon, ask him how he did. He would
answer them cheerfully that he did well, and thanked God most highly
that he would vouchsafe of his mercy to appoint him to be a witness
of his truth, and to suffer for the same, wherein he did most rejoice.
Once or twice he had money cast in at the same hole, for which he
gave God thanks, and used for his necessity.*

The day for his martyrdom having arrived, the sheriffs Amry and
Cowper led him out to Spital Boughton, within the liberties of the
city. After the exhibition of a conditional pardon by the vice-
chamberlain Mr. Vawdrey, and the refusal of it by Marsh, he began
to speak to the people, showing the cause of his death and exhorting
them to stick to Christ. Whereupon one of the sheriffs said : “ George
“ Marsh, we must have no sermonizing now.” To whom he said, I
cry you mercy ; and kneeling down, made his prayers, and then was
chained to the post, having a number of faggots under him, and a thing
like a firkin filled with pitch and tar over his head. The fire being
unskilfully made, and the wind driving it to and fro, he suffered great
torment, but yet endured it most patiently. The people, headed by
sheriff Cowper, pressed forward to attempt a rescue, but were driven
back by the other sheriff. When Marsh had been a long time tor-
mented in the fire without moving, they supposed he had been dead ;
but suddenly he spread out his arms saying —“ Father of heaven, have
“ mercy upon me !” and so yielded his spirit into the hands of the
Lord. Many of the people said openly he was a martyr, and died
marvellously patiently and godly ; whereupon the bishop preached a
sermon in the cathedral, affirming that Marsh was a heretic, burnt
like a heretic, and was now a firebrand in hell. The ashes of the
martyr were privately interred in the burial ground of the Chapel of
S. Giles, in Spital Boughton. The sheriff Cowper, in consequence

* Fox’s Acts and Monuments, iii. 233.

of the zeal he had shewn to save Marsh, was obliged at once to flee over Holt Bridge into Wales. He was outlawed, and had his estates seized by the government. He remained privately in Carnarvonshire until the death of Queen Mary.

The next bishop of Chester was CUTHBERT SCOT, as active and zealous a Romanist as Cotes had been. He was implicated in the burning of Bucer's bones at Cambridge, and took part in most of the political movements of his day. Being disaffected towards Queen Elizabeth, and opposed to the reformed religion, he was imprisoned in the Fleet in London, from which he escaped, and died at Louvain about the year 1560. During his bishopric, in the year 1558, occurred the well-known story, told by Archbishop Usher and Sir James Ware, of the interruption of Cole's commission for the persecution of the Irish Protestants. The messenger bearing the cruel commission stopped at an inn in Foregate-street, kept by Mrs. Elizabeth Mottershed. Learning the nature of his commission from the messenger, and being alarmed for the safety of her brother John Edmonds a Dublin Protestant, she had the courage and address to substitute a pack of cards in place of the dangerous document. Cole proceeded on his journey, and did not discover his loss till he was called on to produce his commission. The Romanist Queen died before his return, and Mrs. Mottershed was afterwards granted by Queen Elizabeth an annuity of 40*l.* for life, as a reward for her timely acuteness.

WILLIAM DOWNHAM, D.D., one of Queen Elizabeth's chaplains, supplanted Scot as bishop of Chester. He was very rigid in enforcing conformity, and many of the Puritan clergy in the county were summoned before him, subjected to his censures, and in some instances deprived for their deviations from the rubrics and usages of the establishment. He died in 1577, and was buried in the Cathedral of Chester.

In 1579, WILLIAM CHADDERTON, D.D., of Queen's College Cambridge, was nominated to the Sec of Chester, and in the same year he accepted the wardenship of Manchester, which was his native town, and where he chiefly resided. He was a successful preacher and a zealous Puritan, and "showed more respect to a Cloak than a Cassock," says Anthony a Wood. Witney, the Cheshire poet of Elizabeth's reign, dedicated one of his Emblems to him. It is entitled "*Vigilantia et Custodia. Ad Reverend: Dn. D. Gulielmum Chattertonum Episcopum Cestriensem.*" The device is a church, with a cock on the

tower and a lion at the door. The following are the explanatory lines :—

The heraulte, that proclaims the daie at hande
 The cocke I meane, that wakes us out of sleepe
 On steeple highe, doth like a watchman stande :
 The gate beneath, a Lion still doth keepe.
 And why? thease two did alder time decree
 That at the churchc, their places still should bee.

That pastors, should like watchmen still be preste
 To wake the worlde, that sleepeth in his finne
 And rouse them vp, that longe are rock'd in reste
 And shewe the daie of Christe, will straighte beginne :
 And to foretell, and preache, that light deuine,
 Even as the Cocke doth singe, ere daie doth shine.

The Lion shewes, they shoulde of courage bee,
 And able to defende, their flocke from foes,
 If rauening wolfes, to lie in waite they see ;
 They shoulde be stronge, and bould, with them to close,
 And so be arm'de with learninge, and with life,
 As they might keepe, their charge, from either strife.

The tenth bishop of Chester was JOHN BRIDGEMAN, D.D., fellow of Magdalen College Cambridge, and chaplain to James I. He was consecrated in 1619. He also held the living of Wigan—the best living in Lancashire—and resided for a time at Great Lever, near Bolton. The following notice of him occurs in Oliver Heywood's "Life of Angier :"—

" Mr. Angier (who became minister of Ringley, 1630) kept a
 " Nonconformist to the ceremonies, and therefore had some adver-
 " saries ; for Dr. Bridgeman, bishop of Chester, lived at Great Laever
 " at that time, to whom were brought various and grievous complaints
 " against Mr. Angier for not conforming. The bishop sent for him,
 " expostulated with him, being a kind of affront to preach so near
 " him (it being but two miles distant), admonished him, exhorted him
 " to conform : he sent for him many times, yet usually gave him very
 " good words, and professed his great respect to him. God ordered
 " it by his providence that the bishop's wife, being a gracious woman,
 " was at that time much afflicted in conscience, and Mr. Angier, by
 " God's blessing, was an instrument of much good to her by his
 " counsels and prayers ; which became a furtherance of his liberty,
 " for the bishop would usually say : ' Mr. Angier, you must see my
 " ' wife before you go,' and she interceded for him ; yet notwith-
 " standing, the bishop could not be quiet, but some or other solicited
 " vehemently against Mr. Angier, in so much that he was suspended

“twice in one year, but was restored by the mediation of his friends. At last the bishop said : ‘ Mr. Angier, I have a good will to indulge you but cannot, for my Lord’s grace of Canterbury (*i.e.*, Archbishop Laud) hath rebuked me for permitting two Nonconformists, the one within a mile on the one hand [that was good Mr. Horrocks, at Dean Church], another on the other, yourself ; and I am likely to come into disfavour on this behalf. As for Mr. Horrocks,’ saith he, ‘ my hands are bound, I cannot meddle with him [’tis thought he meant by reason of some promises made to his wife] ; but as for you, Mr. Angier, you are a young man, and doubtless may get another place, and if you were any where at a little further distance I could better look off you, for I do study to do you a kindness, but cannot as long as you are thus near me,’ &c. Some judged that one reason was, the bishop’s sons were at this time on the rising ground, and this his connivance might cross his design in their preferment. He did suspend Mr. Angier, who continued a season under that suspension [till his removal to Denton].”

The same memoir intimates that old Mr. Langley, minister at Middlewich, was suspended “for years together” by Bishop Bridgeman ; and in Prynne’s “New Discovery of the Prelate’s Tyranny,” the bishop’s character, as a fellow-worker with Laud in persecuting the Puritans, appears without disguise. The story of Prynne’s entertainment in Chester, on his journey as prisoner to Carnarvon Castle, indicates a strong Puritan spirit existing in the city at the time ; and shows what stamp of man Bishop Bridgeman was. William Prynne, a barrister and member of Lincoln’s Inn, wrote and published in 1632 a book against plays, masks, dancing, &c., entitled “*Histrionastrix*.” For this he was arraigned in the Star Chamber (together with Bastwick and Burton), and sentenced to stand in the pillory, to lose both his ears, to pay a fine of 5,000*l.*, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment. In 1637, he was brought up again before the same illegal and tyrannical tribunal, for pamphlets written against prelacy during his imprisonment ; and, having already lost his ears, he was sentenced to have the remainder of the stumps cut off, to be stigmatized on both cheeks with the letters S. L., and to be imprisoned in Carnarvon Castle. Such were the tender mercies of Laud and the High Commission Court. Chester citizens have reason to be proud that there were some among their ancestors at

the time who sympathized with Prynne and shewed him kindness on his journey. The following is the account of the affair, based upon evidence afterwards given before parliament :—

“ Mr. Prynne going forwards in his journey towards Chester, within two miles thereof, one Calvin Brewen, of that city, casually overtaking his conductors, and entering into parley with them as they rode together, asked who Mr. Prynne was ; they informing him, enquired which was the best inn in Chester where they might be best accommodated with lodging? He acquainting them, they resolved to lodge at the inn nominated ; whereupon he demanded of them whether he might visit Mr. Prynne at his inn without offence? They replied, Yea; they having no warrant to debar any of his friends from him. Whereupon, when Mr. Prynne came to his inn, Mr. Brewen and some other of Mr. Prynne’s acquaintance of Chester came to see him, and the next day went with him into the city to help him buy some bedding and furniture for his chamber at Carnarvon, where no such commodities could be gotten ; and when he departed out of Chester, none of his conductors knowing the way, some three or four of his friends conducted them over the washes, which are dangerous, and bringing them onwards on their way about four or five miles, bestowed a cup of wine and some cold meat upon his conductors and returned.”

The bishop of Chester hereupon informs against these Chester men for visiting Mr. Prynne, and sends up their names to Canterbury ; and, to ingratiate himself with the archbishop, to manifest his zeal to his grace’s service and his detestation against Mr. Prynne for the archbishop’s sake, he in the first place makes an order, which he caused to be published in all the churches of Chester, wherein he slanders Mr. Prynne, his friends that visited him, with his fellow-sufferers, and enjoins all the ministers and lecturers in the city publicly to preach against them, turning the pulpit into a pasquil.*

Not content with this, he wrote to his metropolitan at York, requesting him to send warrants for the arrest of Prynne’s entertainers. In this letter he says, “ I myself have no authority in Chester to punish them, but if your grace think fit to send a pursuevant and fetch them unto the high commission, it may do good for example

* See A Copie of the Bishop of Chester’s Order, read in Chester churches August 28, 1637, in “Prynne’s New Discovery,” &c.

“ to others of that straine. This Calvin Bryan, as soon as Dr. Layton’s
“ book came forth called ‘Zion’s Plea,’ had got one of them into
“ his shop, which, as soon as I heard, I sent and took it away from
“ him, and then being threatened and affrighted he faithfully promised
“ future conformity. As for Robert Ince, he was (though many years
“ since) made to do public penance in the cathedral of Chester for
“ schismatical speeches, by sentence of the High Commission; and
“ for Peter Ince, we have no other stationer in the city, yet no
“ puritanical books but our citizens get them as soon as any, which I
“ suppose come through his meanes.” The bishop obtained his desire;
the Chester Puritans who had entertained Prynne were cited before
the High Commission at York, were imprisoned and fined heavily, and
forced to make a public recantation in the cathedral. Three pictures
of Mr. Prynne, which had been taken by a Chester artist, were
ordered to be publicly burnt at the High Cross there. Peter Leigh,
then a grocer in Chester, was among the sufferers at the time.

Such then was the character and such the acts of Bishop Bridgman.
He and his servants called a crop-eared horse of his by the name of
Prynne. No wonder that he was among the sequestered clergy in
1643. He died at his son’s house at Moreton in 1658. One of his
sons, Sir Orlando Bridgman, became Lord Chief Justice of the
Common Pleas and Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and took a
generous part in the attempts to bring about a comprehension between
conformists and dissenters in 1667.

When episcopacy was re-established upon the Restoration of
Charles II., the celebrated BRIAN WALTON, author of the famous
Polyglott, was appointed to the see of Chester. His great work
had been published in 1657, under the auspices of Cromwell, when
learning through the Protector’s influence was, as Burnet tells us,
“high at Oxford, chiefly the study of the oriental tongues.” The
government had allowed the paper for the work to be imported free
of duty. In the first issue of it Walton acknowledged the help and
patronage of Cromwell, but this part of the preface he afterwards
altered, and tendered his gratitude to King Charles II. instead of the
Protector. The original or “republican” copies are rarely to be met
with; there is one however in the Chetham Library. Brian Walton
enjoyed his bishopric for a short time only; he died the 25th Novem-
ber, 1661. Dr. HENRY FERNE was elected to succeed him, but he
also died five weeks after his consecration.

GEORGE HALL, D.D., son of the pious Bishop Hall of Norwich, obtained the See in May 1662, and held it till his death in 1668. He was a man of very different stamp from his father, and avenged his father's sufferings with fourfold severity upon the Nonconformists. He committed the pious William Cook to the common gaol of Chester for preaching in his own house, and hurried Adam Martindale out of his living at Rostherne. The latter speaks thus of him in his Autobiography* :—“ What favour could I expect, or rather “ what violent proceedings might I not expect, from a prelate that “ preached so violently against us, was so brisk with *significavit*, and “ was linked so fast in his interest to the patron (Peter Venables, baron “ of Kinderton), a gentleman of 5,000*l.* per annum, a huge benefactor, “ having given 500*l.* towards the repairing of the bishop's palace, “ and so great honourers of one another that the bishop offered his “ services to marry the patron's dear daughter and only beloved “ child to Mr. Fowler, *alias* Levison, and was accordingly sent for “ (and I question not nobly paid), for confirming them first and “ marrying them after.”

The next bishop was JOHN WILKINS, D.D., of Magdalen College Oxford. He took the Covenant in 1643, afterwards subscribed the Engagement, and complied with the various changes of the times. About 1656, he married Robina, sister of Oliver Cromwell. At the Restoration he took the required oaths, and after several promotions, he was consecrated to the see of Chester in 1668. Dr. Tillotson who had married his daughter-in-law preached his consecration sermon. Pliant himself to the requirements of the Act of Uniformity, he exerted his influence as bishop to induce the ejected ministers in his diocese to conform. Calamy says that “ many ministers “ were brought in by B. Wilkins's soft interpretation of the terms of “ conformity.” The Rev. W. Turner tells of his tutor Philip Henry, that “ Bishop Wilkins sent twice for him, with a design to draw him “ over to conformity, as he had done many of his brethren before in “ his own diocese.”† These efforts of the bishop proceeded however not so much from laxity of principle or policy as from a liberal and charitable spirit ; and there are not wanting witnesses to this among the Nonconformists themselves. Martindale for example, says :— “ About this very time, Bishop Wilkins, observing what a great

* Page 165.

† History of Remarkable Providences, chap. 65.

“company of drunken ministers there was in his diocese, and especially near Wigan, his then residence, was resolved to turn such out, or at the least to suspend them *ab officio*, and to fill the places with better men; and, having a good opinion of some of us that he took to be moderate Nonconformists, he proposed terms to us, to which we returned a thankful answer—showing our willingness to comply in anything that would not cross our principles, and instancing in particulars what we could do. But the Archbishop of York, by his visitation, took all power out of his hands for a year, soon after which this honest Bishop Wilkins died.”*

Henry Newcome again makes the following notes:—“January 27, 1668-9.—I visited the bishop of Chester, at his lodgings in Pall Mall, and he received me very courteously, and used me kindly, and we had a deal of free discourse. November 22, 1672, Friday,—I received the sad news of the death of the learned, worthy, pious, and peaceable bishop of Chester, Dr. John Wilkins. He was my worthy friend.”†

To quote one witness more; John Angier of Denton remarks:—“November 19, 1672, died good Bishop Wilkins, of the stone—a great loss; he died comfortably, and rejoiced in his moderation whilst he was bishop. His death was much lamented in the city of Chester.”‡

JOHN PEARSON, D.D., author of the well-known “Exposition of the Creed,” succeeded Wilkins as bishop of Chester. Burnet says he was in all respects the greatest divine of the age—a man of great learning, strong reason, and of a clear judgment. He was a judicious and grave preacher, more instructive than affective, and a man of spotless life, and of an excellent temper. He was not active in his diocese, but too remiss and easy in his episcopal function; and was a much better divine than a bishop. He was a speaking instance of what a great man may fall to, for his memory went from him so entirely that he became a child some years before he died.|| He died July 16, 1686, having filled the bishopric thirteen years.

To him succeeded THOMAS CARTWRIGHT, D.D., son of Presbyterian parents and a Presbyterian himself, who turned round at the Resto-

* Autobiography, p. 196.

‡ Oliver Heywood’s “Life of Angier,” p. 86.

† Autobiography, pp. 179, 202. || History Own Times, iii. 109.

ration, and distinguished himself by his extravagant zeal for the royal cause. James II. found him a ready and expert agent, and appointed him one of the three commissioners to eject the president and fellows of Magdalen College Oxford, for nobly resisting the king's arbitrary attempts to restore Popery. His diary, during his residence as bishop of Chester, 1686-7, is published by the Camden Society. He fled to France on the arrival of William of Orange, and thence to Ireland, where he died in 1689.

There remains but one of the succeeding bishops whom it is needful for us to name as connected with the Nonconformist history of the city and county, namely FRANCIS GASTRELL. He was born at Slapton, in Northamptonshire, 10th May 1662, and was educated first at Westminster School, and afterwards at Christ Church Oxford. He published *Considerations on the Trinity* in 1696, in 1697 preached the Boyle Lectures, and (in January 1702-3 he was installed canon of Christ Church Oxford) in 1707 published his well known work *The Christian Institutes*. He was consecrated to the See of Chester on April 14, 1714. He died 24th November 1725.

Immediately upon his elevation to the See of Chester he appears to have commenced his *Notitia Cestriensis*, which he compiled from a great variety of public and private documents, from his own Episcopal Registers, as well as from personal investigations and printed circular queries. He continued to make from time to time new additions to the work, even until the last year of his useful life, and the information is, therefore (especially in the Cheshire part), various, copious, and extensive. The *Notitia* is a large folio volume in the handwriting of Bishop Gastrell, consisting of 363 pages closely written in double columns and in a singularly illegible hand. The Chetham Society has published that portion of the work which refers to Lancashire and Cheshire, under the able editorship of the Rev. F. R. Raines, M.A.

§ II. THE NONCONFORMING MINISTERS OF 1662.

Having thus briefly noticed the Bishops of the Diocese of Chester more or less closely associated with the history of Nonconformity in the county, we shall proceed to enumerate the Ministers, Presbyterian and Congregational, who laboured in the city during the Commonwealth, and who were ejected by the Act of Uniformity.

Among the signatures to the ATTESTATION of Cheshire ministers, approving the decisions of the Westminster Assembly and the Solemn League and Covenant, in 1648, occur the names of five Presbyterian ministers in the city, viz. :—

Henry Masy, pastor of Oswald's, in Chester ;
John Glendole, pastor of Peters, in Chester ;
Thomas Upton, pastor of Trinity, in Chester ;
William Pearetree, pastor of Mary's, in Chester ;
Benjamin Ball, pastor of John's, in Chester.

Two of these ministers are named by Calamy as ejected from their cures in 1662—the Rev. JOHN GLENDOLE, of S. Peter's, and the Rev. THOMAS UPTON, of Trinity Church. The fact of their signatures being attached to the Attestation proves that they were staunch Presbyterians, and that they laboured in Chester during the Commonwealth, probably from 1648 to 1662. Of Thomas Upton, nothing further has come down to us. John Glendole is named among the rectors of S. Oswald's, by Ormerod—"1642, November 14, John Glendole." He afterwards removed to S. Peter's. Upon the passing of the Oxford Act, he and Mr. John Fogg, his son-in-law ejected from Liverpool, lived together at Great Budworth in great amity and usefulness.

Benjamin Ball, pastor of S. John Baptist in 1648, was succeeded in 1650 by John Pemberton, a Presbyterian, and formerly of Congleton. He again was followed by Philip Wilson, upon whose death in 1658, PETER LEIGH obtained the preferment, and was ejected thence in 1662. Such is the order of names as given by Ormerod. Peter Leigh was minister at the cathedral before his appointment to S. John's. Henry Newcome says in his *Autobiography* :* "This year, 1653, I preached at the great church at Chester for Mr. Peter Leigh, on Luke xv. 7. It was the first time I ever preached there. At that time Mr. Ash was at Chester, and I had then his acquaintance. He preached on the Monday, and I heard him on 1 Corinthians vi. 9." This was the celebrated Simeon Ashe, ejected from S. Austin's, London. Regarding the early history of Peter Leigh we know but little. There was a grocer of that name in Chester in 1637, a Puritan of considerable influence, who suffered severely for entertaining Mr. Prynne. Henry Newcome names this person incidentally, as "Mr. Peter Leigh of Chester, one of those who were severely

* Page 44.

“prosecuted before the High Commission for visiting Mr. Prynne in “those days.” It is doubtful whether this was the same individual with him who afterwards became minister of S. John’s: more probably he was a relative—possibly his father. His sufferings were very severe, and are very simply narrated in his petition to the House of Commons for redress. It is as follows:—

“*The humble petition of Peter Leigh, of the city of Chester, grocer, and
“Richard Golborne, of Chester aforesaid, gentleman.*”

(To the House of Commons.)

[After an account of their unjust arrest, they say]:—“Your petitioners and the said William Trafford, deceased, were to their great charge forced to attend at Yorke, one of them above a month and the other three weeks, after they had answers to the said articles, before sentence; and at last they were constrained to pay great summes of money for fees and cost of suit on both sides. . . . And your petitioner, Peter Leigh, was fined 200*l.* to the King’s Majestie, and your other petitioner 300*l.* . . . And they were forced to flee into other countries, and leave their wives and children, trades and professions; and in their absence the pursuits of the said court came to their houses with warrants or intimations which they caused to be published in your petitioners’ parish churches in Chester aforesaid, and did so affright their wives that, they being with child, did soon after miscarry. . . . Your petitioners for their parts have been damnified above 1,000*l.*, and their estates almost thereby wholly ruined; they being enforced to flee and wander into strange countries for about four months together. Your petitioner, Peter Leigh, then being a tradesman who dealt for about 4,000*l.* per annum, and then much indebted, had his shop shut up for above three months together, for feare of having his goods seized for his forfeited bond and fine aforesaid.”

Probably the worthy tradesman thus unjustly dealt with was a near kinsman to his namesake the minister of S. John’s, if not the same person. He was in 1637 a married man with an extensive business, and Peter Leigh the minister is described by Tong* in 1686 as an aged dissenting minister residing at Knutsford, a gentleman by birth, and an humble upright person, a good scholar, but, through

* Life of Matthew Henry, p. 254.

bodily indisposition, not capable of constant work. Newcome again names the latter in his Diary, September 27, 1662, as one who together with himself and others was "cited to Chester for repeateinge in my "family,"—that is, for rehearsing in private to a company of friends the sermon preached publicly by the Conformist,—a common practice among the ejected ministers. He also mentions him as having spent an afternoon with him in Manchester, in company with two other eminent Nonconformist ministers, in the same year, doubtless in friendly conference regarding the sad change in their lot and in the religious position of the country. He says, "Oct. 25. This afternoon "was wholly taken up in company with Mr. Bradshaw (of Maccles- "field), Mr. Bagshaw (of the Peak), and Mr. Peter Leigh of "Chester."

Peter Leigh, the ejected minister, probably belonged to the Leghs of High Leigh, in the parish of Rostherne. Proverbially common as the name Leigh is in Cheshire,* the christian and sur- name together, Peter Leigh, is very common too. Martindale's landlord was Peter Leigh, of High Leigh, Esq., a bachelor, whom he describes as "a godly-wise man, a member of our society, and my "special friend."† Whatever family he belonged to, Peter Leigh the minister was one of the noble army of sufferers for conscience sake. He resigned the rich living of S. John's, Chester, in 1662, rather than compromise his convictions of truth, and having passed through the persecutions that accompanied the enforcement of Uniformity, he was still in his old age and in the midst of bodily infirmity a faithful labourer for Christ. The date of his death is unknown, no brass nor marble marks his grave, but *his record is on high*.

The next Nonconformist minister whom we find labouring during the Commonwealth in Chester, though not ejected thence, is SAMUEL EATON, the Independent, of Dukinfield and Stockport. Previous to his going to New England he was settled as a minister of the Established Church, in Wirral. Speaking of Mr. Murcot, he says, "I first knew him when he lived in Wirral, near Chester, and there "was reason that I should be familiarly acquainted with him at that "time, both because he was preacher at a place and also to a people

* In Cheshire there are Lees as plenty as fleas,
And as many Davenport's as dogs' tails!—*Old Proverb.*

† Martindale's Autobiography, p. 118.

“ there to many of whom myself, in former times, stood related, till
 “ the violence of the then prevailing prelates (Laud, Bridgman, &c.)
 “ expelled me thence.” On his return from New England, Eaton
 settled as pastor of a church at Dukinfield, but also received the
 appointment of chaplain to the garrison at Chester, and in that
 capacity formed the first Independent church in the city. Adam
 Martindale, in his Autobiography,* says, “ Mr. Eaton was chaplain
 “ to the garrison of Chester, by occasion whereof, and many journeys
 “ to London, Scotland, &c., he was frequently absent from the church
 “ (at Dukinfield), and his place supplied by gifted persons.” That
 Mr. Eaton established a Congregational church in Chester so early
 as 1648 is evident from the following extracts from the preface
 of one of his works, published in opposition to the doctrine of his
 successor. It appears that, finding the pastorate of both churches so
 far apart too much for him to attend to, he resigned his office at
 Chester, and was succeeded there by Mr. Knowles, who proved to
 be a Socinian. To counteract the erroneous teachings of this new
 pastor, and to fortify the church, of which he had been the founder,
 in the truth, Eaton wrote a treatise upon the Divinity of Christ and
 the doctrine of the Trinity. The work is entitled, “ *The Mystery of*
 “ *God Incarnate; or, the Word made Flesh cleared up, or, a Vindication*
 “ *of certain Scriptures (produced to prove the Divinity of Jesus Christ)*
 “ *from the Corrupt Glosses, False Interpretations, and Sophisticall*
 “ *Argumentations of Mr. John Knowles, who denies the Divinity of*
 “ *Christ. Also certain Annotations and Observations upon the pamphlet*
 “ *entitled ‘A Confession of Faith concerning the Holy Trinity, according*
 “ *‘to the Scriptures;’ together with the Coppie of a Letter sent by him to*
 “ *the Committee of Gloucester, concerning his Faith touching the Doctrine*
 “ *of the Trinity. By Samuel Eaton, teacher of the Church of Christ*
 “ *at Duckenfield. Whereunto is annexed the Attestation of Philip Nye,*
 “ *John Owen, Joseph Caryl, Sydr. Simpson, William Greenhill, Geo.*
 “ *Griffiths, Tho. Harrison. London; 1650.*”

This book has a dedication *To the Faithful in Christ in and about Chester*, in which the following passage occurs:—

“ For your sakes it was that I desired, and in some kind en-
 “ deavoured, his [Mr. Knowles] removal from among you, because I
 “ saw that your affection for his person and parts would certainly be

* Page 74.

“ a snare to many of you, and enslave you to his doctrine, which
 “ was not like to want a specious presentment to commend it to you ;
 “ not that I wished one hair of his head to fall to the ground for his
 “ hurt (the Lord he knoweth), but my earnest desire was that you
 “ might be kept from evil. Nor had I any design to reinvest myself
 “ into place or power or profit or honour amongst you, for then I
 “ might have continued in the place, and in the power and profit o:
 “ it while I possessed it ; for no one took it from me, nor could de
 “ while I faithfully discharged it ; but I voluntarily quitted it because
 “ I could not fulfil my ministry to another people and yet live among
 “ you : and ye yourselves know that I travelled some miles in York-
 “ shire to procure the blessing of an able ministry among you, but the
 “ man whom I designed for you was designed of God to another
 “ people in Berwick. . . . When I saw that he [Mr. Knowles] was
 “ like to abide at least for a time among you, I then attempted the
 “ separation of you from him ; . . . and I had the concurrence of
 “ the elders of churches both of the south and of the north therein,
 “ that walked in the same way and order with yourselves ; but this
 “ was fruitless, though I have much peace and comfort in it, for I
 “ sought not myself but your good in it.—To the faithful and dearly
 “ beloved the Saints of Christ Jesus in and about Chester, especially
 “ to all such who have known the doctrine, read the papers of Mr. John
 “ Knowles, and who have been his familiar hearers and followers.”

This extract fully shews that when Mr. Eaton was in Chester, chaplain to the garrison, he gathered round him a church of the Congregational order ; that the reason of his removal was his inability to fulfil his ministry to the church at Dukinfield ; that he was succeeded in his place by Mr. John Knowles, who taught Socinian doctrines, on account of which the former pastor was seriously grieved and sought the removal of the false teacher. We cannot certainly say in which of the Chester churches this congregation was gathered, but the probability is (considering that Eaton was chaplain of the garrison), that they assembled in a chantry chapel, called “ the chapel of the castle,” dedicated to S. Mary, since memorable as the place in which James II. attended his Roman Catholic devotions, when on a visit to Bishop Cartwright.

It seems that Mr. Knowles replied to Eaton’s book, because in the following year, 1651, Eaton published another work entitled “ *A Vindication or further Confirmation of some other Scriptures produced*

“ to prove the divinity of Jesus Christ, distorted and miserably wrested
 “ and abused by Mr. John Knowles. Also the doctrine of Christ’s
 “ Satisfaction and of Reconciliation on God’s part to the creature, cleared
 “ up from Scripture, which of late hath been much impugned. And a
 “ Discourse concerning the springing and spreading of Error, and of
 “ the means of cure, and of the Preservations against it. By Samuel
 “ Eaton, Teacher of the Church of Jesus Christ, commonly styled the
 “ Church at Dukinfield. London, 1651.”

Samuel Eaton did not stand alone in his efforts to protect the church at Chester from the Socinian teaching of Mr. Knowles. He was assisted by John Murcot, then minister of West Kirby, and by their combined influence Mr. Knowles was removed from Chester. In the life of Murcot prefixed to his works, the following passage occurs :—

“ There appears to be a formidable and blazing comet at Chester,
 “ one Mr. Knowles, who exercised as public preacher to the garrison
 “ there, and in public sermons, private conferences, and by a manu-
 “ script by him framed, denied Jesus Christ to be the Most High
 “ God. Several in the city professing godliness are dangerously
 “ ensnared, and swallow down that poison which will turn to gall and
 “ wormwood in their bowels. Mr. Murcot with others, especially
 “ Mr. Eaton, labours to establish the people in the truth received,
 “ and to pluck up the stinking weed which has begun to spread and
 “ fasten its contagious roots. Upon complaint made the flaming
 “ firebrand is removed, yet left behind him those unquenched sparks
 “ that break forth into fresh flames. Some godly people in Chester
 “ being embodied, and wanting a pastor to take the charge of them,
 “ expressed their desires of enjoying Mr. Murcot, who is sent unto
 “ and requested to preach among them by way of trial and in order
 “ to his future establishment, but withal entreated not to intermeddle
 “ with the present controversy or engage against Mr. Knowles.”

The writer goes on to say that Mr. Murcot visited Chester, and preached from John xxi. 17, vindicating the Divinity of Christ, but that he declined the people’s invitation to become their pastor, saying, “ I cannot live without the ordinances at West Kirby, nor like a Salamander in the fire at Chester.” There is no record extant which informs us who became pastor of the church ; the probability is that the members attended the ministry of Dr. Harrison, a Congregationalist, at the Cathedral.

THOMAS HARRISON, D.D., was born at Kingston-upon-Hull. While still a child his parents removed to America, and there he was brought up to be a clergyman. He became chaplain to the governor of Virginia, who was an enemy to the Puritans, and young Harrison shared his ill-will towards them. Application was made in 1641 by some well-disposed persons in Virginia to the ministers in New England for some assistance towards evangelizing the Indians. In reply two ministers undertook the mission, and sailed for Virginia in October of the next year, taking with them letters from the governor of Massachusetts to the governor and council of Virginia. No sooner was it found that they would not use the forms of the Church of England, than they were ordered to leave the country. Harrison himself afterwards acknowledged that though he seemed openly to plead against their expulsion, yet he secretly wished it. Previous to their embarking however, the savage Indians suddenly rose upon the English colonists and massacred three hundred of them. A pestilence followed and bore away many more victims. Reflections upon his own merciful escape in these disasters led Harrison to enquire into his personal condition before God. The truths spoken by the New England missionaries obtained a lodgment in his heart. He preached more earnestly, and gathered a church under his care. The governor disapproved of his behaviour and dismissed him. He then came back again to England, and succeeded Dr. Goodwin at St. Dunstan's-in-the-East. After he left London (the reason of which does not appear) he lived for some time at Bromborough Hall, in Wirrall, where he preached constantly, and afterwards went to Dublin, with Harry Cromwell, when he was sent to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant. He lived in his family with great respect, and was for several years a preacher at Christ Church with great applause. He preached a sermon (afterwards published) upon the death of Oliver Cromwell, from the text Lamentations v. 16, and entitled "*Threni Hybernici; or, Ireland sympathising with England and Scotland in a sad lamentation for the loss of their Josiah.*" The anonymous writer of the dedication prefixed to this sermon says:—

“ Divine Providence made it my lot to hear it pathetically delivered by that pious divine, Dr. Harrison, in a full and fluent manner, extracting tears from the eyes and sighs from the hearts of the hearers. I moved the doctor for the printing thereof, being so precious a piece touching so unparalleled a person, that it was more

“ fit to be made publick than to perish in oblivion. He in a modest
 “ manner termed it a sudden, imperfect, unpolished collection of
 “ scattering thoughts and notes, which brevity of time and burthen of
 “ spirit would not permit him more completely to compile ; yet upon
 “ my importunity he was pleased to condescend to my motion, and
 “ delivered me this copy now printed, written with his own hand.
 “ The usefulness of the piece, replete with so many rare observations,
 “ together with the desire of erecting all lasting monuments that might
 “ tend to the eternizing of the blessed memory of that twice renowned
 “ patron and pattern of piety your royal father (whose pious life is his
 “ never perishing pyramid, every man’s heart being his tomb, and every
 “ good man’s tongue an epitaph), hath emboldened me to present it
 “ to your highness as a lively effigies to mind you of his matchless
 “ virtues.”

One brief extract will suffice to shew the tenour of the discourse :—

“ I and all the world may say of him (Cromwell), that’s now
 “ gone from us, as one said of Mucianus, the Roman consul, he did
 “ *Vim principis complecti nomen remittere*, he had all the power and
 “ performed all the part of a good king, though he refused the title ;
 “ cause have we therefore to take up a woeful lamentation when such
 “ a prince, when such a great man is fallen in our Israel, who in all
 “ these respects had so benign an influence into the vitals of our state.”

Soon after the preaching of this courageous sermon, almost the only funeral sermon for Cromwell that has come down to us, Dr. Harrison came back into England, and settled in Chester, as the minister of the Cathedral church. Here he had a large and attentive auditory till his ejection by the Act of Uniformity. In the year 1670 he returned to Dublin, having been invited to become pastor of the same Dissenting congregation there, which had previously sought to obtain Henry Newcome of Manchester as their minister. Calamy in his account of him goes on to say, “ In Dublin he had a very flourishing
 “ congregation, and many persons of quality for his constant auditors.
 “ He was extremely popular, and this stirred up much envy. He was
 “ a most agreeable preacher, and had a peculiar way of insinuating
 “ himself into the affections of his hearers ; and yet he used to write
 “ all that he delivered : but he afterwards took a great deal of pains to
 “ impress upon his mind what he had written, that he might deliver it
 “ without using his notes. He had also an extraordinary gift in prayer ;

“such a fluency, and such flights of spiritual rhetoric, suited to all occasions and circumstances, as excited the admiration of all that knew him. He was a complete gentleman, much courted for his conversation : free with the meanest, and yet fit company for the greatest persons. Lord Thomond (who had no respect for ecclesiastics of any sort) expressed a singular value for him, and a high opinion of his abilities. He often used to say, that ‘he had rather hear Dr. Harrison say grace over an egg, than hear the bishops pray and preach.’ He was Congregational in his judgment ; and though his people were universally of another stamp, yet he managed all matters with such discretion, temper, and moderation, that there never was the least clashing or danger of a faction. When he died the whole city of Dublin seemed to lament the loss of him, and there was a general mourning. His funeral was attended by persons of all ranks. The sermon was preached by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Daniel Williams, then pastor of another congregation in that city.” In addition to the sermon already named, he published “*Topica Sacra ; or, Spiritual Pleadings ;*” “*Old Jacob’s Account Cast up ;*” “a Funeral Sermon, for Lady Sus. Reynolds, on Genesis xlvii. 9.” He left behind him many MSS, and among the rest, “A System of Divinity,” in a large folio volume.

The next Nonconformist minister that Chester has to boast of was WILLIAM COOK, ejected from S. Michael’s Church. An interesting account of him is to be found in the last chapter of Philip Henry’s Life ;* and in the preface to a work by the Rev. Samuel Bold, of Steeple, Dorsetshire, entitled “*Man’s Great Duty*,” 1693. Mr. Cook was born in the year 1612, and belonged to a family distinguished for piety for several successive generations. He was educated by the Rev. John Ball, of Brazenose College Oxford, an eminent Puritan who kept a school at Whitmore, near Newcastle, in Staffordshire. He had great natural powers, a quick apprehension, and a strong memory. He was studious to a prodigy, and his proficiency in whatever he applied his mind to was astonishing. He enjoyed the friendship and patronage of Sir John Burgoyne, who assisted him in undertaking the work of the ministry. He was first minister at Wroxal, in Warwickshire, where he published two treatises against the Anabaptists, viz. :—“*An Answer to a Book entitled ‘The Vanity of*

* See also *Baxter’s Life*, part iii., page 98.

"*Childish Baptism*" and "*The Font Uncovered for Baptism*"—an answer to the challenge of the Baptists at Stafford. By the advice of the London ministers he removed to Ashby-de-la-Zouche in Leicestershire, and while there he came into collision with the notorious Hugh Peters. "I have by me," says Matthew Henry,* "many of Mr. Cook's manuscripts, but only some of them legible; and among them a very large account of a particular rencounter between Hugh Peters and him, when Mr. Peters, without his consent, thrust into his pulpit at Ashby, and of the grievous affronts and ill-language that Peters gave him. It is very prolix, being (as all that Mr. Cook did was) very prolix." Mr. Cook was turned out of his living at Ashby for refusing the Engagement, and removed to Chester, where he became minister of S. Michael's Church about the year 1650.

Newcome† says, "The next day, January 2, 1650-51, we parted at Newcastle, Staffordshire, where Mr. Cooke, now of Chester, preached,"—when probably he was on a visit to the scenes of his youth. He was an active man for Sir George Booth, in 1659; for which he was brought up a prisoner to London, and continued long under confinement in Lambeth House, and had not the times turned, he would have been tried for his life. Newcome thus notices his imprisonment:—"1659, September 13, Tuesday. Mr. Harrison and Mr. Cooke were hurried away towards London, by order from above." "During the Usurpation," says Philip Henry, "Mr. Cook's frequent prayer was, 'that God would pull down all usurped power, and restore the banished to their right.'" His sufferings in the Royalist cause did not procure him liberty to preach the gospel without strict conformity. His skill in the Oriental languages won for him respect from the learned Walton, who was bishop of Chester during the year 1661. He would speak civilly to Mr. Cook, but told him he must conform or he could not help him. On the 24th of August 1662, being Bartholomew Day, Mr. Cook resigned his preferment at S. Michael's, but continued till his death in a pastoral relation to a society of many worthy eminent Christians in Chester. Soon after he was silenced he was committed to the common goal for preaching in his own house, by the mayor, at the instigation of the then Bishop Hall. But he strictly adhered to his principles in all the changes of the times, and told the Bishop that though his ordination by Presbyters

* Life by Williams, page 220.

† Autobiography, page 24.

was not legal yet it was evangelical. Upon the passing of the Five Mile Act he was forced to withdraw to Puddington, a village in Wirrall, seven miles from Chester, and while there he attended the public ministry and preached in the intervals. He would say sometimes to his friends when he was in that retirement, that he thought "what little peace and quietness there was in this world, God's people enjoyed it in their corners." On the issuing of Charles II.'s Indulgence in 1672, he returned to his church at Chester, and laboured faithfully among them till his death. He finished his course with joy, July 4, 1684, in the midst of the cloudy and dark day, in the seventy-third year of his age. When he lay on his death bed an aged friend of his, asking him if he had not comfort in reflection upon his labours in the work of God, he presently replied, "I have nothing to boast of." He was buried in S. Michael's Church; and though for some time before he died such was the heat of the persecution that he durst not shew his face in the city, yet many considerable persons were very forward to do him honour at his death.

The following is the character given of Mr. Cook in Calamy's Memorial and by Philip Henry:—

"He was a Christian of the primitive stamp; a man of a most godly, mortified life, and unwearied labour; who could go in mean clothing, live on little, and travel on foot, trampling on this world as dirt. He was very indefatigable in his ministerial labours, in which he never sought anyone's assistance, but would preach and pray almost all the week, as he had opportunity, in season and out of season. While he had liberty, he constantly kept a public fast in his congregation every month, as also a private one in his own closet and family every week. He usually set apart one afternoon every week to visit the families of his congregation, to catechise their children and servants, and discourse with them personally about their spiritual affairs. His visits were short but edifying. He managed them like one who was a good husband of his time, and seldom parted without prayer. He governed his family with great strictness and prudence. Every morning, in his family worship, after he had briefly implored the divine assistance, a psalm was sung, then a chapter in the Old Testament in the morning—and one in the New in the evening—was read, which he expounded, pointing out the several parts of which it consisted, then giving an account of the substance of it in as few words as possible; then

“ explaining the chief difficulties that occurred, concluding with useful
“ instructions. He then spent a quarter of an hour in prayer and praise,
“ usually improving much of the chapter that was read as matter for
“ both. He was eminent in all the parts of prayer; but commonly
“ abounded most in the confession of sin, in admiring all the divine
“ excellences, and in praising God for all his benefits. On all occasions
“ he was importunate for the church of God, and for the enlargement
“ of the kingdom of Christ. His regard to justice was uncommonly
“ exact; and his charity, considering his circumstances (which were
“ not affluent), was stupendous. Having no child of his own, he freely
“ took into his family three or four poor children, whom he boarded
“ and clothed at his own expense, and instructed in human literature
“ and religion. These and his servants he catechised twice a week,
“ explaining everything to them in the most easy manner. When he
“ could no longer exercise his ministry in the church, he performed
“ most parts of it in his family, with the same care and diligence he
“ was accustomed to use in public, though no other person was
“ present.

“ He was a strict conscientious observer of the Lord’s Day. His
“ family constantly had their work done by four or five o’clock on
“ Saturday afternoon. He then spent an hour and a half in ex-
“ plaining Scripture and in prayers. After this all retired to their
“ apartments to learn their catechism and for devotion. At eight
“ they supped, and then he dismissed his family as usual every other
“ day. He was always up early on the Lord’s Day. Every one in
“ his house read a chapter in the morning, and he spent an hour and
“ a half in expounding and prayer. Then he and his family went to
“ public worship, and upon their return (after his being silenced) he
“ prayed and repeated the sermon, and then preached and prayed as
“ he was wont to do in public. After dinner he went to church, and
“ on his return performed the same as before. After supper every
“ one of the family gave an account of what they could remember of
“ the sermon, and he concluded the day with singing a psalm and
“ with solemn prayer and praise. He went through all this labour
“ with surprising vigour, cheerfulness, and fervour of spirit. He was
“ a great follower of peace, civil, courteous, and obliging, but a
“ stranger to that ceremoniousness which has since become so fashion-
“ able. He was very free in reproving his relations and all his
“ acquaintance as occasion required; and was mightily concerned

“ when he heard of the prosperity of any of them, that they might be
“ provided against the temptations of their condition; and he was an
“ earnest intercessor for the afflicted. His abstinence and self-denial,
“ his strict watch over himself, and regard to divine Providence in all
“ instances were very uncommon; as was also his humility. He
“ fortified himself to an uncommon degree against everything he could
“ suspect of having a tendency to tempt him even to a moderate con-
“ ceit of himself. Though he was not free to join in the Common
“ Prayer, and bore his testimony against prelacy and the ceremonies
“ with zeal, he managed his dissent from the established church with
“ great candour and christian moderation. He sometimes keenly
“ reprov'd such as reflected on a Conformist, though in a matter
“ which he himself could not approve. And his great piety, integrity,
“ and charity recommended him to the respect of many that differed
“ from him. He was a great scholar, and continued a hard student
“ to the last. So far was he from entangling himself in the affairs of
“ this life, that he knew not what he had save the bread which he
“ eat; nor was he very conversible about worldly matters, but in dis-
“ course on the things of God none were more free and affable. He
“ lived and died a great example of close walking with God and a
“ heavenly conversation. He suffered with great patience and meek-
“ ness. The Rev. Samuel Bold, who was brought up under him from
“ his childhood, says of him in a tract dedicated to his widow, ‘ He
“ ‘ was the greatest instance of an indefatigable faithful minister and
“ ‘ practical believer that he was ever acquainted with.’ ”

Such is the history as far as it can now be gleaned of the Nonconforming ministers of Chester in 1662. Had we been in the venerable city on that memorable Sunday the 17th of August, the Sunday before the sadly famous Bartholomew Day, we might first have looked in at the *Cathedral* (S. Oswald's), and heard the eloquent Dr. Harrison preaching his farewell sermon; we might have passed thence to *S. John Baptist's* to see the venerable Peter Leigh rising in his pulpit for the last time, to speak forth the words of truth and soberness; we might have hurried thence to *S. Michael's* where that “ pious and “ painful minister” William Cook was declaring his conscientious convictions regarding his Nonconformity to a congregation ready to leave the church in which they had so long worshipped rather than desert their pastor; and (passing by the Castle Chapel, where the honest Samuel Eaton, the Congregationalist, had often preached), if

time and arrangements of services permitted, we might have heard the voice of Mr. Glendall for the last time in *S. Peter's*, and of Mr. Thomas Upton in *Trinity Church*:—no fewer than five faithful ministers might we have seen that day in Chester bidding farewell to their several flocks, and declaring their brave resolve to suffer the loss of all things—of spheres of usefulness, of livelihood, of house and home—rather than violate their conscience by submitting to the requirements of the Act of Uniformity. These five men were the chief ministers of note in the city. The newly-appointed Bishop Hall had probably taken up his abode in the palace; but in these five men he lost the flower of the ministry in Chester, the preachers at the five chief churches. Regarding *S. Mary's Super Montem*, the Lambeth Parliamentary Survey 1649 states:—"The church of this parish is supplied by *Mr. Robert Hunt*, a preaching minister, but insufficient for the place." This was probably the same Hunt whom Walker erroneously names as *sequestered* from *S. Mary's* in 1643. Soon after the Restoration *Mr. Nicholas Stephenson*, who had been ejected from Alderley to make way for the old incumbent, gained this living of *S. Mary's*, and though a Presbyterian, conformed in 1662. Who was at *S. Bridget's* in that year is uncertain. Ormerod names Christopher Goodman, but whether he was ejected or conformed we cannot tell, nor do we know anything of his character or talents. The rector of *S. Bridget's* supplied *S. Martin's*, and *S. Olave's* was under the care of the minister of *S. Michael's*.

The five ministers whose names have now been given did not stand alone in their Nonconformity; they were followed and supported by a large and respectable number of the citizens. We have already mentioned the Congregational Church established by Samuel Eaton, which probably was broken up in consequence of the ministry of "the firebrand" Mr. Knowles. Dr. Harrison did not leave Chester for Ireland until the year 1670, and in 1665 we hear of his introducing a young man into the ministry in Chester named JOHN BAILEY, who had been partially educated by him, and who soon afterwards suffered a hard imprisonment for conscience' sake. This young man subsequently went to Limerick in Ireland, and removed thence to New England, where he became an eminent minister. Cotton Mather gives an interesting account of him, which is inserted in Calamy's Nonconformist Memorial. Mr. Peter Leigh removed to Knutsford, and Mr. Glendall to Great Budworth; but in their place other eminent Nonconforming ministers came to reside in Chester.

Mr. WILSON, of Backford, some time after his ejection, took a house in the city and settled there, holding as large meetings as prudence and the severity of the times would permit. When liberty was granted he preached in a gentlewoman's house, and had a crowded congregation. He died in Chester about 1672.

The Rev. JOHN GARSIDE also preached occasionally in Chester during the stormy interval between 1662 and 1672. He was once pulled out of the pulpit in Bosley chapel by Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, in 1669, and the next day was carried to Chester, where he suffered imprisonment according to law. Tong in his life of Matthew Henry* describes him as "that good aged humble minister that lived and died "near Macclesfield, several years ago, greatly esteemed by all that "knew him, and especially by the good people at Chester, to whom "he used to preach very privately in the times of persecution; a "person of uncommon learning and judgment, and gifts in preaching "and prayer, and of great simplicity and godly sincerity, affecting "plainness in his garb and way of living, beneath what his friends "thought was due to his station as a minister, but he was contented "and best pleased with it."

A third Nonconforming minister who came to Chester, was the Rev. RALPH HALL, ejected from Mear, in Staffordshire. He gathered a congregation (distinct from the one of which Mr. Cook was pastor), who met for worship regularly during the interval of quiet between 1672 and 1682; but when the persecution again arose in the last named year, he was arrested and committed to the North gate prison upon the strength of the Five Mile Act. The following story is related of the conversion of a soldier condemned for murder, whom Mr. Hall met in the prison:—"The soldier's name was Spooner, one that had "been a very loose and profligate man, and was concerned with others "in a drunken riot in which a poor man lost his life. Mr. Hall (who "was pastor to that people in Chester that invited Mr. Henry) was "sent a prisoner to the castle for six months, for no other fault than "preaching the Gospel: but God sent him thither for good to this "poor criminal, who lay in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of "iniquity. Mr. Hall found him very ignorant and stupid, but God "was pleased to bless the serious discourse he had with him and the "fervent prayers he put up to God with him and for him; conscience

“ was awakened to purpose, and God sealed his instruction ; a wonderful change was wrought in him in a little time, and he made such a declaration of the manner of God’s working upon his soul when he came to die, and of the benefit he had received by Mr. Hall’s instruction and prayers, as very much affected all that heard him, and indeed filled the whole city with wonder ; every one looking upon him as such another monument of free grace as the thief on the cross, and glorifying God on his behalf. That good old minister thought his six months’ imprisonment abundantly compensated by being an instrument of so much good to a precious soul, that was in so much danger of perishing for ever.” Mr. Hall did not long survive his trial. He died in the midst of the dark and stormy day, soon after Mr. Cook, in the year 1684.

The latest surviving of the ejected ministers who came to live in Chester was the Rev. JOHN HARVEY. He was ordained by Bishop Worth, in London, in 1660, and became minister of Wallasey, in Wirrall, where he was suffered to remain barely a year, being turned out to make room for Alexander Featherstone, a Conformist. He seems at once to have settled in Chester as pastor of the Congregationalists there ; and he continued to labour faithfully with many hindrances during the ten years of persecution that followed the passing of the Act of Uniformity, during the season of respite from 1672 to 1682, and throughout the second time of trial that preceded the Revolution of 1688.

§ III. THE NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES SINCE 1688.

We have now reached an important era in the history of Nonconformity in Chester. From what has already been stated it appears that no fewer than seven Nonconformist ministers preached in the city as opportunity allowed after their ejection, namely — Dr. Harrison till his removal to Dublin, John Bailey, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Garside, Mr. Cook, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Harvey. Five of these, the first and the last-named excepted, suffered imprisonment for the *crime* of preaching the gospel in their homes and to their friends. Three of them, Mr. Cook, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Harvey, had each a distinct congregation during the liberty which Protestant Dissenters enjoyed by connivance after 1672 ; but these churches were all broken, and dispersed by the persecution which was renewed in 1682. Mr. Cook

and Mr. Hall died in 1684, and those of their congregations who continued Dissenters joined with Mr. Harvey, who kept close and preached very privately in his own house or elsewhere and rode out the storm. But some few had Dr. Long (of Newcastle) and Mr. Burnet, who came to them now and then and administered the Lord's Supper to them.

The celebrated MATTHEW HENRY now appears for the first time in connection with Nonconformity in Chester. He was the son of the holy and meek Philip Henry, ejected from Wybunbury, Flintshire, and was born on October 18, 1662; the same dark year in which so many ministers—his father among the rest—were separated from their flocks and driven from their cures. In 1680 he was placed under the tuition of the Rev. Thomas Doolittle, of Islington, and afterwards became a student of the law at Gray's Inn. But the bent of his mind and the desire of his heart were towards the ministry, and he began to preach in private. In "A Short Account of the Beginning and Progress of our Congregation, written in 1710," he says:—"About the end of the year 1686 some business drew me to Chester, and I lodged at Mr. Henthorn's. I preached at his house two or three times, also at Mr. Harvey's and Mr. Jolly's, and contracted an intimate acquaintance with Mr. Edward Greg. Mr. Henthorn and Mr. Greg came to solicit that if indulgence were granted I would be their minister. I was then (January 1686-7) in the twenty-fifth year of my age. I consented with the proviso, which made them uneasy, that Mr. Harvey would consent to my coming. But at that time I was going to London, to reside at Gray's Inn for some months, and did so." These facts are related in greater detail by Mr. Tong.* He informs us that all those who belonged to Mr. Cook and Mr. Hall had not joined with Mr. Harvey's church in constant communion; and so strongly were their hopes and desires fixed upon Matthew Henry for their pastor, that they were willing to receive him upon his own terms and in his own time. Owing to King James II.'s indulgence (intended in favour only of Popery), the Dissenters were able to resume their meetings in several places, Chester among the rest; they had been not a little harrassed by several fines and imprisonments, though there was nothing found against them except in the matter of their God; but the prospect of rest and liberty was very pleasant to

* Life of Matthew Henry, page 54.

them. They secured the services of Mr. Tong to minister among them till their invited pastor was able to come, and he preached about three months in Mr. Henthorn's hall. "Mr. Henthorn had always been forward to promote the gospel in that city where God had cast his lot and greatly blessed him for many years; he now opened his doors and offered to his neighbours the use of his house for the worship of God, which was large and commodious; he received Mr. Tong into his house, gave him a most kind entertainment, in everything treating him as if he had been his nearest relation. To his house the people resorted beyond all expectation; they only met at first between the hours of public worship; most of them went to hear Dr. Fog and Dr. Hancock, whose ministry they blessed God for; but at noon and again in the evening they flocked to Mr. Henthorn's. Their numbers increased every day, and some time before Mr. Henry came they found it necessary to provide a larger place; here again Mr. Henthorn was ready to supply them a pretty large outbuilding, part of the Friary which belonged to him was pitched upon to be the place. They set to work one Monday morning, and before the week's end they had it in that forwardness that the next Lord's Day it was opened."*

Meantime Matthew Henry was ordained in London, May 9, 1687, at Mr. Steel's house, by the imposition of hands of six ministers. A full account of the service is given by Tong, together with Mr. Henry's confession of faith, in which we find the following:—"I believe that the living and true God is but one. And that in the Unity of the Godhead there is a Trinity of Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these three are but one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. This is a revealed mystery, which I do believe but cannot comprehend."

After his ordination Matthew Henry returned home to his father's house at Broad Oak, and on the 1st of June, 1687, Mr. Greg, Mr. Coker, and Mr. Hall, with some others, came to meet him and attended him to Chester. The day following being Thursday, the *Lecture day*, he preached his first sermon publicly from 1 Corinthians ii. 2. "I expounded also," adds M. Henry, "Psalm 1st, and went on through the Psalms on lecture days. It is now (1710) the fifth time I am going over them. The first Lord's Day I expounded

* Tong, page 59.

“ Nehemiah viii., concerning the exposition of the scriptures, signifying my purpose to keep up that exercise, and began with Joshua, and went back to Genesis after, and in twenty years I went through the Old Testament (only once when we were in some part not so edifying), and I am now going over it the second time and am in Numbers. Afterwards I expounded the 119th Psalm that winter, and then to the New Testament, which I went through in eleven years.”

The dissenters in Chester received Matthew Henry with joy and thankfulness, even as an angel of God. He found in the city very agreeable society, which enabled him to prosecute his work with greater cheerfulness and courage. His behaviour towards Mr. Harvey indicated great prudence and modesty on his part as a young minister towards his senior. He waited on him on his arrival, before his first sermon, to ascertain his assent to his coming, and received from Mr. Harvey the assurance that he approved of it, “believing there was work enough in Chester for them both.” He attended Mr. Harvey’s week evening lecture on Tuesdays, and Dr. Hancock’s at S. Michael’s on Fridays. He and his friends even applied to Mr. Harvey to unite the two congregations, and for Mr. Henry to occupy the inferior position of assistant minister, or that at least they should join at the celebration of the Lord’s Supper; but Mr. Harvey declining both proposals, and wishing the two societies to continue distinct, Matthew Henry administered the Lord’s Supper to his own people for the first time on the second Sunday in July, 1687, and the number of communicants was forty-five. In two or three years they increased to 250. At first they met at church time in the morning, and at four in the afternoon after church was over—to oblige the church, but in vain. Dr. Fog, then the dean of Chester, said “it made the matter no better, it was schismatical at any time;” and afterwards the Dissenters discontinued their attendance at the parish churches, and held their own services at the usual hours. Among Matthew Henry’s friends in Chester, Tong names Alderman Mainwaring and Mr. Vanbrugh, father to Sir John Vanbrugh, who heard him on the week-day lectures; George Booth, an eminent lawyer, and near relation to the Earl of Warrington; Richard Kenrick, a gentleman of very good sense, pleasant and instructive conversation, and truly religious, a true lover of Mr. Henry’s ministry; John Hunt, brother to Mr. Hunt of Boreatton, always Mr. Henry’s faithful and

prudent friend ; and above all Edward Greg, a most exemplary person for meekness, humility, and serious godliness, one that had a good report of all men ; he had been very instrumental in Mr. Henry's coming to Chester, and was his *fidus Achates*, as he called him ; he died on July 8, 1689, after two years spent in the most intimate and endearing friendship, and Matthew Henry preached his funeral sermon from Acts xiii. 36. Besides these he met with many kind and valuable friends among the principal tradesmen in Chester, especially Anthony Henthorne, Samuel Kirk, Thomas Robinson, and Mr. John Hulton. Three of his sisters, soon after his settlement, married Chester gentlemen, and came to reside there. He himself first married into the Hardware family, of Bromborough, and next into the Warburton family, of Grange.

The Dissenters of Chester were foremost in guarding their rights and liberties as citizens. In September 1687, when James II. came to Chester, Mr. Harvey and Mr. Henry, having received an intimation that an address would be expected from the Dissenters, drew one up, and with the heads of their congregations presented it at the bishop's palace, where the king lodged. In this address they studiously avoided committing themselves to an approbation of the illegal dispensing power which had been claimed and exercised by the king, and restricted their expressions of gratitude to the *ease and liberty they then enjoyed under his protection*. Sir Richard Leivling, then recorder of Chester, on the contrary, in his speech at the king's entrance into the city, told him that *the corporation was his majesty's creature, and depended on the will of its creator, and that the sole intimation of his majesty's pleasure should have with them the force of a fundamental law*. The Charter of the city had been surrendered to the king in 1684, and a new one was granted, by which a power was reserved to the Crown to displace and appoint magistrates at pleasure. This precarious charter was joyfully accepted by those who surrendered the old one, and who now hoped that some aldermen of honest principles would be turned out and their places supplied by persons of a different temper. About August 1688 a messenger was sent to exercise the power reserved in the new charter, and remodel the corporation, who applying to Mr. Henry told him the king thought that the government of the city needed reformation, and that if he would specify what individuals should be removed it should be done. Mr. Henry declined to interfere, stating that it was no business of his,

nor would he intermeddle in any such affairs. However, the messenger procured his information elsewhere. The new charter was cancelled, and another sent of the same purport, but substituting the names of all the Dissenters of note, the seniors as aldermen, and the juniors as common councilmen. This charter was brought down, and the persons nominated called together to have notice of it, and to have the time fixed for being sworn. But they, like true Englishmen, refused to accept it and desired that the ancient charter might be restored, although they knew that none of them would come into power, but that many of their bitter enemies would be restored by it. Thus did they bravely sacrifice self-advantage and influence for the sake of vindicating the common rights of citizens, although by so doing that party would be installed in office who had basely surrendered the independence of their city. Nor was their laudable firmness without effect, for the old Charter was restored in the same state as when the Tories had surrendered it.

The number of Dissenters in Chester was much increased towards the end of 1688 by many who were forced to flee for safety from Ireland, taking up their abode there : but most of them returned after the battle of the Boyne in 1690. Mr. Harvey and Mr. Henry, having qualified themselves according to the terms prescribed in the Toleration Act, certified their places of worship, together with several private houses in the city and neighbouring country, and prosecuted their labours with diligence and mutual good will.

On the 28th of November 1699 Mr. Harvey died. "I went this morning," says Matthew Henry,* "between seven and eight o'clock to see Mr. Harvey, and found him newly departed out of this world; his passage was made easy and there were no bands in his death. When I had prayed with him last night, I said to him, 'I hope, 'Sir, you have now inward peace and comfort;' he answered, 'I trust I have,' and said no more. He was taken ill last Friday. O that I might hear the voice of this rod; I am called to prepare, 'tis a voice to me. I have been this day blessing God for the comfort we have had these twelve years past, and that I have endeavoured to carry it aright towards him, and bewailing it wherein I have been defective. As to the disposal of the congregation, I have solemnly and with the greatest indifference referred it to God,

* Tong, p. 276.

“ resolving to be purely passive, and earnestly begging that it may be
 “ so ordered as may redound most to the glory of God and the
 “ furtherance of the gospel in this place.” Mr. Henry preached on
 this occasion on the lecture day from Luke xiv. 21.*

Mr. Harvey was succeeded in the pastorate by his son, the Rev. JONATHAN HARVEY, who entered Mr. Frankland's academy at Rathmel, February 26, 1695, and was ordained at Warrington, in June 1702, Mr. Henry taking part in the service. He was not successful in keeping up his father's congregation. It gradually declined. Matthew Henry in his diary writes : “ I have had many searchings of
 “ heart about Mr. Harvey's congregation who come dropping in to
 “ us. As I have endeavoured in that matter to approve myself to
 “ God and my own conscience, and my heart doth not reproach me,
 “ so, blessed be God, I hear not of any person one or other that doth.”†

The foundation of Matthew Henry's new chapel, situate in Crook Lane, which he describes as “ very commodious, capacious, and
 “ pleasant,” was laid in September 1699. It cost 532*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* At the opening, August 8, 1700, Mr. Henry preached from Joshua xxii. 22, 23 ; a sermon which was published in 1726, under the title of “ *Separation without Rebellion.*” In 1706, owing to decline of health, Mr. Jonathan Harvey resigned his charge, and he died in April 1708, aged 30 years. The bulk of his congregation united with that at Crook Lane, and a gallery was erected for their accommodation. The number of communicants rose to above 350, unanimity prevailed, and pastor and people rejoiced in their prosperity.

It is beyond the scope of this sketch to give any detailed account of Matthew Henry's life. For this the reader is referred to Mr. Tong's memoir, a most interesting and useful book, one of the most valuable works in connection with Nonconformity in Cheshire ; or to the biography compiled by Sir J. B. Williams, which may fairly be characterized as a republication of Tong, with some valuable additions and with some important omissions.

Matthew Henry was an able, zealous, and affectionate labourer among the Nonconformists both in Chester and throughout the county. The long lists of his texts and subjects so methodically arranged prove the thoroughness of his pulpit work. His well known Commentary is the digest of his sermons. The first volume was finished October

* Tong, page 276.

† Williams's Life of Matthew Henry, page 136.

1706, the second August 1708, and the third July 1710. He was always at his post. In 1710 he says, "I never had been on the first sabbath in the month out of Chester for twenty-four years." He was indefatigable in his labours as pastor. In addition to his weekly lecture he had frequent services on week days, in celebration of the monthly fasts ordered by government, and in preaching "Reformation" sermons. He regularly visited the prisoners and malefactors in the castle, preaching to them and praying with them. He held weekly a catechumen class. His efforts extended to several places in the country about Chester. He preached monthly at Mouldsworth, Grange, Bromborough, Elton, Saughton, and frequently at Beeston, Mickledale, and Peckforton; he was often employed at Wrexham, Shocklidge, Burton, and Darnal. There was scarcely a week but he was at one or more of these places preaching the gospel. Besides all this he was an active member of the Cheshire Association of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers; there was scarcely a meeting of the ministers he did not attend; eight times in the Knutsford meeting he preached before the ministers, several times he was moderator, and at the ordinations he was frequently engaged. He was one of the principal contributors to the fund "for the maintenance of the poorer sort of ministers, and education of young men designing the ministry," and he took his turn in the moveable Lecture against profaneness preached by various ministers in the different chapels throughout the county. As to his theological views his works all of them bear testimony to his adherence to the confession of his faith made in his ordination, and to the Agreement adopted by the Cheshire ministers which he signed. In accordance with these he was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Trinity and in the Divinity of our Blessed Lord, and in His vicarious sufferings and death as the propitiation for the sins of men. A recognition of and a faith in these truths as the cardinal doctrines of Christianity are clearly manifest in every sermon that he published and in almost every page of his Commentary. Some of his discourses bore directly on these truths. In one set of sermons we find one upon the doctrine "that there are three Persons in the Godhead, 1 John v, 7." In another course upon *Redemption by Jesus Christ*, we find two sermons upon the two natures of Christ: "I. He is God, John i. 1. II. He is man, John i. 14," and others upon "His Incarnation, and His Priesthood, and His offering sacrifice for sin, Hebrews x. 12." As a Nonconformist he was firm yet liberal. He says in his diary:—

“ The High Church are very high both against the Low and Dissenters ;
 “ now Lord, behold their threatenings ; we are alarmed to think of
 “ sufferings and we need such alarms. I have heartily wished that the
 “ bigotry of some violent Conformists on the one side and of some
 “ Dissenters on the other might drive the sober, moderate, and
 “ peaceable on both sides nearer together, and prepare things for a
 “ coalescence when God’s time is come, which I earnestly pray for,
 “ and which perhaps might be effected if they could disentangle them-
 “ selves as much from the High Church, as I think we are from the
 “ High Dissenters, or I wish we were.”*

On May 11, 1712, he preached his farewell sermon to his congregation at Chester, previous to his removal to the church at Hackney. “ A very sad day,” he says ; “ O that by the sadness of their countenances and mine our hearts may be made better. I expounded the last chapter of Joshua in the morning, and the last of Matthew in the afternoon, and preached from 1 Thessalonians, iv. 17, 18. I see I have been unkind to the congregation who love me too well. I look back with sorrow for leaving Chester ; I look forward with fear, but unto Thee O Lord do I look up.” He promised to pay his Chester friends a yearly visit, and to spend a few weeks among them ; but on the second fulfilment of this promise when he was down in Cheshire, he died suddenly at Nantwich, on June 22, 1714, in the fifty-third year of his age. Mr. Withington preached a discourse suitable to the occasion in the morning, and Mr. Gardner in the afternoon of the Sunday following, in the chapel at Chester. His remains were followed to the grave by many Dissenting ministers, eight Conformist ministers, and by persons of note and distinction on all sides. He was buried in Trinity Church, Chester. When we consider the great amount of work he got through, we wonder at the stoutness of his appearance as presented in his portrait ; but Mr. Tong aptly remarks:—
 “ Though his constitution was very healthful and strong, there is
 “ reason to believe he put too much upon it ; and that not only by
 “ his frequent and very fervent preaching, but chiefly by his sitting so
 “ long together in his study and writing so much, this stopt the due
 “ circulation of the blood and spirits, and caused an obesity of body
 “ and flushing in his face ; but his study was more to him than the
 “ palaces of princes, and his work was his most pleasant recreation.”†

* Tong, page 311.

† Tong, page 390.

At the time of Matthew Henry's removal to London, it was expected that the Rev. C. Blackmore, of Worcester, would have succeeded him as minister of Crook-street Chapel. Mr. Blackmore had previously preached there, and the people gave him a cordial invitation to settle among them, but after much hesitation he declined. The Rev. Mr. Aldred, of Eccles, near Manchester, was next invited, but he also declined. It is not surprising that these worthy ministers shrank from the labour and responsibility involved in becoming successor in the pastorate to such a man as Matthew Henry and over so large a church. It was too much for any man of ordinary ability. Finally therefore, in October 1713, an arrangement was made whereby the Rev. JOHN GARDNER, of Swanland, near Hull, became minister of the place, with the Rev. Peter Withington as his assistant. Among the supplies who preached occasionally in the chapel previous to this settlement was the Rev. Joseph Murrey, a member of the church, and afterwards minister of a congregation at Burton-upon-Trent. Mr. Tong says—"The disappointments of his people gave Mr. Henry a great deal of trouble and cost him many prayers and tears; at length God provided wonderfully well for them; Mr. Gardner and Mr. Withington are labouring among them in the word and doctrine with universal acceptance, and we hope may be continued in their usefulness for many years, building upon the good foundation that has been laid by those master builders that have gone before them."*

Mr. Gardner continued to hold the office of senior minister of the congregation for upwards of fifty years. His first assistant, Mr. Peter Withington, a young man, was ordained in August 1714, and remained at Chester until 1720. The Rev. Mr. STREET, afterwards of Macclesfield, next acted as Assistant for some years, and he was succeeded in 1751 by the Rev. JOHN CHIDLAW. Upon Mr. Gardner's death, November 2, 1765—the congregation having gradually diminished during his pastorate—Mr. Chidlaw became sole minister, and continued in the office till 1798, when the state of his health compelled him to resign. He was respected and beloved by his congregation; but during his ministry at Chester he became a Socinian, and several of his people seceded and formed the Independent Church in Queen-street. He died November 15, 1800, in the seventy-fourth

year of his age. Upon his resignation in 1798, he was succeeded by the Rev. W. THOMAS, who resigned in consequence of ill health in 1808, and died in South Wales in March 1809. The next minister was the Rev. James Lyons, who had been eleven years pastor of a Particular Baptist church at Hull, but had relinquished his office there in consequence of his embracing Unitarian views. He came to Chester in 1808, and continued to minister at Crook-street Chapel till the end of 1813. The public services there were afterwards conducted by various ministers till August 1815, when the Rev. W. J. BAKEWELL, who had received a unanimous invitation the previous April, while a student at York College, undertook the pastoral charge. He was still at Chester in 1820, but since that date the succession of ministers is unknown to us. Crook-street Chapel, built by orthodox Nonconformists, under the protection of the Toleration Act, for the orthodox Matthew Henry, is now with its endowments (which are considerable) in the hands of Unitarians. The true representatives, in Doctrine as well as in Dissent, of the Nonconformists of 1662 and 1688 worship Christ elsewhere.

§ IV.—QUEEN-STREET INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.*

The Independent Church assembling in Queen-street Chapel Chester, and whose history and records are traced in these pages, owes its existence to a separation that took place from the so-called Presbyterian—now usually known as Unitarian—congregation assembling in Matthew Henry's old chapel in Crook-street.

Mr. John Gardner succeeded Matthew Henry as pastor of Crook-street Chapel in 1713, and remained there till his death in 1765. His views of divine truth are supposed to have been changed towards Arianism about the year 1750. With him was a co-pastor, one Mr. J. Chidlaw. Probably he was more decidedly Socinian than his senior fellow-labourer. At all events, on the death of Mr. Gardner, which occurred in 1765, Mr. Chidlaw became sole pastor, and the Socinian doctrine began to be more openly proclaimed.

In the Crook-street congregation there were several persons who held the Independent form of church government to be true and best.

* Furnished by the Rev. C. Chapman, M.A., minister of the place. A few additions [inserted in brackets] have been made.

A considerable section of them had joined the Presbyterians in Matthew Henry's time—the present gallery being erected for them; and, although in doctrine they agreed with the orthodox Presbyterians, yet in matters of church government they retained their own views unimpaired. About the time that Mr. Chidlaw became sole pastor, these and the remaining orthodox Presbyterians formed a distinct party in the church. When, therefore, the Independent section came out from fellowship with the Crook-street Church, purely on the ground of doctrine, the orthodox Presbyterians joined them and kept their views of church polity in abeyance for the sake of orthodoxy, just as the Independents had formerly ceased to insist on theirs for the sake of worshipping with a people in whose general doctrines they agreed. This took place in 1768.

In thus leaving the chapel and endowments in the hands of the Unitarians, the Independents brought away nothing but a good conscience, a zealous regard for the evangelical doctrines of religion, and that copy of Matthew Henry's commentary which had been left for their special use.

The number of those who seceded is not known. It would appear that by far the greater part of them were persons in humble circumstances. They commenced their separate existence as a worshipping assembly by taking a room belonging to the Smiths' Company, and situated on the south side of Commonhall-street. This room was in a part of S. Ursula's hospital, and was adjacent to the Old Common Hall. The meetings held in this room were chiefly for prayer, reading the Commentary, and Christian intercourse. Now and then the aid of some Nonconforming ministers was obtained. [There is a letter from the Rev. Dr. Jenkins, then of Wrexham, to the well-known Josiah Thompson, copied in the MSS. of the latter in Red Cross-street Library, which gives a minute account of Mr. Jenkins's visits to Chester. A deputation from Chester waited upon him inviting him to preach for the friends at Chester who had separated from Crook-street congregation. He went accordingly and preached in the room that had been chosen, to a congregation of about 200, among whom were only two or three of Mr. Chidlaw's congregation, and these only attended in the morning, and then by some indecorous manifestation of their sentiments during public worship showed that they disapproved of the proceeding. This encouraging attendance induced Mr. Jenkins to abandon a design he

then had of visiting London, and by the desire of the people he continued preaching to them all the winter. In the spring the congregation was so much increased that many were unable to procure admission, and a larger place became necessary. After Mr. Jenkins left they obtained assistance from neighbouring ministers.] In the year 1770 the congregation took an upper room on the opposite side of the street. It is said that it would accommodate between three and four hundred persons. The increase in the number of regular attendants rendered this step necessary. The assistance of ministers was now regularly sought and obtained. Among those who thus rendered help was the Rev. Jonathan Scott, more generally known as Captain Scott, a man of singular ability and piety. Up to this time no church had been formed. But after the lapse of two years, in consequence of the settled character of the congregation and the signs of God's blessing, it was considered prudent and right to constitute a *bona fide* Independent Church, distinguished from the congregation of ordinary worshippers.

The solemn event took place on the 30th January, 1772, when the Rev. Benjamin Evans, of Llanwicllyn, came to Chester for the purpose of doing it. By this act of brotherly kindness Mr. Evans performed a deed which will bear fruit for ever. The names of the *nine* persons who constituted the infant church were William Dix, Robert Bagley, Ellen Dimilla, Mary Fearnall, John Johnson, Martha Hawkins, Esther Elizabeth Dix, Ann Taylor, Hannah Kitchens.

There are no details extant as to the manner in which the church was constituted. But there were certain Articles of Faith drawn up, as also a form of Covenant designed to set forth—so far as words admit of it—the general doctrinal basis of fellowship and the obligations voluntarily assumed by the parties concerned. These are clearly written in the MS. Church Book, then opened for the first time, and still in the possession of the Queen-street Church. The handwriting seems to be that of the Rev. Benjamin Evans, as it corresponds with the signature of his own name at the end of it. The contents of the document were read and agreed to in the presence of the nine persons above mentioned, and whose names are appended in Mr. Evans's handwriting as an evidence of the same.

During that year, and before a settled pastor was obtained, there were five other persons added to the church. In the early autumn an invitation was given to Mr. W. Armitage to become pastor. He

accepted it, and entered on his duties on October 30, 1772. [The Rev. W. ARMITAGE was born at Huddersfield in 1738, and received his education for the ministry at the Rev. Mr. Scott's academy at Heckmondwike. His first pastorate was at Haton, in his native county, where he laboured successfully four years and a half; thence he removed to Delph, near Saddleworth, and having spent three years as minister to the congregation there he accepted the earnest and unanimous invitation of the infant church at Chester.]

It would appear from what has already been stated that there were fourteen members on the church book at the time that Mr. Armitage was chosen pastor. It is stated in Mr. Armitage's memoirs that he received the call from the church consisting of *seven* members. This perhaps means that seven of the members joined in the call, or that those admitted after the formation, up to August 24, did not vote. Two of the original nine were soon separated—one by the church; the other, his wife, by her own consent. During the rest of the year 1772 three other persons more were received into fellowship.

On the Thursday after the first Sabbath of his ministry Mr. Armitage held a service, which has ever since been continued. Four persons were led by that service to attend the Sabbath services, and subsequently to join the church.

[Mr. Armitage gives the following account of a singular occurrence that happened in connection with his preaching soon after his arrival in Chester:—

“Immediately on my coming to this place I determined to begin
“a Thursday evening lecture, and accordingly published my design
“on the first Sabbath day after my arrival. This being rather an
“uncommon service among the Dissenters at Chester, struck the
“inhabitants as a novelty, and excited the curiosity of many people
“to attend. I was much perplexed in the interval for a subject, nor
“was it till just before the time of meeting that I could fix upon a
“text. The words that I could find liberty to speak from at last
“were those recorded in Judges xiii. 23, ‘*If the Lord were pleased*
“‘*to kill us he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat*
“‘*offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these*
“‘*things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these.*’
“I could not then account for being led out of my usual way of
“study, but the secret was soon unravelled. It happened that a
“company of strollers were the same evening to exhibit a *puppet*

“ *show*, in a room adjacent to that in which we were to meet for the
 “ worship of God, and at the same time that I was to preach. Many
 “ debated in their minds whether the show or the sermon would
 “ afford them the greatest entertainment. As I was just come to
 “ town, and was entirely new to them, several on this ground resolved
 “ to hear me, and reserve their visit to the puppet room for a future
 “ evening. It was happy for them that they came to this resolution ;
 “ for that very night the place and about two hundred persons were
 “ blown into the air by the explosion of gunpowder, which had taken
 “ fire in a room under that in which they were assembled. Forty
 “ were killed on the spot, and many others were most miserably
 “ scorched and mangled. Those who attended on me made an
 “ application of my text to themselves, and said, ‘ If the Lord had
 “ ‘ intended to kill us, he would have permitted us to go to the puppet
 “ ‘ show, but as he has spared us we will never go again.’ Some of
 “ these have attended my ministry ever since, and I trust not without
 “ profit.”]*

Some time during the year 1773 Mr. Thomas Jones the cutler was chosen Deacon. He was alone in the office till 1780, when Mr. Charles Williamson was also elected. During Mr. Armitage’s ministry in Common Hall Lane, the congregation was greatly increased by means of a course of lectures, which he delivered on Tuesday evenings, upon Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. About this time there were seventy-eight members in the church, and the congregation also included persons of some position and means.

In the year 1776 it was considered desirable to seek a new and more commodious sanctuary. This was promoted also by the effort made by a certain party to obtain, by offering a higher rental, the use of the upper room for another interest. A suitable site was found in Queen-street, on the ground formerly used as the Tithing Croft. Mr. Thomas Jones was deputed to make a purchase of the land, subject to a ground rent, which was afterwards reduced and made into a freehold by Mr. T. Jones. On this land there was erected a brick Chapel, a Vestry, and a minister’s house. The ground not occupied by these buildings was laid out as a Cemetery. The Chapel was sixty feet in front, and forty feet in depth. The house was on the south side of the chapel, and facing the street. The vestry was

* *Evangelical Magazine*, ii. 267.

in the cemetery, on the north side. The chapel had no gallery. The foundation stone was laid on August 1st, 1776, and the building opened for worship on May 1st, 1777. The Trustees were not appointed till 1783. Mr. Thomas Jones then passed over the property to the chosen Trustees, namely, himself; Rev. W. Armitage; George Hodson, soap boiler; John Jones and Samuel Jones, cutlers; David Francis Jones, gentleman; Charles Williamson, wine merchant; John Johnson, shoemaker; all of Chester; and Robert Colley, of Churton Heath, gentleman. The blessing of God followed the effort of the church to extend its usefulness. After twenty-two years ministry among this church, five in the old and seventeen in the new place, Mr. Armitage was called to his rest March 25th, 1794, aged fifty-six years. He lies buried in the cemetery adjoining the chapel, and a marble tablet near the pulpit records the fact of his services and his decease.

The pulpit was then for a time supplied by neighbouring ministers and young men seeking a settlement. Mr. WILLIAM THORPE was chosen and became pastor; but after one year's labour he resigned the pastorate, and subsequently became eminent as a preacher at Bristol. Mr. Thorpe left in 1796. After two years' waiting, the church found a pastor in Mr. MOSES TAYLOR. Much beloved and blessed he preached for twelve months, when to the regret of all he was obliged to resign in consequence of ill health. Finding that through weakness of constitution, and prostration through excess of study, he was not able to do all that was required for the efficiency of the church, he considered it better for himself and for the people to give place to a stronger man. This occurred in 1799.

After another two years' waiting, the Rev. W. Roby of Manchester recommended the Rev. EBENEZER WHITE, who having supplied the pulpit for three months was invited and became the pastor of the church. He preached his first sermon as pastor on 17th October 1802, and was publicly recognised on 19th May 1803. On the occasion of Mr. White's recognition the following ministers officiated. In the morning Mr. Johnson of Warrington commenced by reading Scripture and prayer; Mr. Ralph of Liverpool offered the general prayer; Mr. Roby of Manchester delivered the charge from 2 Corinthians, iv. 5, 6; Mr. Lewis of Wrexham preached to the people from Philippians ii. 29. In the evening a double lecture was delivered by Mr. Davies of Liverpool, from Matthew v. 8, and Mr. Ralph from Galatians iii. 21, 22. Mr. Wilson of Northwich concluded by prayer.

[Ebenezer White was born in London March 9, 1771, and entered Hoxton Academy as a student for the ministry in 1796. Having spent three years there, he went into Northamptonshire, and soon afterwards removed to Hertford. His biographer in the *Evangelical Magazine** gives the following account of his ministry in Chester :—

“In this scene of pastoral duty he was uniformly assiduous, and “as far as the measure of bodily vigour permitted (and too often “beyond it) he was actively devoted to the studies and pursuits of “the Christian ministry. Notwithstanding frequent depression which “arose from constitutional infirmity and a melancholy temperament “of mind, he generally preached thrice every Lord’s Day, and once “on an evening in the week. His sermons were always distinguished “by their neat arrangement and perspicuous method, and he was “peculiarly happy in the selection of appropriate portions of Scripture “for the proof and illustration of the topics he discussed. The habit “of accurate classification was remarkably predominant in all his “literary and theological enquiries, and great ingenuity appeared in “what may be called the *mechanism* of his discourses. Hence a “logical minuteness of detail appeared in his sermons, which at times “interfered with the more important properties of amplitude and “strength; but he was always the faithful, consistent, intelligent, and “useful preacher.”]

After a ministry of nine years Mr. White was called to his rest on May 5th, 1811. He was interred in the ground adjoining the chapel, and the Rev. Mr. Spencer of Liverpool delivered an address over the grave. A marble tablet in the chapel commemorates his labours, as also those of Mr. Armitage.

During the ministry of Mr. White in 1803 the Queen-street Sabbath School was first established. There had been religious instruction of a catechetical kind given by the two deacons, Messrs. Jones and Williamson; but in order to extend the benefit of religious instruction to the neglected youth of Chester, and to relieve the deacons, a regular school was formed; and also arrangements were made for secular teaching on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings.

In the year 1812 a large gallery was erected in the chapel, at the cost of about 1,200*l.*

* Vol. xix., page 332.

In the year 1813 a call was given to the Rev. JOHN REYNOLDS to become the pastor, and he was publicly recognised in October of the same year. The services of the day were conducted as follows. In the morning the Rev. Job Wilson of Northwich read the Scriptures; the Rev. Joseph Fletcher of Blackburn introduced the business of the day; the Rev. W. Evans of Stockport gave the charge from 2 Timothy ii. 15. In the evening the Rev. W. Thorpe of Bristol preached on the relation of pastor and people, from Hebrews xiii. 17; the devotional services were conducted by the Revs. Thorpe, Wilson, Fletcher, and Hitchin.

Mr. Reynolds continued to labour with great success for five years, when in 1818 he resigned his charge, and soon afterwards settled at Romsey, Hants. It was during the time of Mr. Reynolds's pastorate that Dr. Townley came to Chester to be ordained as an evangelist to Ireland. His brother, Mr. H. Townley, who had previously been ordained at Paddington as a missionary to India, was also present on this occasion.

For the space of five years, from 1818 to 1823, the church depended on the assistance of neighbouring ministers and students; at length Mr. JOHN THORPE, son of the Rev. Mr. Thorpe, and at that time student at Blackburn, was invited to become pastor. The invitation was unanimous with two exceptions. Mr. Thorpe was ordained on April 30, 1823. The morning service was conducted by the Revs. J. Wilson, T. Raffles, J. Turner of Knutsford, and T. Bennett of Hatherlow; and the Rev. W. Thorpe who delivered the charge from 1 Timothy iv. 6. In the evening the Rev. Mr. Silvester of Sandbach prayed, and the Rev. J. Parsons of Leeds preached to the people. From the year 1823 to 1830 Mr. Thorpe drew large congregations, and exerted considerable influence on the public. But from 1830 to 1833 the congregation considerably declined. In consequence of want of success Mr. Thorpe resigned and retired to Huddersfield.

The pulpit was now vacant again for two years, when at last Mr. S. LUKE, then of Highbury College, accepted an unanimous invitation to become the pastor, on condition that he be allowed to complete his ministerial education by a six months' term at Glasgow. He was ordained on July 23, 1835. The ordination services were conducted as follows. In the morning Dr. Joseph Fletcher preached the introductory sermon; the Rev. Job Wilson asked the questions;

the Rev. J. Turner offered the ordination prayer; the Rev. J. Blackburn (Mr. Luke's former pastor) gave the charge. In the evening Dr. Raffles preached to the people; the Revs. Caruthers of Liverpool, E. Pary of London, J. Marshall of Over, Jones of Holywell, Williams of the Octagon, took part in the services.

After Mr. Luke had been minister about three years it was considered necessary that considerable alterations should be made in the chapel. After some time it was determined to rebuild a considerable part and enlarge it to the full extent of the ground, by adding seven feet in front and seven feet at back, thus making it inside sixty feet square. It was also beautified and fronted with white stone. The total cost was 2,888*l.* 10*s.* Soon after that, the minister's house being inconvenient, it was resolved to build on its site a lecture and school room, sixty by thirty feet, the upper for lectures and the lower for the boys and girls, who were separated by a partition. Four years afterwards the girls used the lecture room. The building cost 1,200*l.*, making with the alterations of the chapel a total of 4,088*l.* 10*s.*

Mr. Luke was pastor twelve years, when in 1847 he resigned and went to London. An effort was soon after made to secure the services of the Rev. — Gregory of Clifton, and an invitation was sent; but Mr. Gregory could not see his way clear to accept it. About that time the Rev. R. KNILL was on a visit to Chester on behalf of the London Missionary Society. The earnestness of his preaching, and the general esteem in which he was held, resulted in a cordial and unanimous invitation to become pastor of the church, which he accepted, and entered upon his duties in January 1848. A public recognition of his entering on the charge of the church was soon after held. Great blessings attended the labours of Mr. Knill. In the year 1852 he commenced a series of afternoon sermons in the theatre, which proved a means of salvation to many. Also during his ministry a considerable effort was made to reduce the debt on the Chapel and Lecture room, which with interest had increased to 2,384*l.* Towards this about 1,200*l.* were raised. Mr. Knill also contemplated preaching in the various towns and villages of the County, but before he was able to carry out this plan his health failed and he was obliged to retire from the office of pastor. This event took place in the spring of the year 1856, and on January 2nd, 1857, this good and faithful servant of Christ was called to his rest. [He still lives in the affectionate remembrance of many not only in Chester but throughout

England, who have profited by his counsels and admired his glowing zeal. For an account of his life the reader is referred to the admirable biography written by the Rev. C. M. Birrell of Liverpool.

The church was not long without a pastor. The Rev. CHARLES CHAPMAN of Western College Plymouth, and M.A. of the London University, was invited, and began his ministry among them on the first Sabbath of 1857.]

§ V.—COMMONHALL STREET INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.*

The Congregational Church assembling in Commonhall-street Chester, owes its origin under God to the labours and self-denying ministrations of the Rev. JONATHAN WILCOXON, who was for many years a faithful evangelical and powerful minister of the Gospel here. The efforts of this man of God were largely blessed in the gathering together of a considerable congregation, and the establishment of a Christian church, to whom he constantly preached gratuitously for a period of thirty years.

If we are asked the reason why Mr. Wilcoxon and his friends formed a distinct congregation rather than associate with any existing interest, we believe we should not err by attributing it chiefly if not solely to a desire to do good by extending the influence of the Gospel, not to create division or unnecessarily to multiply distinct congregations. They separated from their brethren meeting in the Octagon Chapel in this city in order to hold forth the Word of life in a spot that had been hallowed and consecrated by the solemn devotions of God's worshipping people through a long course of years before. In the Room which they now occupied the present influential Independent Church meeting in Queen-street was first formed; when left by them it was used by the Baptist brethren now meeting in Hamilton Place, and that church was originated here also; and when the old honoured room (situated near the present chapel) was again vacant, Mr. Wilcoxon and his friends felt it to be their duty to resume divine worship in it, and thus to meet the spiritual wants of the neighbourhood.

When they took possession of the place they were generally known by the name of *Oliver's Connexion*, and were so called on

* Furnished by the Rev. T. Peters, minister of the place.

account of their connexion with, and their adherence to the doctrines of the church formed by the Rev. PHILIP OLIVER in Great Boughton, in the suburbs of the city. Mr. Oliver was educated for, and for some time officiated in the Establishment; but being an earnest and evangelical minister he seceded, became a Nonconformist, and retired to Boughton Lodge, the property and residence of his widowed mother. He had not been here long, however, before the spiritual ignorance and the impiety of the people around awoke his Christian sympathy, and excited a deep solicitude for their salvation. His first efforts for this end were confined simply to his inviting the neighbours to meet in his mother's parlour, where he prayed with them and expounded the Scriptures. But the parlour soon becoming too small, he obtained leave to convert the coach-house—which appears to have been very spacious—into a place of worship. Here we are told many hundreds used to assemble to hear from his lips the words of eternal life.

There can be no doubt that Mr. Oliver was called and qualified by the great Head of the Church to do a great and good work; he was truly a burning and shining light, made more conspicuous by the surrounding darkness, and for a time many rejoiced in the light. Through his instrumentality evangelical truth was diffused even to the surrounding districts, many souls were savingly converted, and a church, consisting, we are told, of about five hundred communicants, was gathered together. But in the midst of his spiritual activity and ministerial success, in the year 1800, and when only thirty-seven years of age, this eminently holy and honoured servant of Christ was called to rest from his labours and to enter into the joy of his Lord.

After the death of Mr. Oliver the cause which he had originated in Boughton was transferred to the Octagon Chapel, under the direction and care of the celebrated Charles of Bala, who was left by Mr. Oliver the executor of its affairs.

Among the many active members of the church and approved teachers of the word Mr. Wilcoxon stood most prominent, and at this time he and his friends took possession of the room already referred to in Commonhall-street, as another branch of Oliver's connexion, and continued to worship in it until Mr. Wilcoxon's death.

It was resolved at this time to erect the present chapel, which was opened for divine worship in 1839. The ministry depended upon supplies drawn chiefly from the Calvinistic Methodist body, and the

liturgy of the Church of England was still read, as it had been during Mr. Wilcoxon's pastorate; but in the year 1842 the church resolved to dispense with the reading of the liturgy, and also to adopt Congregational principles. They formed themselves into an Independent Church, believing that they would thus lay the foundation for more usefulness and permanency. In the month of August 1843 the Rev. H. MARCHMONT settled as a Congregational pastor, and during his ministry the interest was well sustained. He continued to preach the word with much acceptance, until he removed in 1847 to take the pastoral charge of a church in London.

The church had again to resort to supplies, until in August 1848 the Rev. F. JONES removed from Runcorn and settled here. He was an affectionate and earnest minister, but his health failing he was obliged to resign his charge about the close of the year 1850. He was succeeded by the Rev. T. K. Smith, who became pastor in the latter part of the year 1852, but must have resigned office soon afterwards, for in the summer of 1853 the church was again seeking supplies. The ministry was carried on with efficiency and regularity in this way until October 1857, when the Rev. THOMAS PETERS, the present minister, removed from Marton in Shropshire and settled here. It is pleasing to add that during the last five years the church has gradually advanced, its membership having nearly doubled both in numbers and influence; and the hope is cherished that ere long the congregation may have a chapel to worship in more suitable to Chester and to Independency than is the present; and that some opening in Providence may evoke the cry, "*Arise and let us build, for the God of Heaven He will prosper us.*"

BARROW.

THIS place lies about a mile from Tarvin, and was originally only a chapelry belonging to that parish. Dr. Henry Bridgeman, son of Bishop Bridgeman, is named by Walker as sequestered from Barrow, in 1643. JOHN BOYER, a Presbyterian, was appointed to the living in his stead, and his name occurs among the signatures to the *Attestation* of Cheshire ministers in 1648. Upon the Restoration, in 1660, Dr. Henry Bridgeman was reinstated, and the Presbyterian minister

ejected to make way for him. He was afterwards promoted to the See of Sodor and Man, but held the living of Barrow though an absentee till his death in 1682.

BRUERA.

MR. COLLEY is named by Calamy as a Nonconformist minister in Cheshire, who at length conformed at Bruera, or Church in Heath, a village three miles from Chester. He was one of those probably who were *brought in*, as Calamy says, by Bishop Wilkins in 1668. Newcome also speaks of him as "Mr. Colley, several years a preacher among the Nonconformists, and at length brought in at Churton-heath Chapel." He says again in 1675, after his son had been appointed rector of Tattenhall: "We went that night to Churchen Heath, to my old friend Mr. Colley, who lives within two miles of Tattenhall; a great addition to the mercy to have so good a man, an old friend, so near a neighbour."*

CHRISTLETON.

THIS village, which lies about two miles south east from Chester, was during the Civil war fortified by the Parliament, and became the head quarters of Sir William Brereton's army during the siege of Chester. Walker in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, names "one Morston" as sequestered at Christleton, and adds that "one Samuel Stater got the living in 1655." The sequestered Morston (or more probably *Mostyn*, because the church was then the property of the Mostyns), was succeeded by *Hugh Burroughs*, who signed the Cheshire Attestation as *Pastor of Christleton*, in 1648. He was followed by the pious and learned *Samuel Stater*, who continued minister of the place probably till the Restoration, when he was "turned out" as Calamy says, and removed to Hargrave.

The Rev. RICHARD EDWARDS was the next minister, but he did

*Autobiography, p. 215.

not long retain the living. He could not submit to the requirements of the Act of Uniformity, and therefore he resigned his preferment. Afterwards, however, he was brought in by Bishop Wilkins's soft interpretation of the terms of the Act, and became the Incumbent of Oswestry. The excellent Philip Henry, of Broad Oak, knew him and bore testimony to his Christian liberality. "He often said how well pleased he was when, after he had preached a lecture at Oswestry, he went to visit the minister of the place, Mr. Edwards, a worthy good man, and told him he had been sowing a handful of seed among his people, and had this answer :—'That's well ; the Lord prosper your seed and mine too, there's need enough of us both.'" Again, in his Diary, P. Henry says :—" July 2 and 3, 1680. These two days brought tidings of the death of Mr. Haines of Wem, and of *Mr. Richard Edwards*, minister at Oswestry, both worthy Conformists, pious, peaceable, and good men, whom I hope through grace to meet in heaven. The Lord raise up others in their room to be and do better."*

Nonconformity seems never to have become extinct at Christleton. Bishop Gastrell mentions two Dissenting families there in his day, and there is now a small Independent chapel in the village.

DODDLESTON.

THE name of JAMES HUTCHINSON occurs among the signatures to the *Attestation* of Cheshire Presbyterian ministers in 1648, as "Pastor of Dodlestone," and the Parliamentary Survey for 1649† informs us regarding that date "the present minister is Mr. James Huttcheson, appointed by the Committee for Plundered ministers."

Mr. Hutchinson either died or removed from Doddleston before the Restoration, because we find a Mr. BAKER minister of the place at that time, whom Calamy names as a Nonconformist. He says, "This was a sequestration, but he continued a Nonconformist afterwards." This is one among the honest and steadfast Two Thousand of whom we know nothing save his name and the fact of his Nonconformity.

* Williams's Life of P. Henry, pages 132 and 274. † Lambeth MSS. v. III.

ECCLESTON.

WALKER names the Rev. William Bispham, prebend of Chester and rector of Eccleston, as one of the sequestered clergy in 1643. He says, "He was a great sufferer during the Rebellion. He was either "by fear or want driven beyond the seas, and forced to leave his "wife in extreme want to the charity of those who would relieve her; "of such it seems she found not many, for she was one day compelled "by necessity to apply herself to *Mr. Gelbourn* (who succeeded her "husband to this living and was eating his bread) to beg money to "buy her a pair of shoes, which he refused."

JOSHUA GELBORNE, whom Walker here names, signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648 as "pastor of Eccleston." The obvious injustice of the one statement in the extract from Walker, that Mr. Gelborne *was eating Bispham's bread*, because he held the living by a warrant equally legal as that by which Bispham himself had held it, leads us to suspect the injustice if not the utter groundlessness of the other statement regarding his want of charity. Bispham however not only had his *fifths* during his sequestration, but supplanted Gelborne in 1660, and enjoyed the living till his death in 1685.

FARNDON.

WILLIAM BRIDGES, *Pastor de Farndon*, signed the Attestation of Cheshire Presbyterian ministers in 1648.

HARGRAVE.

CALAMY names the REV. SAMUEL SLATER as turned out from this place in 1662, but he can have held this living a short time only, because from 1655 to 1660 he was settled at Christleton.

His funeral sermon was preached and published by the Rev. William Tong.

PLEMONDSTALL.

GEORGE COTTINGHAM, *Pastor of Plemstall*, signed the Attestation of Cheshire Presbyterian ministers in 1648.

Dr. Lawrence Fogg (or Fog), Dean of Chester, held this living fifty years, from 1672 till his death. He was the son of Mr. Robert Fogg, ejected from Bangor, in Flintshire, in 1662. He himself also had been a sufferer by the Act of Uniformity, having resigned the Rectory of Hawarden, in Flintshire, in 1662. "He stood out some time but at length came in," says Calamy, who also adds:—"It displeased him that in the first edition of this work he was mentioned as *conforming*, and therefore this account of him is taken from his own letters to the author upon this occasion:—"His case was in some respects different from that of others, for though he was conformable in worship ceremonies and matters ecclesiastical (being among the first who restored the public use of the liturgy in 1660, and continued the use of it till August 1662), yet he could not satisfy his conscience to keep his living when not only assent and consent was required, but a subscription to a second declaration, in which some clauses relating to matters of State seemed to him to be ambiguous. Not being permitted to subscribe in any other acceptance than what was commonly accounted the sense of the imposers, he chose rather to quit his livelihood than his inward peace, and resigned his benefice before the Act took place. And yet, in obedience to the law, he neither joined with any separate congregation nor officiated in the church till his sentiments of the *Declaration* were justified in Westminster Hall in 1665, by persons sufficiently authorized to interpret an ambiguity in a law, so long as the law makers forbore by an explanatory act to do it themselves. He then subscribed the said *Declaration*, as Dr. Bates and others did in London. The bar being (as he said, by Divine Providence) thus removed, he returned to his ministerial employment, having for several years only a curacy, but he was at length made Dean of Chester." The casuistry of this good man's reasoning, in order to justify to himself his conformity, is an amusing and curious counterpart of much that is written now a-days with the same intention by some broad Churchmen and Evangelicals in the Establishment. Matthew Henry observes regarding a Reformation lecture preached

by Dr. Fogg,—“I bless God for this sermon, and as I have from my heart forgiven, so will I endeavour to forget all that the Dean has at any time said against Dissenters, and against me in particular.” Tong also speaks of “Dr. Stratford and Dr. Fog, men of great learning and true piety, both excellent preachers.”*

PULFORD.

MR. RANDAL GUEST was Presbyterian minister of this place, and was ejected on account of his Nonconformity in 1662. An account of his ordination is given in the Minute Book of the Manchester Classis. “Mr. Randal Guest was formally examined (November 3, 1647) and brought a certificate of his taking the National Covenant, and of his call to Poulford, in Cheshire.” He was ordained on February 9th, 1647-8, and then, being in the fortieth year of his age, received his certificate “to exercise his ministry in the church at Poulford, in the county of Chester.”

His name occurs among the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation in 1648, thus,—*Randall Guest, pastor of Poulford*. He continued to labour faithfully at this place till 1662. Calamy says: “I know nothing more of him than that he lived and died a Nonconformist.”

TARPORLEY.

THE REV. John Jones, afterwards of Marple, officiated for some time in his younger years at Tarporley, after the manner of the Church of England, but being afterwards dissatisfied with it, he was invited by two pious gentlewomen—Mrs. Jane and Mrs. Mary Done—to reside with them at Utkinton Hall as their chaplain.

He was succeeded at Tarporley by NATHANAEL LANCASTER, B.D., whose signature occurs to the Cheshire Attestation in 1648, *Nathanael Lancaster, minister of Tarporley*. He was, previous to his appointment to Tarporley, chaplain to the forces of the Parliament, and

* Life of Matthew Henry, pages 243, 244.

after the engagement of the troops at Denbigh, sent to the Speaker of the House of Commons a well expressed letter with an account of the battle. The following is an extract:—

“To give every one his due in this service would savour too much of vain-glory; but this I may modestly report that every one endeavoured to exceed each other in gallantry, whose spirits God had raised to so high a pitch as might suit to a work of so high a nature. It’s conjectured by those who are best able to give account herein that above one hundred of the enemy were slain, about four hundred taken prisoners with divers men of quality. It’s not known that any of ours are slain, and few wounded. It is the desire of our hearts that God alone may have the honour of his own work, the characters of whose power are so memorably stamped upon it, whose goodness our sins have not yet so wearied to make him weary of renewed mercies.”

The following extract from the Commons’ Journals* shows that this service was not unrewarded. “4th November, 1645. A letter from Denbigh, 1st November, 1645, with a letter enclosed from thence of same date, from Nath. Lancaster, minister, relating the success of the Parliamentary forces under Colonel Mitton against the King’s forces under Sir W. Vaughan: Resolved, that the minister who brought these and the good news of the routing of the King’s forces shall have 50*l.* bestowed on him for his pains.”

This Mr. Lancaster married Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Leigh of West Hall, in High Leigh, Esq., to his second wife. He died a short time before the Bartholomew Act, as an inscription in Tarporley Church informs us:—“Nathanael Lancaster, son of Gabriel Lancaster of Rainhill, Lancashire, B.D., and rector of this church, died 9th January, 1660.” The probability is that had he lived he would have refused the conditions of the Act of Uniformity.

In the parish of Tarporley lies Utkinton, an old house standing in a warm valley, sheltered with hills and old timber on every side except the south-west, where there is a delightful prospect of the Welsh hills and the vale of Chester. This old hall, together with the village of Tarporley, was the scene of the grossest revelry and pillage on the part of the Royalist troops in the beginning of the civil war.† Utkinton Hall was the residence of Sir John Done, who “by his

* IV., 433.

† See *Neutrality Condemned*; a Cheshire Tract. 1642.

“ well-pleasing service to his majesty James I., who took pleasure
 “ and repast in Delamere Forest, 1617, of which he was chief forester,
 “ ordered so wisely his Highnesse’s sports that he freely honoured
 “ him with knighthood, and graced his house at Utkinton with his
 “ presence.”* This Sir J. Done married the daughter of Thomas
 Wilbraham of Woodhey, Esq., and with his youthful bride went to
 reside for some time, according to the desire of his father-in-law, in
 the house of the celebrated John Bruen of Stapleford, in order to be
 schooled in the principles and habits of Puritanism. Mr. Hinde of
 Bunbury, the biographer of John Bruen, gives the following quaint
 account of Sir J. Done’s sojourn there :—

“ One of the first and best, and best worthy to be first of those
 “ gentlemen who dealt with him (Mr. Bruen) in this kind, was that
 “ thrice worthy, truly honoured, and accomplished gentleman Thomas
 “ Wilbraham of Woodhey, Esq., the very beauty and glory of that
 “ house, and peerless pillar of the country, who having married his
 “ eldest daughter to a young gentleman of great place for his birth and
 “ blood, and of good parts for his natural endowments and civil dis-
 “ position (yet much addicted to the pleasures of the world and the lusts
 “ of youth), was desirous to place them as sojourners in this gentleman’s
 “ house. . . . ‘ This Master Done being young and youthly, yet
 “ ‘ very tractable, could not well away with the strict observation of
 “ ‘ the Lord’s Day, whereupon we did all conspire to do him good, ten
 “ ‘ of my family speaking one after another, and myself last, for the
 “ ‘ sanctifying of the Lord’s Day. After which he did very cheerfully
 “ ‘ yield himself; blessed be God.’ . . . ‘ I [John Bruen] coming
 “ ‘ once into his chamber and finding over the mantelpiece a pair of
 “ ‘ new cards, nobody being there I opened them, and took out the
 “ ‘ four knaves and burnt them, and so laid them together again; and
 “ ‘ so for want of such knaves his gaming was marred, and never did
 “ ‘ he play in my house, for aught that I ever heard, any more.’
 “ Here I cannot but commend both the Physician and the Patient
 “ also; the physician that gave him a gentle purge so wisely, and the
 “ patient that took it so well that it wrought so kindly with him for
 “ his good.”†

This Sir John Done died in 1629, leaving three daughters, Jane
 Done, Mary wife of John Crewe, Esq., and Eleanor wife of Ralph

* *King’s Vale Royal.*

† Hinde’s Life of John Bruen.

Arderne of Harden Hall, Esq. These pious gentlewomen, as Calamy styles them, inherited the Puritan principles of their father. The two first named had the Rev. John Jones as their chaplain, and removed to Harden Hall, near Hatherlow, to reside with their sister. They were holy and charitable women, zealous of good works. Philip Henry in his Diary thus speaks of the second sister:—"Mrs. Crew of Utkinton in Cheshire, an aged servant of the Lord, was buried July 8, 1690. She kept her integrity and abounded in works of piety and charity to the last, and finished well; to God be praise."* Her husband, John Crewe, Esq., second son of Sir John Crewe of Crewe, Knight, who died some years before her, was a friend of John Angier of Denton, whom he frequently met at Harden Hall. Oliver Heywood, in his life of Angier,† says, "Mr. Crew of Utkinton in Cheshire, was his (Mr. Angier's) dear and intimate friend, and had an entire love for him, as the writer hereof can testify; for being at his house at Utkinton, and Mr. Crew shewing him and his wife some handsome pictures hanging in a chamber (in which he much delighted), among the rest showed them the picture of Dr. Wilkins, who (saith he) is to be our Bishop of Chester; but (said he) *Mr. Angier is my Bishop*: and I have heard that Mr. Crew oft solicited Mr. Angier to sit while his picture was drawn, and he would be at the charge of it, but he put it off saying, a minister's picture must be in the hearts and lives of his people."

There is a sumptuous altar monument of white marble in Tarporley Church to the memory of the excellent sisters, on which is engraved the following inscription:—

"Near this place lieth the body of Jane Done, eldest daughter of Sir John Done, late of Utkinton, in this county palatine of Chester, knight, and one of the co-heirs of John Done, his son, esquire. She was baptized Nov. 14, 1600, and in a virgin state of great reputation, lived remarkably eminent for parts and prudence, affability and generosity, charity and piety. Besides her daily almsgiving and good deeds, she gave twenty pounds (charged upon certain lands in Torporley) to be yearly paid to the school adjacent for ever, and two hundred pounds now charged upon lands in Tattenhall, for the binding poor children in Torporley and Utkinton apprentice. She was a most tender lover of her no less affectionate sister, Mary Crewe, upon whom and her heirs, she settled her portion of the estate, and from whom she never parted till the day of her death, March 2nd, 1662.

"Here also by her sister Jane Done, lieth the body of Mary Crewe, relict of John Crewe, Esq. She was born at Utkinton, July 12th, 1604, married at

* Williams's Life of Philip Henry, page 277.

† Page 62.

“ Stockport Church, December 1636, and had 4 children, viz., a daughter born
“ at Harden, Oct. 3rd, 1637,” &c.

“ The aforesaid Mary Crewe, a wife chaste and affectionate, a parent prudent
“ and kind, a mistress tender and condescending, a friend wishing well and doing
“ well to all, in constant and free housekeeping not inferior to any of her quality
“ and time : a blessed peacemaker, even by authority amongst her tenants where
“ counsell could not prevail ; full of good works and almsdeeds which she did both
“ to the bodies and souls of many, having lived a rare example of piety, justice and
“ mercy, in a good old age, honoured and lamented by all, departed this life at
“ Utkinton, July the 6th, and was interred the 8th, 1690. She also gave two hundred
“ pounds charged by her upon lands in Torporley, for the binding apprentice the
“ eldest sons or daughters of cottagers, her tenants, in such places as were not pro-
“ vided for by her sister’s benefaction.

“ To the memory of which two sisters, alike in their characters and affections,
“ matchless in their endearments, inseparable in their lives, by death scarcely
“ divided, and here at last resting together awaiting the dawning of the Resurrec-
“ tion, this monument was erected in duty and honour by Sir John Crewe, of
“ Utkinton (nephew to the one, son to the other, and heir of both), in the year of
“ our Lord 1698.”

TARVIN.

THIS parish is celebrated as the residence of JOHN BRUEN, an eminent Puritan, and as the scene of the labours of the pious SABBATH CLARK, who was minister of the place for upwards of half a century, and who in his old age was ejected thence by the Act of Uniformity. Calamy gives the following account of Mr. Clark :—

“ He had been minister of this parish for near sixty years. He
“ carried Puritanism in his very name, by which his good father in-
“ tended he should bear the memorial of God’s holy day. This was
“ what some in those days affected. For this they have sufficiently
“ suffered from profane wits, and this worthy person did so in par-
“ ticular. Yet his name was not a greater offence to such men than
“ his holy life. He was a very grave person, exceedingly beloved by
“ that phoenix of his age Mr. John Bruen, of Stapleford, who brought
“ him to this place, where he was the spiritual father of many, and
“ the natural father of two eminent preachers. He died within a
“ year or two after his being silenced, blessing God that he had lived
“ to bear his testimony to Nonconformity. He preached and printed
“ Mr. Bruen’s funeral sermon at Tarvin, 1625.”

Mr. Sabbath Clark gives the following testimony regarding his friend and patron Mr. John Bruen :—

“ He was the chief instrument to plant and establish the preaching of the gospel in this congregation ; first by providing divers of God’s ministers to preach here oftentimes when the Incumbent was grown old and decrepid ; afterwards by maintaining a preacher at his own proper cost and charges ; and lastly by being a means to obtain the place for me in reversion, and allowing me the greatest part of my maintenance. So that this parish has cause for ever to acknowledge him as a nursing father of religion amongst them, and a blessed instrument to bring in the light of the gospel unto them when they sate in darkness and in the shadow of death.”

Mr. Bruen belonged to an ancient family. He was born in the year 1560 and died 1625. “ Many of his brethren and sisters were holy men and women, especially that rare gentlewoman Mrs. Catharine Brettergh,* his own dear sister whose praise is in print, and whose name and fame have been sounded out and proclaimed to the churches of Christ by two silver trumpets of the gospel Mr. Leigh and Mr. Haris in *Death’s Advantage*.” Mr. Bruen was an educated man ; he was gentleman Commoner of St. Alban’s Hall Oxford, and though at first inclined towards the riotous amusements of gentlemen of those days, he soon forsook these for a life of unaffected piety and extensive charity. He married for his first wife a sister of Mr. Hardware, of the Peile or Peele, in Tarvin parish and of Bromborough, into whose family Matthew Henry afterwards married. His second wife was Anne Fox, of the Rhodes, near Manchester. He was a stern Puritan, and his house was a thorough school of religious discipline to all who visited him. He was wont very hospitably to entertain whole families at a time at Stapleford, obliging them, however, for their spiritual good to conform to the religious arrangements of his household. An instance of this we have already stated in the case of Sir John Done. Mr. Bruen’s brother-in-law “ with his good liking and allowance,” brought himself and his whole family, wife, children, and servants to be tabled with him. He had a pulpit and chapel fitted up in his own house, where he had frequent service

* Mrs. Catharine Brettergh was born at Stapleford, Cheshire. When about twenty years old, by her parents’ consent she was married to Mr. William Brettergh, of Bretterghold, in Lancashire, near Liverpool, who was a young gentleman that embraced religion sincerely, and suffered much for it at the hands of the Papists. Two years after her marriage she was taken ill of fever and died. She was visited by her brother John Bruen, and by a godly minister, Mr. William Harron, and departed this life May 31, 1601, aged 22 years.—See *Clark’s Lives*.

to which the neighbours were invited. His biographer says: "His house was as the common Inne or constant harbour of the church and of God's children; and himself a Gaius, a goodly and good host to give them liberal and cheerful entertainment as they came unto him." And again:—

"His house was herein methinks not much unlike unto a goodly tower upon a hill, fair built and richly beautified, which doth easily invite and allure the doves of the vallies to fly and flock unto it, and for their better refreshing and repose to build their nests in it."

Previous to Mr. Sabbath Clark's settlement at Tarvin, and while the old and infirm incumbent was still living, Mr. Bruen procured "that faithful minister of Christ Mr. Ar. St. (Arthur Storer, A.M., of Stockport) to be preacher at Tarvin; whose ministry, being very profitable and powerful, he so much delighted in that, as he did entertain him kindly, so did he maintain him and his family very bountifully for the comfort and benefit which himself and many others did reap and receive from him." Mr. Hind gives the following letter of Mr. Storer's regarding John Bruen in confirmation of this statement:—

"Good Mr. H., I received your letter but know not what to say of that worthy servant of God Mr. John Bruen, which yourself know not already. I think I may well say of him as it was said of Noah, that he was a just and perfect man in his time, and walked with God. Whiles I was preacher at Tarvin I had little maintenance but what I had from him."

The following account of one of Mr. Bruen's household servants is worthy of insertion here as illustrative of the Puritanism of those days:—

"He had a servant named Robert Pasfield, better known as Old Robert, a man utterly unlearned, being unable to read a sentence or write a syllable, yet so well taught of God that by his own industry and God's blessing upon his mind and memory he grew in grace as he did in years, and became ripe in understanding and mighty in the Scriptures. To help his own and his friends' memories he invented a strange girdle of leather, long and large, so that for compass it would go twice about him. This he divided into several portions and parts (as a carpenter doth his rule) and allotted every Booke of the Bible in their order to some of those divisions, as Genesis to the first, Exodus to the second, &c. Then for the distinction of the chapters of every book he annexed a long point or

“ thong unto the several divisions, and made knots by fives or tens
 “ thereupon to distinguish the chapters of that book; he had also
 “ other, either points or rushes, to divide the chapters into their par-
 “ ticular contents, or several parts or verses, as occasion did require.

“ This instrument of his own invention he framed and used (as
 “ others do their pen and writing) for the better help of his under-
 “ standing and reliefe of his memory in the hearing of the word
 “ preached; which he did with so good effect and fruit, in observing
 “ all the points and Scriptures alleged in a sermon, and binding
 “ them upon the points and partitions of his girdle as he heard them,
 “ that in repeating the sermon afterwards he himself had great benefit,
 “ and many other professors much comfort and help by his handling
 “ of his girdle and fingering the points and divisions of it.

“ This man and his girdle shall rise up in judgment against many
 “ of greater place than himself, who are mindlesse in observing and
 “ carelesse in retaining what they hear or have heard in the preaching
 “ of the Word. His master thought the girdle worthy to bee kept and
 “ preserved in his study as a monument of God’s mercy and Old
 “ Robert’s piety and industry.”*

The following extract shews the sternness of John Bruen’s Puri-
 tanism:—

“ Finding in the church of Tarum, in his owne chappell, which of
 “ ancient right did appertain unto him and his family, many super-
 “ stitious images and idolatrous pictures in the painted windows, and
 “ they so thick and dark that there was, as he himself saith, scarce
 “ the breadth of a groat of white glasse amongst them; he knowing
 “ by the truth of God, that though the Papists will have images to
 “ beelay men’s bookes, yet they teach no other lessons but of lyes,
 “ nor any doctrine but of vanities to them that professe to learn by
 “ them; and considering that these dumb and dark images, by their
 “ painted coates and colours, did both darken the light of the church
 “ and obscure the brightness of the gospel, he presently took order
 “ to pull down all these painted puppets and popish idols in a war-
 “ rantable and peaceable manner, and of his own cost and charge
 “ repaired the breaches and beautified the windows with white and
 “ bright glass again.

“ Hereunto he was the rather induced and encouraged both by
 “ the liberty given and granted by the Queene’s injunctions *utterly*

* Hinde’s Life of Bruen, pages 57, 58.

“ to extinguish and destroy all pictures, paintings, and other monuments
 “ of idolatry and superstition, so that there might remain no memory of
 “ the same in the walls, glass windows, or elsewhere within their
 “ churches and houses, and also by the authority of a Commission sent
 “ down into the country to the Earle of Darby, the Mayor of Chester,
 “ and others, to the same purpose at the same time. Neither was
 “ this all, for he had the word of God to warrant him and the examples
 “ of holy men, as of Ezekiah in breaking to pieces the brazen serpent,
 “ of Josiah in pulling down the altars to Baalim, of Epiphanius in
 “ rending in pieces the superstitious vaile hanging before a church at
 “ Anablatha wherein was set forth the picture of Christ or of some
 “ saint, and of Leo the Emperor who broke down all images and
 “ idols in churches as standing there against the decrees of the
 “ Council of Nice. As for this gentleman of whom we speak, his
 “ affection and action cometh near to that commendation which
 “ Ambrose gave unto Theodosius,*—*Theodosius abscondit simulacra*
 “ *Gentium, omnes enim cultus idolorum cultus ejus abscondit; omnes*
 “ *eorum ceremonias obliteravit.*”

Mr. Bruen was visited on his deathbed by Mr. Hinde of Bunbury, Mr. Langley of Middlewich, and his own pastor Mr. Sabbath Clark. In the registers of Tarvin Church the following entry occurs:—
 “ Burials, 25th Jan. 1625, John Bruen of Stapleford, Esq.

“ *Nulli Pietate Secundus.*

“ An Israelite in whom no guyle

“ Or Fraud was ever found;

“ A Phoenix rare,

“ Whose virtues fair

“ Through all our coasts do sound.”

It is not to be wondered at that through the influence of such a devoted Puritan as John Bruen, and such a laborious and evangelical Nonconformist minister as Sabbath Clarke, a strong Dissenting element prevailed in Tarvin parish afterwards. Tarvin was one of the towns at which a *Reformation lecture* was preached every month. Henry Newcome mentions his having preached himself at Stapleford in the year 1678. He says, “September 1st I preached at Stapleford. I did think before, that though what I did was just and lawful, yet I questioned the prudence of it. The Tuesday after I was at Tarvin lecture, where I saw many friends. But the content hereof had two alloys. Mr. Fisher spoke to me about my preaching at

* *Orat. in mort. Theo.*

“Stapleford; and though I hope I satisfied him, yet I fear the uncounsellableness of my friend will breed inconveniences which I shall be sorry for.”* Oliver Heywood also preached at his cousin Nathanael Greg’s, in Tarvin parish, in the year 1688.

THORNTON IN THE MOORS.

SAMUEL CLARK, B.A., of Emmanuel College Cambridge, spent a short time in the early part of his ministerial life in this secluded village. He was invited to assist Mr. Byrom of Thornton in Cheshire, and in this new situation he was exposed to great temptations, “but it pleased the Lord in mercy to hedge up his way with thorns, and by striking him with extraordinary terror to bring him to reflection and deep humiliation, and by degrees to give him some comfort in believing and applying the promises of free grace in Christ Jesus. He here met with some trouble from a malicious person who prosecuted him for the omission of some ceremonies.” After a two years’ residence and labour he removed from Thornton to Shotwick, and afterwards became a distinguished minister in London.†

In the year 1648 *Richard Chapman* signs himself “Pastor of Thornton in the Moores,” in the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers.

On the 9th August 1653 Mr. *Richard Bowker* was ordained and certificated by the Manchester Classis to be minister of Thornton in Cheshire. He probably removed soon after to Middlewich, and was followed by the Rev. SAMUEL FISHER, M.A., who continued minister until 1662, when he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity. Mr. Fisher was a friend of Richard Baxter, who in a letter to Newcome mentions him as “judicious and honest Mr. Fisher,”‡ and who thus speaks of him in his life:—“Mr. Samuel Fisher, an ancient reverend divine, some time minister of Withington (near Chelford), then of Shrewsbury, turned out with Mr. Blake for not taking the Engagement against the King and the House of Lords in 1650; then lived in Cheshire, and thence cast out and silenced. A very able preacher, and of a godly life.”§ Calamy, in quoting this reference, says that

* Autobiography, page 227.

† Preface to Clark’s Lives, page 3.

‡ Autobiography, page 346.

§ Baxter’s Life, part iii., page 98.

Mr. Fisher was rector of Thornton, and adds that he lived many years after his ejection at Birmingham, and died there. He published a small work entitled *Spiritual Submission*, in two funeral sermons; one for Mrs. Holgate, the other for Mrs. Baker; and also *A Fast Sermon for January 30th*. Newcome, in his Diary, referring to his efforts to obtain an appointment for his son, says, "I besought " my lord of Dunham, in whose gift Thornton was, that I might not " prejudice honest Mr. Fisher; but if he could not secure it, I might " try if I could secure it by a friend."* It appears from references that follow this,† that Mr. Shaw, who had been chaplain to Sir G. Booth, suddenly conformed and went to Thornton, where he remained till his death in 1666. He was probably followed by Dr. Arderne, who had Mr. Ephraim Elcock as his curate for some time. This Ephraim Elcock was a pupil of Adam Martindale's son, and master of the Free School in Tarvin.‡

Calamy also names Mr. Samuel Edgley of Thornton as one of those ejected in 1662. He was a candidate for the ministry, and probably assistant to Mr. Fisher when the Bartholomew Act took place, and he continued several years a Nonconformist. At length, according to Calamy, he conformed, having been won to the Establishment by the influence probably of Bishop Wilkins. There was a Samuel Edgley, A.M., vicar of Acton, in 1705, but whether he was the same we cannot say.

WAVERTON.

CALAMY gives the name only of the Rev. JOHN MARIGOLD as the minister ejected from this rectory in 1662. He must have been resident as minister of this place during the whole of the Commonwealth, because we find his name "John Marigold, pastor of " Waverton," among the signatures of Cheshire Presbyterian Ministers to the Attestation in 1648.

*Newcome's Diary, page 118.

† *Vide* pages 118, 161.

‡ Martindale's Autobiography, page 192.

DEANERY OF WIRRALL.

(By the Rev. W. URWICK, M.A.)



THE Deanery, nearly co-extensive with the Hundred, of Wirrall, includes the peninsula between the estuaries of the Mersey and the Dee, which, according to the outline of the county, may be called the west horn of Cheshire.

It was in ancient times an extensive forest—traces of which are still visible—but being deforested in the reign of Edward III. it afterwards became one of the most fertile parts of the county, celebrated chiefly for pasture land. The population of this district was for many centuries very scanty; but during the present century there has been first a gradual and then a rapid increase, owing to the springing up of towns and watering places opposite to Liverpool—Birkenhead, Seacombe, Liscard, New Brighton, &c. In 1831 the number of inhabitants in Wirrall was 19,000; in 1861 it amounted to nearly 80,000; having thus quadrupled in thirty years.

Regarding the religious state of this Deanery in the early part of the seventeenth century, the well known ecclesiastical historian and biographer Samuel Clark (who was then minister of Shotwick) informs us* that there were divers godly and understanding Christians scattered up and down in it, but scarce a constant preacher besides himself; so that the people all of them within seven miles compass repaired to his ministry, the best of them being men in russet coats who followed husbandry. The highway for travellers between England and Ireland then lay through Wirrall, and it became the scene of the stated or occasional labours of several Puritan clergymen during the Commonwealth. The Congregationalists Samuel Eaton and John

* Preface to his Lives, page 4.

Murcot are to be noticed as having spent some years in Wirrall. There were not fewer than ten Nonconformist ministers here in the year 1662; viz., John Wilson of Backford, Mr. Wright of Bidston, Hugh Bethel, M.A., of Burton, Mr. Keyes of Heswall, Samuel Marsden of Neston, Matthew Jenkins of Shotwick, Mr. Watts of Thurstaston, John Harvie, M.A., of Wallasey, John Cartwright, M.A., of West Kirby, and Samuel Grastie of Woodchurch.

Upon the passing of the Toleration Act two Nonconformist chapels were opened in Wirrall, one at Brombro' and the other at Upton. The population however gradually tided towards other centres in the district. In the year 1809 an Independent chapel was opened at Park Gate, and the Cheshire Congregational Union supported an agent—Mr. Foster of Cheshunt College, who preached at Park Gate and Heswall, and itinerated in Wirrall. The Scotch Presbyterians now hold the Park Gate Chapel. The Nonconformist churches of Wirrall are now located in the populous towns of Birkenhead and Liscard.

BACKFORD.

THE first minister at Backford during the Commonwealth was Robert Freckleton, who was resident in Chester when the forces of the Parliament took the city, and had his goods sequestered by the Committee of Sequestration there.* He is described as supplying this place *pro tempore*, probably as successor to Mr. Bagguley the former vicar, whose signature in the Registers ceases about 1644. By virtue of an order from the Committee for Plundered Ministers in 1646, he was granted all the profits of the Rectory and £50 by way of augmentation. He signed the Attestation of Cheshire Presbyterian ministers in 1648 as *Robert Freckleton, minister at Backford*.

The Rev. JOHN WILSON, of Brazennose College Oxford, succeeded him, and laboured here for some years previous to his ejection in 1662. Calamy gives the following account of Mr. Wilson:—

“His living was made pretty considerable by an augmentation which was in those times allowed to various persons who, upon testimonials and trial were judged men of ability and piety”—probably a continuance of the augmentation before granted to Mr.

* Lambeth MSS., Parliamentary Survey, vol. iii.

Freleton.—“ He submitted to the test and was approved. Sometime after his ejection he took a house in Chester and settled there; where he had as large meetings as prudence and the severity of the times would permit. When liberty was granted he preached in a gentlewoman’s house, and had a crowded congregation. He was a judicious and useful preacher. The matter of his discourses was solid and searching; the dress neither negligent nor affected, neither slovenly nor gaudy but grave and decent, such as well became the subject. He was a zealous contender for the purity of God’s worship, as his printed works and his last Will sufficiently testify. Being confined to a warm room all day, and forced frequently for his security to go out at unseasonable hours of the night in cold weather, this brought a tenderness upon him, which issued in a settled cold and cough that carried him off in the midst of his days. He died at Chester about 1672. He was a man of great worth and a good scholar, as must be owned by such as peruse his writings, though they may not relish the strictness of his principles. The author of the *Friendly Debate* between a Nonconformist and a Conformist answered his piece entitled *Nehushtan*, by causing its author to be persuianted up to the Council, rather than by anything of moment which he printed against it.”* His works were—1st, *Nehushtan* (2 Kings xviii. 4); or a sober and peaceable Discourse concerning the Abolishing of Things abused to Superstition and Idolatry. 2nd, *The Vanity of Human Inventions*, in an Exercitation on the Ceremonies. 3rd, *Cultus Evangelicus*, a Discourse of the Spirituality of New Testament Worship. 4th, *An Apology for the People’s Judgment of Private Discretion*. 5th, *The Vanity of Man’s Present State*, proved and applyed in a Sermon on Psalm xxxix. 5; with divers Sermons on the Saint’s Communion with God and safety under His Protection in order to their future glory, on Psalm lxxiii. 23—26. This last named work was published after his death in 1676, and contains a dedication to “The Honourable the Lady Catharine Booth,” the gentlewoman whom Calamy refers to. The dedication is as follows:—

“ Madam,—These sermons to which you gave so free entertainment when they were preached under your roof (which you made a sanctuary), do not doubt of your countenance. The first, being of man’s state altogether vanity, was by the revered author’s own hand

* Calamy, vol. i., pages 325-6.

“ scarce finished before his distemper had disabled him from service of this nature. And albeit the latter part were by him destined to obscurity amongst his private papers; yet by the assistance of special friends that compared his short notes with what was taken from his mouth, I have answered the importunity of others that often pressed me to make them publick.”

We are told in the same preface that “his strong body and vivacious spirits were weakened and rendered languid by an inveterate distemper,” which it seems speedily hurried him away. Of his last sickness as well as of his active spirit when in health the remark of Mr. Fennes of Essex might hold good, “I am ashamed of myself to see how Mr. Wilson gallopeth towards heaven and I do but creep on at a snail’s pace.” The following lines are extracted from a short poem upon *the much lamented death of the Rev. John Wilson, minister of God’s word*:—

His doctrine solid aimed to make men know
That which was good; his use to make them so.
His sweet allurements pleasing were and grave
With holy guile lost souls to catch and save.
With mushroom notions light he did not cheat
Attentive hearers, giving froth for meat;
When they flocked to the windows to be fed
They were not served with air instead of bread.

Mr. Wilson had a son who was for some time a Nonconformist minister at Bromborough, and who afterwards settled at Warwick, where he died. Bishop Gastrell notes that there were five families of Presbyterians in the parish of Backford about the year 1720.

BEBINGTON.

THIS parish, which includes Rock Ferry—a delightful and populous district chiefly occupied by the merchants and tradesmen of Liverpool, and which is still celebrated for its spacious and lofty old church—was during the Commonwealth the scene of the labours of a worthy pastor whose name occurs among the signatures of Cheshire ministers to their Attestation of the solemn League and Covenant in 1648, *Ralph Poole, minister of Bebington*. He was probably saved the honour of being ejected as a Nonconformist by his death in the beginning of the year 1662. He had succeeded his father to this now rich living

(the advowson of which then belonged to the family), as the following inscription to both father and son upon a brass in the chancel shews:—
 “*Radulphus Poole*, Hugoni patri, tam suggesto quam sepulcro eodem,
 “ successor, collectus fuit ad patres, Aprilis 5, 1662.”

BIDSTON.

THIS is the place meant in the Nonconformist Memorial by *Boston*, there being no such place as *Boston* in the county. Mr. WRIGHT was ejected from this parish in 1662, but he afterwards conformed. Bishop Gastrell notes that in 1717 there were seventeen Presbyterian families in this parish; who probably attended the neighbouring chapel at Upton.

The editor of the *Notitia Cestriensis* is in error when he intimates by a quotation from Calamy that Thomas Brook, ejected from Congleton, preached at Moreton Chapel in Bidston parish. The Moreton Chapel meant by Calamy is that in Moreton Hall, near Congleton.

BURTON.

RICHARD HOPWOOD signed the *Attestation* of Cheshire ministers in 1648, as “minister of Burton,” and it is uncertain how long he remained here. At the time of the Restoration the Rev. HUGH BETHEL, M.A., held the living, and he became a Nonconformist when the Act of Uniformity came into force. He was an educated man; he belonged first to Magdalen College, and afterwards became fellow of Christ’s College Cambridge. He graduated his B.A. in 1640, and his M.A. in 1646. Calamy describes him as “of good family and very much of a gentleman in his behaviour; a very pious man, and a profitable preacher.”

It may here be noted that the celebrated Dr. Thomas Wilson, bishop of Sodor and Man, was born at Burton, as he states in his diary, “on the 20th December 1663, of honest parents, fearing God.” He was educated at Trinity College Dublin. He was a truly primitive and conscientious man, and more than once refused an English See. He was made bishop of Sodor and Man by King William III. in 1697, and laboured there faithfully till his death on the 7th March

1755, in the ninety-third year of his age. The revenue of his diocese did not exceed 300*l.* a year. He was invited to France by Cardinal Fleury, who expressed great anxiety to see him, as he believed the bishop and himself to be the two oldest and poorest prelates in Europe. The reply of the bishop is said to have been so gratifying to the cardinal that he procured an order that no French ships of war should ravage the coasts of the Isle of Man out of respect for the character of its prelate. There is a good free school on the road to Nesse built of red stone, erected and endowed by Bishop Wilson and his son.

EASTHAM.

WALKER, in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, gives a long account of the Rev. WILLIAM SEDDON, A.M., who held the vicarage together with a living in Chester and was sequestered in 1647. “Upon the rebellion, and approach of the siege of Chester, he was compelled (says his son) to withdraw his family and effects into the city for succour, where his great and good friend, Bishop Bridgeman, accommodated him. The aged bishop, dreading the hardships of a siege, voided the place, leaving my father in the palace, who continued diligent in his ministry, and frequent preaching to the garrison there. When the city was taken he was imprisoned, his preaching having reflected upon the prevailing party. An order was drawn up to export his wife and children out of the city to Eastham, where although they had only the bare walls of a vicarage house to resort to yet they found a hearty welcome from the loyal part of the parishioners there, among whom they dispersed themselves, and in a short time after my father’s confinement was somewhat enlarged and his escape connived at, which gave him the liberty of going in quest of his wife and children, whom he found in pretty good circumstances among his loyal friends. But another minister, whose name and character I have utterly forgot, being despatched with orders from the ruling powers in Chester to supply the vicarage of Eastham, and a rumour dispersed that my father must be apprehended again and reduced as prisoner to Chester, he scampered about privately to the houses of the loyal gentry to whom his character and conditions were well known, and then dispatched a letter to his

“elder brother, Mr. Peter Seddon at Outwood in Lancashire, the place of my father’s nativity, who was then at the rate of the times turned a zealous Presbyterian too, and had a son a captain in the Parliament’s army, acquainting him with the storm he was under, and requesting him to cover all or part of his family till he could weather the storm. To which letter the main answer he had was that if he would conform himself to the godly party his own merits would protect and prefer him; which so incensed my father that he never more held any correspondence with him.” How he afterwards was appointed by the triers to Grappenhall, in this county, and what became of him there, is related in connection with that place. Besides the Puritan brother, who was a layman and an officer in the army of the Parliament, there was a third, a Robert Seddon, M.A., who lived some time with Mr. Angier, of Denton, became pastor of the Independent church at Gorton, where he succeeded Adam Martindale, and soon after removed to Langley in Derbyshire,* where he was ejected in 1662. He died at the house of his brother, Captain Peter Seddon of Outwood (in the house where he was born), March, 1695, age seventy-seven years.

The minister referred to in the above account, sent to Eastham in 1647, whose name and character William Seddon’s son “entirely forgot,” was none other than the celebrated JOHN MURCOT, a well-known name in the literature of Nonconformity, of whom we shall have more to say when we come to West Kirby. He was not at Eastham more than twelve months, and yet, as we are told by his biographer, “he gained mightily upon the affections of many, especially the godly, whose hearts began betimes to be knit unto him, and here likewise the Lord was pleased to water his labours with the dew of his blessing.”†

Mr. Murcot was succeeded by the Rev. Richard Banner, a Puritan, who it appears conformed in 1662, and enjoyed his living only three years afterwards. Within the altar rails of the fine old church at Eastham is a tablet with this inscription:—“Here lyeth the body of Richard Banner, clarke and vicker of Eastham, who died the vi. day of December, 1665.”

* Martindale’s Autobiography, page 76.

† *Moses in the Mount*, page 5.

HESWALL.

WILLIAM GLEGGE signed the Cheshire Attestation as Presbyterian minister of *Haswell* in 1648. He doubtless belonged to the family of the Gleggs of Gayton in this parish, several curious memorials of whom are in the church. When William III. visited Gayton Hall in 1689 he conferred the honour of knighthood upon its then occupier and owner William Glegge, Esq., son probably of the Puritan minister.

Calamy names Mr. KEYES as the minister ejected from Heswall, or Haselwall, in 1662. He intimates also that he continued a Nonconformist afterwards.

The pious and devoted *Ralph Robinson*, minister of S. Mary Woolnoth, London, during the Commonwealth, was a native of Heswall. He was born here in June 1614, studied at Katherine Hall Cambridge, and was cut off in the midst of his ministerial labours, June 15, 1655, in the one and fortieth year of his age.*

NESTON.

THIS parish was the scene of the labours of a very worthy and devoted minister the Rev. SAMUEL MARSDEN during the Commonwealth. He was the eldest son of the Rev. Ralph Marsden, an eminent Puritan minister who was settled at West Kirby in his latter days, and he had three brothers who like himself became Nonconformist ministers. The family of the Marsdens present an interesting picture of honourable Nonconformity. The father, himself a minister and a Puritan, had the happiness and honour to see his four sons grow up—not (as is sometimes the case) ashamed of their father's principles because unfashionable, but true to those principles—all of them Puritan ministers and Nonconformists in 1662. *Samuel* the eldest son was presented to the living of Neston by the Committee for Plundered ministers.† He signed the Cheshire Attestation in 1648 as “minister of Neston;” he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity in 1662; and he then went over to Ireland where he died in 1677. *Jeremiah* the second son, having spent two years at the

* Clark's Lives, page 57.

† Lambeth MSS., Parl. Survey, vol. iii.

university, taught a school for a time at Neston, became an occasional preacher and assisted other ministers. Martindale tells us that he was "of the Congregational way, and signed the Agreement " at Manchester 13 July, 1659."* His life was a perfect peregrination. He was at Ardersley chapel near Wakefield in 1662 and became a Nonconformist there. He wrote several treatises, suffered imprisonment for preaching, and died in 1684. *Gamaliel* the third son was educated at the Dublin University where he continued ten years, part of which time he was Fellow. He was turned out with Dr. Winter at the Restoration and then came into England. He became minister at Coley in Yorkshire, and refusing to conform to the requirements of the Act was ejected thence in 1662. He afterwards went to Holland. He was a man of much sound learning and skill in the languages, a very hard student but no very pleasing preacher. He was a moderate Congregationalist, a man of great piety and integrity. He died in 1681, aged forty-seven years.† *Josiah* the youngest son was also Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, and the most eminent of the brothers. He was turned out at the Restoration and died early. The only daughter in the family, *Esther*, became the faithful wife of the celebrated John Murcot who succeeded her father as minister of West Kirby.

Bishop Gastrell notes that in his time there were six Presbyterian families resident in this parish of Neston.

SHOTWICK.

THIS parish, which lies about five miles north-west from Chester, on the estuary of the Dee, is a perpetual curacy, and though now very small stands distinguished in the annals of Nonconformity as the pastorate of more than one eminent Puritan. Samuel Clark the martyrologist, who studied at Emmanuel College Cambridge, under *Thomas Hooker*, one of the choicest tutors in the university, when leaving Thornton, was importuned by some godly persons in Wirrall to come among them at Shotwick. He consented (probably about the year 1624), and there being then scarcely a constant minister besides himself in this part of the county, people came six or seven miles round to hear him.

* Autobiography, page 129.

† Calamy's Noncon. Memorial.

“At this place he found the first seals of his ministry, being an instrument in converting many souls to God. He set up meetings for prayer and conference, which were held at the houses of the richer people in rotation, where questions were discussed which he had previously proposed. The benefits arising from these friendly associations he found to be many and great. Hereby knowledge was increased so that (says he) I never was acquainted with more understanding Christians in all my life, though the best of them went in russet coats and followed husbandry. Hereby holy affections were kindled and kept alive. Mutual love was promoted; so that all the professors of the gospel living ten or twelve miles asunder were as intimate as if they had been of one household. The necessities of the poor being known were provided for. The weak were strengthened, the mourning comforted, the erring reclaimed, the dejected raised, and all mutually edified in their holy faith. Moreover they hereby enjoyed opportunities for private fasts and days of thanksgiving as there was occasion.” Mr. Clark while minister of Shotwick, in the year 1625, married Katherine, the daughter of Mr. Valentine Overton, rector of Bedworth in Warwickshire, “a pious, humble, prudent, and sweet tempered person.” After five years’ residence he was compelled to leave the place by a prosecution brought against him in the Chancellor’s Court for the omission of ceremonies, and his enemies were so inveterate that they would not suffer him to preach a farewell sermon. He removed to Coventry, and afterwards to the church of Bennet Fink, London, where he became a Nonconformist in 1662, and ended a laborious life both as a preacher and a writer on Christmas Day 1682, aged upwards of eighty-three years.*

He was probably succeeded at Shotwick by the Rev. WILLIAM HEWETSON, who signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648, as minister of this place. How long Mr. Hewetson remained is uncertain, but in the year 1660 the Rev. MATTHEW JENKYNs, who had been turned out from Gressford in Denbighshire, to make way for the old incumbent, became minister of Shotwick, and refused to conform to the requirements of the Act of Uniformity in 1662. He was one of those however who were afterwards brought in by the *soft interpretation* put upon the Act by Bishop Wilkins, and he ended his life as a Conformist either here or at some other parish in Wirrall.

* Preface to Clark’s Lives, and Nonconformist Memorial.

THURSTASTON.

THE Parliamentary survey of 1649 states of this small parish, "One Mr. BRIAN LASSELLS a blinde man is minister there, who was presented by the Bishop of Lincoln and some other lords, and was instituted and inducted about December 30th, 1641."* Mr. Raines the able editor of Gastrell conjectures that the Parliamentary "Inquisitors" meant that this rector was not naturally but spiritually blind, and that in consequence he was turned out to make way for a Presbyterian. The prejudice that prompts this conjecture is evident; not only is the conjecture groundless, however, but we have evidence that this worthy blind minister was himself a Presbyterian, for among the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648 there occurs that of *Bryan Lascells, minister of Thurstaston*. How long after this he remained at the place we cannot tell. In the memorable year 1662 one Mr. WATTS was minister, and he became a Nonconformist, and is reckoned by Calamy among the faithful Two Thousand.

WALLASEY.

REGARDING this interesting and now large parish Bishop Gastrell says, "There were formerly two churches here, one called Walley's Kirk, "situated in ye present churchyard, ye foundations of which are yet "visible; and Lees Kirk, near a narrow strip of land still called "Kirkway; but when one became ruinous and the other wanted a "priest they were both taken down, and ye present church was built "in their stead." He also records that Major Henry Meold (or as the name is generally written *Meoles*) and his brother Captain W. Meold, both of them officers in the Parliament's army, gave large sums of money towards erecting and endowing a grammar school in this parish, and also for charity to the poor.

In the early years of the Commonwealth the Rev. RANDALL ADAMS was minister. His name occurs among the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation as Presbyterian minister of the parish in 1648, and the Parliamentary Survey records that "the present minister at

* Lambeth MSS., vol. iii.

“Wallasea is one Mr. Adams, placed there by the Committee for
“Plundered Ministers.”*

In the year 1660 the Rev. JOHN HARVEY, M.A., was ordained by Bishop Worth in London, and signs the registers of Wallasey Church as minister for the first time in that year, but he was not suffered to remain there long owing to his Nonconformist views. He was obliged to resign his preferment before the Act came into force, and removed to Chester where he became an eminent Congregational minister. (*See Chester City.*) He was supplanted at Wallasey by the Rev. Alexander Featherstone.

WEST KIRBY.

THE eminent Cheshire Congregationalist SAMUEL EATON, whose family owned an estate in the township of Newton in the parish of West Kirby, began his ministerial life as a clergyman in this parish. Speaking of Mr. Murcot he says, “I first knew him when he lived in
“Wirral, and there was reason that I should be familiarly acquainted
“with him at that time, both because he was preacher at a place
“and also to a people there, to many of whom myself in former
“times stood related, till the violence of the then prevailing prelates
“expulsed me thence; and also because he took to wife from
“among us Mrs. Hester Marsden well reputed of by us.” In another of his works† he writes:—“For ourselves when we first
“entered the ministry we were both of us conformable in judgment
“and sometimes though very rarely in practice. But we have
“bemoaned and publicly testified our repentance both before and
“since the times of this present Parliament. The one of us
“renounced it and was therefore suspended by the Bishop of
“Chester fourteen years ago, and was afterwards about thirteen years
“since expulsed from his habitation; and after that about eleven
“years since was forced to leave the kingdom and to seek for
“shelter in Holland, and there joined with others in a Congrega-
“tional way; and after that, when the unsuitableness of the air

*Lambeth MSS.

†A Defence of sundry Positions and Scriptures alleged to justify the Congregational Way; by Samuel Eaton, teacher, and Timothy Taylor, pastor, of the church in Dukinfield in Cheshire. 1645.

“ occasioned much sickness, he was constrained to return ; and
 “ finding no rest was the second time necessitated to transplant
 “ himself into New England, where if the High Commission of York
 “ could have let him alone he might probably have ended his days.
 “ But for non-appearance at their courts when yet he was out of the
 “ land, and knew nothing of their summons, he was fined in several
 “ sums of money which together amounted to 1,550*l.* And his
 “ estate in Wirrall in Cheshire was extended upon for payment, and
 “ the tenant to whom the land was leased before his departure to
 “ New England, forced to pay great sums of money for the redemp-
 “ tion of his cattle which were driven off the ground : where he was
 “ supported in those troublous times by the beneficence of two
 “ religious gentlemen, William Stevinton of Dothit, and his son-in-
 “ law Creswal Taylor of Longdon aforesaid, his noble friends. And
 “ the tidings of these cruel proceedings and the grievous complaints
 “ of the tenant, coming over to him in several letters, he was advised
 “ to try if by his returning back he could use means to free his
 “ estate ; but before he arrived, this renowned reforming Parliament
 “ was assembled ; and what he hath suffered since for his opposition
 “ to Prelacy is known not to a few.”

It is evident from these quotations that Samuel Eaton was minister in the place where John Murcot afterwards laboured, namely, West Kirby ; that while there he did not conform to the church ceremonies ; that in consequence he was suspended by Bishop Bridgeman in 1631, and in the year following driven from his home ; and that his estate in Wirrall was charged with enormous fines imposed by the dominant Prelates on account of his Non-conformity.

Walker in his *Sufferings of the Clergy* names Thomas Glover as the rector of this parish sequestered for delinquency about the year 1643. In the parliamentary survey of 1649 the tithes are stated to be worth 125*l.* per annum, 25*l.* being allotted to Mrs. Glover for her fifths.

Mr. Ralph Marsden of Neston was appointed minister of West Kirby in the place of Mr. Glover but he died June 30, 1648. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, the excellent John Murcot of whom we shall here give some account.

JOHN MURCOT was born at Warwick in 1623 of parents both respectable and pious. His father Job Murcot was a lawyer. He was committed to the care and tuition of an able and godly school-

master Mr. Dugard who instilled instruction both with his lips and life, desirous to make him not only a scholar but a Christian. Being competently furnished for the university his father sent him to Oxford, where he continued his studies under the tuition of the faithful and religious Mr. Button in Merton College. When he had been there two years, in consequence of the occupation of Oxford by the king's forces (1642-3) he was obliged to flee from the university disguised, and repaired to the house of Mr. Leigh (or Ley) of Budworth, "an ancient grave able learned man" and minister of that place, and there he studied hard both day and night allowing himself but four hours for sleep. The cloud being blown over, he repaired a second time to Oxford, completed his college course, took his degree, and returned to his old friend Mr. Leigh, to whom he was in various ways useful.

He began with much fear and trembling to appear in public and to preach. "Being pressed and egged on," says his biographer,* "by his friends and a call from the inhabitants of Ashbury he entered into the Lord's vineyard, put his hand unto the plough and was ordained a minister at Manchester. He professed, to use his own words, that he was drawn as a bear to the stake, complaining, and often bewailing his want of a sufficient stock of university learning." The following notice of his ordination is extracted from the Minutes' Book of the Manchester classis :—

"Whereas Mr. John Murcott, B.A., aged about twenty-four years, has addressed himself to us (authorised by both Houses of Parliament of the 26 August 1646 for the ordination of ministers) desiring to be ordained a Presbyter; for that he is chosen and appointed for the work of the ministry in the church of Astbury, in the county of Chester, as by a certificate now remaining with us touching that his election and appointment appeareth; and having likewise exhibited sufficient testimonials of his taking the National Covenant, of his diligence and proficiency in his studies, and unblameableness of life and conversation;—He hath been examined, according to the rules for examination in the said ordinance expressed, and thereupon approved; and there having been no just exception made against his ordinance and admission;—These may testify to all whom it may concern, that upon Wednesday the 9th of the

* Moses in the Mount, page 4.

“ month of February, we have proceeded solemnly to set him apart
 “ to the office of a Presbyter and work of the ministry of the gospel
 “ by the laying on of our hands with fasting and prayer ; by virtue
 “ whereof we do declare him to be a lawful and sufficiently authorised
 “ minister of Jesus Christ : and having good evidence of his lawful
 “ and fair calling not only to the work of the ministry but to the
 “ exercise thereof in the church of Astbury in the county aforesaid,
 “ we do hereby send him thither and actually admit him to the said
 “ charge, to perform all the offices and duties of a faithful pastor
 “ there ; exhorting the people in the name of Jesus Christ willingly
 “ to receive and acknowledge him as their minister, and to maintain
 “ and encourage him in the execution of his office that he may be
 “ able to give up such an account to Christ of their solemn obedience
 “ to his ministry as may be to his joy and their everlasting comfort.
 “ We the Presbyters of the first classis in the county of Lancaster
 “ have hereto set our hands, this 9th day of February 1647.

“ Signed, RICHARD HEYRICK. ROBERT CONSTANTINE.

“ JOHN JONES. EDWARD WOOLMER.

“ JOHN ANGIER. JOHN HANSON.

“ JOB FINNES. THOMAS HOLLAND.”

According to this certificate Mr. Murcot went to Astbury, and as his biographer says, “the Lord was pleased to own him in his first attempts and endeavours, giving him a seal to his ministry by the conversion of two especially, who being awakened by his sound doctrine, smart expression, and powerful delivery, sadly bemoaned themselves and mourned over their lost condition even in public.” He did not however remain long at Astbury but removed to *Eastham* where his labours were also blessed to the good of his hearers. While here and in the 25th year of his age “being resolved to change his condition, and discoursing with a friend about it, there was proposed unto him *Hester*, the daughter of Mr. Ralph Marsden (minister of West Kirby, of note and useful in his generation) whom he afterwards took to him to be the companion of his life.” But before the consummation of the marriage, the people of West Kirby (Mr. Marsden departing this life) gave him a call, which he complied with. He signed the Cheshire Attestation in 1648 as *minister of West Kirby*. His anonymous biographer gives this quaint account of his labours in this parish :—

“ Two villages of the parish of West Kirby are sorely visited with

“ the pestilence and the Lord scatters abroad the black tokens of his
“ displeasure, the products of which are many fasts, tears, prayers,
“ importunate requests that the Lord would show unto his people
“ why he thus contended with them. Mr. Murcot had his ears open
“ to instruction. This thundering providence awakens him to a more
“ exact scrutiny, and he is now persuaded that he had been too lax
“ and general in the administration of the sealing ordinances, so that
“ he resolves to forbear ; however he perseveres in preaching work,
“ and waits on providence to see how the Lord will dispose and
“ encline the people’s hearts. An Irish lord quartering at West
“ Kirby being bound for Ireland was observed to be a prodigious
“ swearer, belching out most horrid oaths in great abundance. Mr.
“ Murcot hearing of it is impatient of brooking these high dishonours
“ that were done unto his Majesty. Wherefore taking with him a
“ friend, he rides the same night six miles to a magistrate, procures a
“ warrant ; the trembling constables at first are astonished to think
“ of approaching in such a way to guilty greatness, but being
“ animated by Mr. Murcot they served their warrant, and the horses
“ of the nobleman were seized and kept till he paid 20*l.*, which was
“ employed as a stock for the poor of the parish. This exemplary
“ act of justice procured and prosecuted by Mr. Murcot’s active zeal,
“ so daunted and overawed his lordship that during his abode there
“ he held his tongue and mouth as it were with bit and bridle.

“ It was a common practice in those parts to have *Ales* as they
“ called them, *alias* good-fellow-meetings, in which the night was
“ consumed in rioting and drunkenness, the creatures abused, and
“ God most shamefully dishonoured. One revelling night he and a
“ good neighbour (Captain Johnson) went to the constables, engage
“ their assistance, advance and enter the house or rather the den of
“ dragons, at whose approach and presence the rabble rout scatters
“ like a mist before the rising sun. Some run affrighted out of doors,
“ and leave their ale behind them, others hide in secret places,
“ the flight was so full of confusion you would have thought it
“ occasioned by the incursion of an enemy, and that their lives were
“ rather invaded than their purses and reputations. One only of
“ the company assumes the confidence to stand it out, and, having a
“ brow of brass, thinks to outface both sacred and civil officers, and
“ saith, ‘ Shall I fear *Murcot* ? ’ calls for more beer, and in a bravado
“ drinks to him, who pledged him with stern silence and frowning

“ aspect. The names of the ringleaders are returned to the justices, and they constrained to pay their imposed fines. But did this son of impudence (who dares thus affront God’s minister) thus escape? Though that sickness at the time was comfortably abated, and the family to which he was related not in the least tainted, yet this man is very shortly after visited, and by that signal stroke from the hand of the Lord hurried out of the land of the living. The following Sabbath Mr. Murcot chose a subject to treat on suitable to the occasion, laid before them the blackness of guilt contracted, the dreadfulness of wrath deserved; and so severe and cutting were his rebukes that they caused in the congregation strong pangs of affection and unwonted transportation.”

These quaintly told stories illustrate for us not only the zeal and courage of Mr. Murcot but also the habits of the ungodly and the beliefs of the godly in those times. They show how strong was the faith of the people in special providences and Divine judgments, and how unhesitatingly the power of the magistrate and of law was made use of in order to enforce morality and religion. The drunken and disorderly habits of the people were owing in part to the continual travelling carried on from Chester through West Kirby to and from Ireland.

Mr. Murcot being dissatisfied with the condition of his congregation and not deeming it right to celebrate the ordinances promiscuously among them, resolved at length to leave, and refusing an invitation to settle at Chester he crossed over to Dublin, where he became pastor of an Independent church, and died, greatly regretted in that city, at the close of the year 1654. He was buried in S. Mary’s Chapel, near Christ Church Dublin. His death is thus mentioned by Henry Newcome:—“The next day (May 30, 1655) I called at Harding (Harden) of Mr. Eaton who had then lately returned from Ireland, and *precious Mr. Murcot* was then just dead, and he told me of the precious name and savour he had left behind him there.”*

Mr. Eaton says of John Murcot, “He was, while he lived in Wirrall, the glory of that country. A very quick and lively and powerful preacher he was, and mighty in prayer. Eminent for piety, gravity, and holy innocency. Dearly loved he was by some, and

* Autobiography, page 55.

“greatly revered by others. In a word he was a most industrious vigilant pastor, and a most austere and self-observing Christian. He may be reckoned among the Lord’s worthies, of whom the world was not worthy.”

The printed works of John Murcot are for the most part expository and practical sermons, namely, *Circumspect Walking*, on Ephesians v. 15, 16; *The Parable of the Ten Virgins*; *The Sun of Righteousness*, Malachi iv. 2; *Christ’s Willingness to receive Humble Sinners*, on John vi. 37.

Mr. Murcot was, after an interval of two or three years, succeeded at West Kirby by the Rev. JOHN CARTWRIGHT, who took his M.A. at Jesus College in 1652, and was presented to this living in 1654. He continued to labour faithfully here until the Act of Uniformity came into force, and not being able conscientiously to take the distinct and solemn oaths required he resigned his living on the 24th of August 1662. He afterwards became chaplain to the pious lady Wilbraham at Woodhey in this county. Philip Henry calls him “my worthy friend and brother, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ,” and adds, “he was buried at Audlem in Cheshire, February 17, 1687-8.” He was a man, says Calamy, of an excellent, sedate, serious spirit, and a very solid judicious preacher.

WOODCHURCH.

WALKER names the *Rev. George Burges* as sequestered from this living, and he adds, “one *Peter Burger* was presented in 1654, and “the same year I find one *Samuel Grastie* upon it.” This SAMUEL GRASTIE “appears in the parish registry as rector in 1655; he is “again noticed as rector in 1659, but *intruder* in all the intermediate “years.”* Calamy gives his name as one of the brave Nonconformists of 1662. The church was afterwards vacant till 1664, when the Rev. William Anderson, Conformist, was appointed.

Richard Sherlock, D.D., of Trinity College Dublin, a zealous churchman Popishly affected, and a very voluminous writer, was born in this parish.

A legacy of 500*l.* was left by Alderman W. Gleave, a Puritan of London, for erecting a free school in this parish 1655.

* Ormerod’s Cheshire.

BROMBROUGH.

CONSIDERING how many eminent and worthy ministers laboured in Wirrall during the Commonwealth, and were ejected for their Nonconformity in 1662, it is not surprising that we find a strong element of Dissent from the dominant Establishment in this deanery afterwards. Bishop Gastrell enumerates forty-nine families of Dissenters residing in Wirrall in his time (1720), and mentions two Nonconformist meeting houses, the one at Brombrough and the other at Upton in the parish of Overchurch.*

Dr. Thomas Harrison, ejected from the Cathedral Chester, preached at Brombro' Hall for some time before the Restoration. This place was the residence for many years of the Hardwares, a Puritan family into which the celebrated John Bruen married at the end of the sixteenth century, and Matthew Henry the end of the seventeenth. Through their connexion with John Bruen and their frequent visits to the Puritan training school of his house, this family embraced Puritan principles, and their connexion with Matthew Henry confirmed and matured their espousal of them. The daughter of the Hardwares whom Matthew Henry married for his first wife very soon after died, but he retained ever afterwards a strong attachment to her relatives. His biographer says :—

“ As for the family of Bromborough, to which he was first related, “ he had a very hearty regard to them and concern for them and all “ theirs ; if any of them was sick he did not fail to visit them, he “ made their cares and comforts his own ; when matters were well he “ rejoiced with them, and when otherwise he was a hearty mourner. “ He had a great value for his Mother Hardware, and always shewed “ it in his behaviour towards her both when they lived together at “ Chester and afterwards at their house at *Wirral*, where she lived “ for some years, walking with God and looking well to the ways of “ her household. On the 6th December 1693 she died, and was “ buried at Tarvin December 9th, and the day after Mr. Henry “ preached from Proverbs xiv. 22. Mr. Hardware was now arrived “ at a good old age, but he lingered on sixteen years, and finished “ his course April 2, 1709, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, having

* *Notitia Cestriensis*, i., 157, 167.

“ this honourable testimony given him by his son Henry, that he was
 “ a very conscientious gentleman, a serious good Christian, remarkable
 “ for his temperance and love to the duty of prayer, a true old Puritan.
 “ He was buried in Bromborough Church, Mr. Henry preaching in
 “ the hall on that occasion from Genesis xlvii. 9.”*

Through the influence of this family, and as the result of the teachings of the several Puritan ministers who had sown the seed of Nonconformity in Wirrall, a Nonconformist church was formed and a chapel erected at Brombrough soon after the passing of the Toleration Act.

The first stated minister seems to have been the Rev. JOHN WILSON, son of Mr. Wilson ejected from Backford. Tong gives the following account of him:—“ This Mr. Wilson was that dear and
 “ intimate friend and brother of his, and I must say of mine too, that
 “ spent his four last years at Warwick, son to the learned and judicious
 “ author of the treatises called *Nehushtan* and *Judicium Discretionis*,
 “ &c. He was not inferior to his father either for gifts or graces, the
 “ most beautiful mind and temper in one of the most comely persons
 “ that I ever knew; he was born in Chester the same year with Mr.
 “ Henry, he was educated at London with Mr. Thomas Row, lived
 “ for some time afterwards in Mr. Philip Henry’s house, was the first
 “ minister of the Presbyterian denomination at Warwick, died of a
 “ consumption in his thirty-second year, but did more service for God
 “ and the souls of men in that short term of life than many even good
 “ men have done in twice that number of years; and having laid such
 “ a foundation of serious religion in Warwick as I hope will still
 “ abide, he went to heaven in full assurance and a holy triumph, never
 “ to be forgotten by those of us that were eye witnesses of the end of
 “ his conversation.”†

At the fifth meeting of the united ministers—Presbyterian and Congregational—of Cheshire, August 11th, 1691, “ Mr. Wilson’s case
 “ about his removal from Wirral to Warwick was debated and referred
 “ to the Chester ministers, and circumstances being duly weighed his
 “ removal was consented to.” He was present however at two subsequent ministerial meetings in Cheshire. “ There, at Knutsford, my
 “ dear brother Wilson of Warwick and I met the Cheshire ministers
 “ on May 24th, 1692, where Mr. Henry preached an excellent sermon

* Tong’s Life of Matthew Henry, pages 141, 142.

† *Ibid.*, pages 49, 50.

“ from Philemon, 2. The year after, 1693, Mr. Wilson with myself contrived again to come from Warwickshire to meet our brethren at Knutsford, but by reason of Mr. Wilson’s indisposition on the road we could not reach them till the evening May 16th, when the public work was over.”*

The last notice we have of Mr. Wilson is from Matthew Henry’s diary:—“ April 12th, 1695. This day I hear that my dear brother Wilson finished his course on Monday last, a great loss, and I should say irreparable did I not know that God has the residue of the spirit. This day I had a letter from Mr. Tong of the death of dear Mr. Wilson last Monday about noon, who lay for some time before he died in raptures of joy.” “ May 15th. I have been with Mrs. King, now returned from Warwick, who tells me many very affecting things concerning her dear son Mr. J. Wilson; that a little before he died he said *He could now through grace stand upon the brink of one world and look into another without any amazement; that he had indeed had some struggles in his soul, but he had endeavoured to deal roundly with himself in renewing his repentance, and now he had boldness to enter into the holiest through the blood of Jesus.*”

This faithful minister of Christ was succeeded at Brombro’ by the Rev. RICHARD EDGE. An account of his ordination (which took place at Knutsford, 27th September 1692), with five other candidates, is given by Matthew Henry.† The following letter from Mr. Harvey, the Independent minister at Chester, and a certificate from the church at Brombrough are recorded in the Cheshire Minute Book:—

“ Mr. Harvie’s letter on Mr. Edge’s account to Mr. Aspinwall or Angier was as followeth:—

Dear Brother,—On the eighteenth day of this instant I preached and administered ye Sacrament of ye Lord’s Supper at Bromborrough, which I have done once in two months ever since Mr. Wilson left the people that meet there. The congregation is considerably increased both in common auditors and in communicants. The chief of ye society when I was last with them desired me to give my thoughts of Mr. Edge, which I now do. He is one who is completely skilled in ye Latin and Greek tongues, and hath some knowledge of the Hebrew. He is pious and industrious, meek and lowly of heart, zealously disposed to do good in his generation, and by his affability, good doctrine, and blamelesse conversation hath obtained much respect amongst his hearers, as will now fully appear by a certificate of his behaviour subscribed by them: which is all at present from your affectionate brother,

JOHN HARVIE.

Chester, Sep. 23, 1692.

* Life of Matthew Henry, page 257.

† Tong’s Life, page 259.

A COPPY OF YE CERTIFICATE.

We, whose names are subscribed, inhabitants of Bromborough, Widaston, and the parts adjacent in Wirral, do certify that Mr. Richard Edge hath lived and preached among us now almost a year last past, and hath approved himself well. His conversation hath been sober, humble, and pious, and his preaching edifying and profitable, and we unanimously desire he may be duely fixed among us to labour among us in the Lord.

“This certificate was subscribed by thirty-four persons.”*

Mr. Edge did not long continue pastor of the church at Bromborough according to this request, for at Christmas in 1693 we find Mr. ROBERT TRAVERS there, who had been ordained at the same time with Mr. Edge. His stay was also very short, as the following extract shews:—

“Upon information that Mr. Robert Travers was resolved to leave the people he had fixed with in Wirral since Christmas last, it was agreed that the following letter should be despatched unto him to divert him from that intention :

Knutsford, Aug. 14th, 1694.

Dear Brother,—Your case was this day taken into consideration. The result is we do unanimously desire you (with all tenderness) not to think of removing without a clearer call. It is feared if you should the effects would be so sad upon the congregation that hereafter it may be reflected on with much regret. Pray suspend your thought till another meeting, where it may be better considered and determined. God keep you in the way of duty, and make us all cordially willing to serve our dear Master Christ Jesus with constancy and fidelity in the station he hath assigned us.—We are yours in our dear Lord,

SAM: LAWRENCE, *Moderator.*

GAM: JONES, *Scribe.*

This affectionate Christian letter shows with what brotherly tenderness, apart altogether from any assumption of authority, the the united ministers of Cheshire acted. They met for mutual counsel not for command. Mr. Travers however slighted the well-meant advice of his brethren and upon the receipt of it quickly removed to Lichfield. He was succeeded at Brombro' by Mr. RICHARD HOULT, who remained as pastor of the church there about two years.

The Rev. RALPH AINSWORTH was the next minister. In 1691 he signed the Cheshire Agreement of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers, as *minister of Whitley chapel* where he remained until that place was appropriated by the Episcopalians about the year 1700.

* Cheshire Minute Book.

He then came to Brombro', and after labouring here about three years he removed in the beginning of the year 1704 into Lancashire.

He was followed by the Rev. LEOLINE EDWARDS, a student from Mr. Owen's academy at Wrexham. He had supplied the congregation at Haslington upon the death of Mr. Cope, and afterwards spent some time at Tintwistle. He was ordained at Wheelock in August 1706 with Silas Sidebottom and his fellow student Thomas Perrott of Newmarket, Flintshire. His thesis was *An vere regeniti a gratia Dei totaliter et finaliter excidere possint?*

He was minister at Brombro' from the year 1707 probably until 1714, during which time he attended the meetings of Cheshire ministers. In 1715 he was living as minister of the church at Oswestry.

His old fellow student Mr. THOMAS PERROTT succeeded him. He is described as one of the ministers present from other counties at the meeting held August 4, 1713, so that at that time he must have been still minister at Newmarket, Flintshire. He was at Brombrough however in 1715, and had one hundred and eighty hearers, twelve of whom were gentlemen.* He attended the meetings of the Cheshire ministers, and on one occasion May 7, 1717, preached the sermon before the assembled brethren from Luke ix. 62. In 1719 he removed to Caermarthen.

The Rev. THOMAS WOODCOCK followed. He was ordained by the Cheshire ministers August 8, 1721. His question was *An beati in statu Glorie se mutuo sint agnitori? Aff.* "In a numerous assembly of ministers and people met together in the New Chapel (Knutsford) he was solemnly set apart for the office and work of the ministry. Mr. Lightbown (of Allostock) began with prayer and reading some portions of Scripture. Mr. Culcheth (of Macclesfield) prayed before sermon. Mr. Gardner (of Chester) preached from John i. 16—*And of His fulness have all we received and grace for grace.* After sermon ended Mr. Owen (of Warrington) called for a confession of his faith which he made before the congregation, and then put the usual questions to him to which he answered *verbis conceptis.* Afterwards he was set apart by prayer and imposition of hands of Mr. Owen, Gardner, Culcheth, Waterhouse, Sydebottom, Jones, Lea, who prayed over him. Then followed the exhortation

* MS. Williams's Library.

“ by Mr. Sydebottom from Numbers xxvii. 18, 19, and so concluding “ with prayer, thanksgiving, singing, and pronouncing the blessing, “ the congregation was dismissed.”*

How long Mr. Woodcock continued at Brombro' is uncertain. He was occasionally present at the Cheshire ministerial meetings down to the year 1727. Nothing is known regarding the Nonconformist church at Brombro' since his pastorate. It seems gradually to have died out.

OVERCHURCH AND UPTON.

OVERCHURCH, which is the name of the parish embracing and co-extensive with the township of Upton, was once adorned with an ancient and beautiful church, at which during the Commonwealth the *Rev. Henry Hatton* a Presbyterian preached. He signed the *Attestation* of Cheshire ministers in 1648, as minister of the place, but it is uncertain how long he held that office. The church was for many years afterwards in a state of decay. In 1709 the steeple having been injured in a storm, and the body of the church much dilapidated, two of the bells were sold to defray the expenses of repairs. In 1813 the venerable structure was taken down and a smaller building erected.

Upton, though now only a small village, was formerly considered the metropolis of the lower mediety of Wirrall, and had two annual fairs of considerable importance. It became, therefore, when the Toleration Act was passed, one of the centres of Dissent in that part of the county. Bishop Gastrell names a Presbyterian meeting house as existing in his time in this parish, and in the year 1691 we find the *Rev. THOMAS LEA*, minister of Upton, among the small band of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers who met together and formed themselves into a union upon the basis of the terms of agreement drawn up by the London ministers. Mr. Lea entered Mr. Frankland's academy as a student, at Natland, on May 11th, 1678, and probably became pastor of the Nonconformist church at Upton immediately upon his leaving college. Certain it is that he was settled in that office in 1691, and that he continued to labour there faithfully for eighteen years from that date. He attended the meetings

* Cheshire Minute Book, page 58.

of the Cheshire ministers, and was much respected and beloved by his brethren. At their August meeting in 1700 he was the preacher, and took for his text 1 Corinthians iv. 2, *Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.* Notwithstanding the faithfulness of their pastor however it seems that the church at Upton became gradually weaker and declined. Mr. Lea was one of the ministers who for three successive years received a share of the bequest of Mr. Thomas Lee* of Darnal, for the support of the Cheshire ministry. Upon the death of Mr. Samuel Low, minister at Knutsford, April 19th, 1709, Mr. Lea of Upton was invited to succeed him. "Mr. Lea spent the fourth Lord's Day in May 1709 at Knutsford, and was unanimously chosen, but took time to consider of it, being very averse to think of leaving the place where he now is, though he labours under great discouragements there, the congregation being dwindled to next nothing; but nine own communicants and some of those that had been members being a great grief to him. In June some of the congregation at Knutsford went to Upton to enforce the invitation they had given him; he said he would know what the advice of his brethren the ministers was. He owned that five of the ministers that had advised him were so far convinced of the reasonableness of his removal that they would acquiesce, and only two were stiff against it. August 2nd. The case of Mr. Lea's invitation to Knutsford was proposed, stated, and duly considered. The opinion of all the brethren was asked one by one, and they all agree that he had a clear call to Knutsford. Whereupon, after some consideration, with great humility and tenderness he declared his acceptance of the call in compliance with the advice of his brethren, and promised to come after two Sabbaths."† These extracts tell in favour of the worthy humble minister of Upton, but rather against his congregation there. When he left, the church seems to have been dissolved, and what became of the chapel is not known.

Mr. Lea continued minister at Knutsford several years. His name occurs as present at the meetings of ministers up to September 5th, 1732. He died May 17th, 1733, at the age of seventy-seven.

* This Mr. Thomas Lee seems to have been no relation to the Upton minister, though their names are sometimes spelt alike. Regarding the former Matthew Henry says, "My worthy friend Mr. Thomas Lee of Darnal finished his course on Friday night, May 18th, 1705."

† Cheshire Minute Book.

BIRKENHEAD.

THIS place is described by Bishop Gastrell as "Extraparochiall, subject " to no Jurisdiction Spirituall or Temporall, payes no Tyths." It is celebrated in the ancient ecclesiastical history of Cheshire for its *Priory*, founded in or about the year 1153 by Hamon de Massie, the third baron of Dunham Massey, and enriched with many endowments, among which was the vicarage of Bowdon. At the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. it became crown property, and afterwards was given, together with the township of Cloughton, to Ralph Worsley. Gastrell states that in his time the owner of the property was Mr. Cleveland of Liverpool, "who allows the curate of Bidston 8*l.* per " annum, for which he reads prayers and preaches every Sunday except " ye first Sunday in ye month."* S. Mary's Church now stands close by the ancient chapel of the Priory.

What was three centuries ago "a Priory hard on the Wyrall shore, " without any village by it," and a place of refreshment for the travellers by the ferry from Liverpool, has of late years become a large and populous town, the residence of many Liverpool merchants. Several places of worship have been built, two of which are Independent Chapels, namely, Woodside Chapel and Oxton Road Chapel.

WOODSIDE INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.†

This chapel, which is situated in Hamilton Square, was opened for public worship on the 16th October 1838; the services being conducted by the Revs. Dr. Raffles of Liverpool, Dr. Carruthers then of Liverpool, and Samuel Luke then of Chester. On the 26th February 1839, a church was formed, and in October of the same year the Rev. R. COPE of Airedale College was ordained first pastor. Mr. Cope resigned in 1841, and entered the Established Church. The second pastor was the Rev. WILLIAM O'HANLON, who began his ministry there in April 1842, and resigned towards the end of 1845. In 1846 the Rev. H. D. KNOWLES was ordained third pastor. He continued his labours till the middle of 1849, when he resigned, and the church

* Notitia Cestriensis, i. 156.

† Furnished by the Rev. James Mann, minister of the place.

was dissolved. The Rev. JAMES MANN was invited by the trustees to take the superintendence of the congregation, and entered upon his charge on the first Sabbath of December 1851. A church was again formed on the 9th February 1852, when a unanimous call was given to Mr. Mann to become pastor. The call was at once accepted, and a public recognition service was held on the 2nd March in the same year. He still continues pastor.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OXTON ROAD, BIRKENHEAD.*

Until within the last seven years there was but one Congregational church in Birkenhead, situated so far from Oxtan and Claughton as to be of little service to the Nonconformists living in these neighbourhoods.

Many professing Congregational principles were therefore constrained to connect themselves with those holding views on church polity different from their own; and a few gentlemen determined to do their utmost to remedy the defect by forming another Independent cause.

A small chapel in Grange Lane which had been formerly occupied by the Association Methodists happening at this time to be vacant, afforded an opportunity of commencing religious services without delay. The originators of the enterprise guaranteed to defray the expenses of the first year, and the Rev. Richard Thompson, B.A., of New College London, accepted an invitation to conduct the Sabbath services for a few weeks, beginning on the 17th of June 1855. His ministrations were continued for three months, after which the Rev. D. Simon supplied the pulpit for a short time. The services of the Rev. F. S. WILLIAMS, formerly of New College London, were now secured for a season, and a very cordial invitation was soon afterwards accepted by him to become the pastor. On January 1st, 1856, he began his labours. In the February following a church was formed, for which purpose a most impressive service was held, in which the Revs. Dr. Raffles, Professor Griffiths, W. Marcus, James Mann, and — White took part. The Rev. F. S. Williams was ordained to the pastorate in the following May. Very soon after his settlement the project of erecting a new church was formed. The population about

* Furnished by the Rev. Charles Goward, minister of the place.

Oxton and Claughton was rapidly increasing, and it was hoped that there would be very soon too large a congregation for the chapel in Grange Lane. A site was selected, the situation of which has proved to be very central, for during the last few years the green fields and pleasant valleys which surrounded it have been turned into streets and terraces.

The land was purchased, and 560*l.* were subscribed by the committee and their families; one gentleman in addition to other services giving his assistance in the necessary legal transactions. After considerable negotiations with the English Congregational Chapel Building Society, the council determined to give 150*l.*, and to lend 150*l.* repayable by yearly instalments. The Liverpool Congregational Aid Chapel Building Society, then just formed, gave 200*l.*, and lent 200*l.* to be repaid by ten yearly instalments, four of the committee becoming yearly subscribers of 5*l.* each to that society.

The plans were now adopted, and tenders invited for the execution of the work. The lowest tenders presented doubled the estimate of 2,160*l.* that had first been given. The work of building, however, was begun, and progress was made. Fresh contributors to the finances came forward, and all concerned in it were hopeful. The contractor failed; but the committee resolved to complete the building, though at an extra cost of 900*l.* The edifice was then soon finished, because "all had a mind to work." On the 22nd June 1858 it was opened for divine worship by a religious service, in which the ministers of the neighbouring churches took part.

The cost of the building, which is a very handsome structure, together with the site and the schoolhouse, amounted to 5,475*l.*

It is only fitting that this record should bear testimony to the indomitable perseverance displayed by the originators of the now advancing cause. They clung to the enterprise through good and evil report, and voluntarily permitted the gravest responsibilities to be laid upon them for the sake of Him in whose name they began and continued their work.

Since they first commenced, other Nonconformist bodies have been incited to church extension. The Baptist brethren have reared a noble building; the United Presbyterians have erected two new edifices; and within the last year the Wesleyans have opened a large chapel.

In July 1861 Mr. Williams resigned the pastorate of the church,

which remained without a settled ministry until the next spring. At the expiration of six months, during which period the pulpit was supplied by various ministers, the Rev. CHARLES GOWARD, formerly of Airedale College, was invited to preach for two Sabbaths. After a second visit a requisition to become their pastor was sent by the church and congregation to Mr. Goward. The call was acceded to, and the present minister commenced his duties the first Sabbath in May 1862.

LISCARD.

THIS place, which was formerly an uninteresting and thinly peopled township in the parish of Wallasey, now includes the populous watering places of Egremont and New Brighton. An Independent chapel has been erected, the history of which may here be fitly inserted.

The LISCARD INDEPENDENT CHURCH* was founded by John Astley Marsden, Esq., of Liscard Castle, in the year 1842. Mr. Marsden, a staunch Dissenter and a great admirer of the older English divines, was one day passing along some back street in London when his attention was attracted to a marble tablet lying in a builder's yard, the inscription upon which was to the memory of Dr. Watts. Upon inquiry Mr. Marsden ascertained that it had been set up in Dr. Watts's chapel, S. Mary Axe, and had been purchased by the builder together with the original pulpit, the pews, &c., a few months before when the chapel was pulled down. Mr. Marsden at once became the purchaser and with great triumph brought home the relics of a man for whom he had the deepest reverence. He immediately set to work, built a church upon his own land to put them in at a cost of about 1,200*l.* and handed it over when finished to trustees for the use of the Congregational body. It was opened on the 1st of September 1842. It is a neat building Anglo-Gothic, with lancet windows and a tower. The next year some extensive alterations were made in the building, which cost 800*l.*

On the day of the re-opening July 19th, 1843, a church was formed consisting of eleven persons. And on the following 1st of August the Rev. WILLIAM LAWSON BROWN, M.A., formerly of Lerwick,

* Furnished by the Rev. James Cranbrook, minister of the place.

Shetland, was set apart to the pastoral office. He held his pastorate however only until the 16th of December 1844, when having received an invitation to one of the churches in Bolton he resigned. During the year about thirty-seven members had been added to the church, and his ministry was otherwise very successful.

The church remained without a pastor until the 1st of May 1846, when the Rev. JAMES LE COUTEUR of Upway, Dorset, was called to and entered upon the office. He held it until the 27th of November 1849 when he resigned, and soon after accepted a call to the church in Wellington, Wilts, where he has remained ever since.

After Mr. Le Couteur's removal the church remained unsettled until the spring of 1851. An invitation was then given to the Rev. JAMES CRANBROOK of Stratford-on-Avon. Mr. Cranbrook entered upon the pastorate on the 23rd of April, and is still the minister of the church.

The following is the inscription on Dr. Watts's tablet, now placed within the tower over the stairs leading to the gallery :—

זכר צדיק לברכה

(Prov. x. 7.)

The following humble Inscription was composed by
Dr. Watts a short Time before his Death,
and according to his Desire is written upon his Tombstone
in Bunhill Fields :

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

Pastor of a church in Bury Street London,

Successor of the Rev. Joseph Caryl,

Dr. John Owen, Mr. Clarkson, and Dr. Isaac Chauncey,

After fifty years of feeble labours in the gospel

interrupted by four years of painful sickness,

Was at last dismissed to rest

Nov. 25, A.D. 1748,

Æt. 75.

2 Cor. v. 5.—Absent from the body, present with the Lord.

Col. iii. 4.—When Christ who is our life shall appear, I shall
also appear with him in glory.

In uno Jesu omnia.

DEANERY OF MALPAS.

(By the Rev. W. URWICK, M.A.)

MALPAS Deanery, which forms part of the hundred of Broxton, is comparatively small, and contains only eight parishes, from four of which however ministers were ejected in 1662, viz., George Mainwaring from Malpas, Thomas Burroughs from Harthill, John Griffith from Shocklach, and George Bonnyman from Tilston. That scrap of the county of Flint which borders upon this part of Cheshire, interesting as it is in the annals of ecclesiastical and particularly Nonconformist history, shall be included in our sketch of this deanery.

MALPAS.

THE town of Malpas, fifteen miles south from Chester, and five from Whitchurch, in Shropshire, is pleasantly situated on a hill, from the higher parts of which extensive views are obtained. There are two rectories to the one church, called the Higher Mediety and the Lower Mediety. The Rev. GEORGE MAINWARING was minister at this place, probably at the Higher Mediety, during the Commonwealth. He signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in that capacity in 1648. He was born in Wrenbury parish, and supported at the university by Mr. Cotton of Combermere, where he had the reputation of a good scholar. He was made acquainted with the ways of religion by means of Mr. Buckley, his uncle, a strict Puritan. He was first chaplain to Sir Henry Delves, afterwards rector of Baddaley and chaplain to Sir Thomas Mainwaring. After the wars he removed to Malpas, whence he was ejected at the Restoration. The pious

Philip Henry, who gives this account of him,* calls him "a worthy minister of Jesus Christ, and my worthy friend;" and adds, "His conversation was exemplary, especially for plainness and integrity; he was eminent for expounding Scripture. While he was at Malpas he constantly gave all the milk which his dairy yielded on the Lord's "Day to the poor." Ormerod, the historian of Cheshire, insinuates that this account is incorrect. He says, "the question of its accuracy is only hinted at from its being strongly opposed to local tradition." All, however, who know the character of Philip Henry will consider his assertion of a matter of fact concerning one whom he knew intimately, and close by whom he lived, as more trustworthy than any local tradition. When Philip Henry was engaged in building a parsonage at Worthenbury, he notes in his diary that the very day the workmen began building, Mr. Mainwaring of Malpas preached the lecture at Bangor (Flintshire) from Psalm cxxvii. 1, *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.* There never was truth, saith he, more seasonable to any than this was to me; it was a word upon the wheels.† Philip Henry's eldest son, who died in his sixth year, was baptized by Mr. George Mainwaring, "late of Malpas," May 12th, 1661. He preached in the morning from Zechariah xii. 1, and in the afternoon from Psalm li. 5, at Worthenbury.

Mr. Mainwaring died in a good old age, March 14th, 1669-70, gathered as a shock of corn in his season. Philip Henry wrote an elegy upon the death of his worthy friend, in which he thus bewails the restraints put upon him by the Act of Uniformity:—

His later years he sadly spent,
 Wrapt up in silence and restraint,
 A burden such as none do know
 But they that do it undergo.
 To have a fire shut up and pent
 Within the bowels and no vent;
 To have gorged breasts, and by a law
 Those that fain would, forbidden to draw.
 But his dumb Sabbaths here did prove
 Loud crying Sabbaths in heav'n above;
 His tears, when he might sow no more
 Watering what he had sown before.

Walker, in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, names the Rev. Thomas Bridge as vicar of Malpas sequestered and restored. He adds,

* Life, by Williams, page 270.

† See Proverbs xxv. 11.

“ I am not *absolutely certain* of this sequestration, and therefore “ *quaere.*” The probability is, however, that Walker is right, because the Lower Mediety was held during the Commonwealth (as we shall presently see) by Mr. Holland; but Mr. Mainwaring calls himself minister at Malpas in 1648, and though there were two other chapels—S. Chad’s and Whitewell—in the parish supplied by the rectors for the time being, at which Mr. Mainwaring might have ministered while Mr. Bridge held the Upper Mediety, the fact of his ejection in 1660 can be accounted for only on the supposition that he had to make way for the old incumbent. Mr. Bridge was appointed rector to the Upper Mediety February 21st, 1624; he was supplanted by Mr. Mainwaring; in 1660 he was reinstated in his living and Mr. M. turned out; and in 1682 he died. The following account of him occurs in Philip Henry’s Life:—

“ Mr. Thomas Bridge, who had been rector of the higher parsonage of Malpas about fifty-seven years, being aged about eighty-two years, was buried at Malpas October 7th, 1682. In his last sickness, which was long, he had appointed Mr. Green, one of the curates there, to preach his funeral sermon on 1 Timothy i. 16,—*Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering,*—and to say nothing in his commendation, but to give a large account of his repentance.” The diary runs thus:—“ Mr. Green preached. Text, 1 Timothy i. 16; told what he [Mr. Brooks] had declared to him in a late fit which he had concerning his repentance; towards his latter end very charitable; a taking popular good preacher; preached often, and to the last could read the smallest print without spectacles, having used glasses in private ever since forty.”*

The Lower Mediety of Malpas rectory was held during the Commonwealth by the Rev. WILLIAM HOLLAND, who belonged to the family of the Hollands of Denton. He signed the Cheshire Attestation to the Covenant as *minister at Malpas* in 1648. In the register of his marriage at Malpas church, 27th February 1654-5, he is described as “ minister of God’s Word in the Lower Mediety of “ Malpas.” He conformed in 1662 to the requirements of the Act of Uniformity, and resigned his living through ill health in 1680. In 1660 he signed a testimonial to Bishop Bridgman in behalf of Philip

* Williams’s Life of Philip Henry, pages 274, 461.

Henry, witnessing the orthodoxy, learning, piety, and *loyalty* of the worthy Puritan. The celebrated Matthew Henry was baptized by him the day after his birth, being Sunday October 19, 1662. "His father desired Mr. Holland to omit the sign of the cross, but he said *He durst not do it*; to which Mr. Henry replied *Then sir, let it lie at your door*. However godfathers and godmothers there were "none."*

In the history of Denton chapel a letter is given from Mr. Holland to his parishioners at Malpas excusing his absence from his charge, together with their address in reply. The latter is as follows :—

"We parishioners of Malpas are willing to certify that William Holland, clerk and M.A., hath been parson here twenty-four years, and for more than twenty years did with unwearied labour carefully perform all the offices appertaining to his place and calling, until of late years it hath pleased God to visit him with such bodily infirmities that have caused great obstructions in breathing and difficulties in speaking; so that not without compassion and pity of his sufferings and infirmities we have of late years heard him deliver his meditations in the pulpit."

In his letter to his parishioners he says :—"My removal from Malpas was not, 1st, out of any contempt or undervaluing disdain of my function and call to the ministry. God is my witness in this sense I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It was not, 2ndly, out of weariness of my ministerial employment; nor, 3rdly, upon consideration or design of reaping any considerable advantage or profit by it; but, 1st, my own disability of voice, 2ndly, the death of my wife, and, 3rdly, the education of my children."

Mr. Holland succeeded to the Denton Hall estate on his brother's death; in 1680 he resigned his living, and in 1682 he died.

Bishop Gastrell notes that in his day there were twenty Dissenters, most of them Presbyterian, at Malpas.

It is worthy of note that Reginald Heber, the eminent poet and Bishop of Calcutta, was born at the Higher Rectory at Malpas, of which place his father was rector, in 1783.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, MALPAS.

The Rev. JAMES PRIDIE now resident at Halifax, Yorkshire, gives

* Tong's Life of M. Henry, page 6.

the following account of the origin of the Independent church at Malpas:—

“ My connection with Malpas commenced in 1814. Early in that year a few friends in Chester obtained a small farm, and having converted it into a chapel, it was opened in due form by the late Mr. Thorp of Bristol.

“ Just before that time a gentleman resident in Chester, the late Mr. Williamson, had purchased an estate at Boughton in the suburbs of that city. The estate originally belonged to a clergyman who had seceded from the Established church. Out of several buildings he constructed a place of worship in which he officiated on the Sabbath. Mr. Williamson was wishful this chapel should be re-opened. Circumstances, to which I need not advert, induced me to comply with a request earnestly presented to preach both at Boughton and at Malpas. Having preached at Boughton in the morning I rode to Malpas and preached there in the evening, then rode three miles to obtain a bed. At the expiration of six months I was able to obtain a lodging in Malpas, and I continued to reside and labour there till the spring of 1816, when I left for Manchester.

“ I would desire to record with deep humility and gratitude that some of the fruits of my Malpas ministrations are to be found even at the present day.”*

In January 1821 a church was formed by the Rev. James Pridie, then minister of New Windsor Chapel Manchester, the Rev. John Morris of Tattenhall, the Rev. George B. Kidd of Doddington, Whitchurch, with several members of neighbouring churches. The Lord's Supper was administered the same day. The Revs. J. Morris and G. Kidd superintended the affairs of the church until the year 1824, when the Rev. Mr. Williams accepted a call to the pastoral office and continued at Malpas about two years.

In the year 1825 a small chapel in the Lion Yard (built and for some time occupied by the New Connexion Methodists) was purchased for 210*l.*, and opened as an Independent chapel in October of the same year by the Revds. Dr. Raffles and J. Thorp.

In 1828 the Rev. H. BIRCH, formerly a student at Blackburn and late of Oldham, accepted an invitation to the pastorate, and

* Letter to the Rev. W. Urwick, March 23, 1863.

continued to fulfil its duties till April 1834. In 1836 *Mr. C. Belk* was recommended by the Cheshire Union to the church, and laboured among them about three years, during which period the Lord's Supper was administered by the Rev. J. Morris of Tattenhall—*Mr. Belk* not being ordained. In October 1842, *Mr. S. M. COOMES* being (it is noted in the church book) in the order of Divine Providence brought among the people of Malpas, they retained him to labour among them in word and doctrine. During his stay, a Bible class and Sabbath school were both established. His stay however must have been short, for on August 23, 1846, "after a "continuance of supplies for about sixteen months" the Rev. W. WILLIAMS was chosen pastor. He held the office for about six years. After another interval, in the latter part of the year 1857 the Rev. HENRY BAKE became minister of the place, and still continues to fill the office of pastor.

During the years 1861 and 1862 a new chapel, school room, and lecture rooms were erected on an eligible site, with burial ground adjoining, at a cost of 1620*l.*

An Independent chapel was opened in THREAPWOOD in the year 1850, calculated to seat one hundred and twenty persons, and the minister of Malpas holds service in this place once every Sunday. Threapwood is an extra-parochial district, partly in Cheshire and partly in Flintshire. The Independents have had a preaching station there for many years.

ALDFORD.

WALKER names a *Mr. Eaton* rector of Aldford as sequestered in 1643. He says, "He was dispossessed by a party of soldiers, who most "barbarously carried out his wife (sister or daughter to Sir Philip "Oldfield) and placed her on a dunghill, where they so much insulted "and abused her that she grew distracted and died in that condition." In 1648 among the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers there occurs the following:—*John Roberts, pastor of Aldford.* He was probably a relative of Jonathan Roberts of Denbighshire, whom Philip Henry describes "a learned man and an *Israelite indeed,*" and who was ejected from Llanvaier in 1662.

Aldford Hall (now used as a farm house) was in the time of

James I. the residence of Bishop Vaughan, during the prevalence of the plague in Chester. The foundations of Aldford Castle, moated all round, are still visible a short distance from the church.

CODDINGTON.

THE rectory of Coddington is thus described in the Parliamentary Survey, 1649*:
"It has an old parsonage house, with garden, orchard, and one close or glebe, called the Springe, butting south upon the highway and north upon Sir Thomas Wilbraham's ground, and worth 10*l.* per annum. Tythe corn and hay of Coddington worth 30*l.* per annum. Half of the tythe corn and hay in Chowley (a township included in the parish) worth 6*l.* per annum. Third part of the tythes of Aldersey (another township) worth 4*l.* per annum. Mr. RICHARD VAUGHAN is minister there."

HANDLEY.

"SAMUEL CATHERALL, pastor of Handley," signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648. Philip Henry names† a Samuel Catharall living as a schoolmaster at Whitewell Chapel in 1665, and at Wigland, also in Malpas parish, in 1667. He was (if not the same person) probably a near relative, perhaps son of the Presbyterian minister.

HARTHILL.

WALKER names "Mr. Wright at Harthill in the Deanery of Malpas. He was turned out to make room for one THOMAS BURROUGHS, who was a man of no learning, bred up to husbandry, and yet enjoyed the benefice until the Restoration." This Mr. Burroughs is named by Calamy as one of those who afterwards conformed. He was instituted to the living of Baddaley in the Deanery of Nantwich, December 14, 1681.

* Lambeth MSS.

† Life, by Williams, page 109.

Bishop Gastrell names a Dissenters' meeting house, Anabaptist, as existing in this parish in his time.

SHOCKLACH.

CALAMY names the Rev. JOHN GRIFFITH, minister of Shocklach, as one of the noble army of Nonconformists in 1662. He was ejected from this living and became a Nonconforming minister in Shropshire.

Bishop Gastrell notes that there were in his day four families of Presbyterian Dissenters in Shocklach parish.

The celebrated JOHN DOD the Decalogist was a native of Shocklach, where his parents lived and had a considerable estate. He was born in the year 1550. He was educated at Jesus College Cambridge, where he became scholar and fellow, and where he remained sixteen years. He afterwards became the minister of Hanwell in Oxfordshire, and laboured there as a faithful pastor for twenty years. He was suspended from his ministry there by Dr. Bridges Bishop of Oxford, for Nonconformity to the ritual of the Establishment; and he gave his flock a farewell sermon on the occasion from the words, *I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.* Being thus driven from Hanwell he preached at Fenny Compton in Warwickshire, and afterwards at Canons-Ashby in Northamptonshire where he lived quietly several years and preached over the whole prophecy of Daniel. He was again silenced there by Bishop Neal. He then ceased to preach privately, but considering his heavenly gift in conference, he might have been said daily to preach privately. He died at Fawsley, Northamptonshire, in the year 1645, at the advanced age of ninety-six years. He was an excellent Hebraist and is best known by his able work upon the Decalogue; but was also celebrated for his maxims which were printed in sheets and pasted on the walls of cottages with the title *Dod's Sayings*. One of these which he realised in his own experience was "Sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions." He suffered brutal cruelty from Charles the First's cavaliers who plundered his house, and when he was unable through weakness to leave his chamber, cut away the curtains of his bed and pulled away the pillows from under the head of the good old man.*

* Clark's Lives attached to his Martyrology, page 175.

TATTENHALL.

AMONG the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation in adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant, 1648, occurs the name of *Josias Clark, pastor of Tattenhall*. We have not been able to ascertain how long he remained at Tattenhall, or whether he was a Conformist or a Nonconformist. The minister at Tattenhall in 1662 was probably a Conformist. Dr. Moreton, rector of Tattenhall, died March 1675-6, and his son-in-law Mr. Tarbuck succeeded to the living. He being in a very low state of health had to employ a curate, and in the course of a few months died. Henry Newcome, son of the celebrated Nonconformist minister ejected from the Collegiate Church Manchester, succeeded. The following is the account in his father's Autobiography of his obtaining the appointment to Tattenhall:—

“The warden told me that the presentation for Harry to Tattenhall was come. I went away to Barthomley, found my rector (Z. Cawdrey) at home, and he very kindly went with me towards Tattenhall the next day. We had before us to smooth the way all we could, to get a fairness in the people to receive him; and then the curate in the place, the people had generally petitioned for him, and I confess I was concerned about that, as thinking a man of such interest should rather have been preferred than a stranger. When we came to Tarporley we found Mr. Sherard at home, who received us very heartily, and was glad of the news and offered us all assistance. . . . We found Sir John Crewlord of the parish, and had some tenants, and his interest Mr. Sherard secured for us. The only considerable house and estate in the parish we there also found to be Sir James Bradshaw's, and his favour I knew how to procure, viz., by my cousin Roger Manwareing, who had married his sister, and so he wrote to him and he did his part. And for the care of the curate we were relieved from it in such a way as was not to be desired; for we found him a man of a blamable life, and so no otherwise to be regarded by us than as a poor man and an object of charity.”*

Having obtained the sanction of Bishop Pearson, Henry Newcome,

* Newcome's Autobiography, pages 213, 214.

junior, was collated to the rectory on July 30, 1675, and the chief of the people very civilly met him and were very friendly towards him. Regarding his early history we learn from his father's Autobiography that he was born in 1650, and matriculated at Oxford in 1667. His venerable father often visited him when at Tattenhall, and more than once officiated with him at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

He continued many years at Tattenhall, till 1701, and was known to Matthew Henry who heard him preach the Reformation lecture in S. Peter's church in Chester, and in his diary speaks of his "good and proper discourses." It appears however that though the son of one of the most eminent Nonconformists, Henry Newcome of Tattenhall, was among the bitterest against Matthew Henry and those other Dissenters who established a Reformation lecture among themselves. "Preaching in Chester from 1 Thessalonians v. 8., in many things very well, in the close of his sermon he departed from that good temper for which he had been much esteemed and in which his father's friends hoped he would have continued to the last; he broke out into very severe invectives against the Dissenters because they did not conform to the church, suggesting that thereby they hardened the profane and disabled themselves to reform them; on which Mr. Henry writes, 'The Lord be judge between us; perhaps it will be found that the body of Dissenters have been the strongest bulwark against profaneness in England.'"*

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, TATTENHALL.†

Though no minister was in 1662 ejected from Tattenhall, several places in the neighbourhood were thus distinguished, namely, *Hargrave* from which Samuel Slater was turned out, *Churtonheath* where Mr. Colley laboured, *Waverton* whence John Marygold was ejected, and *Harthill* from which Thomas Burroughs was expelled.

The darkness that succeeded the removal of these good men from their spheres of usefulness in this neighbourhood continued for more than a hundred and fifty years; the clergy, gentry, the middle

* Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, page 248.

† Furnished by the Rev. J. Morris, minister of the place.

and lower classes were alike demoralised. But the state of the parishes in this district is only a counterpart of the whole kingdom after the passing of the Act of Uniformity: here and there God had a few witnesses, but they were Nonconformists and chiefly laymen, for an evangelical clergyman or a Nonconformist minister was almost unknown in these parts. By reason of the prejudices of the clergy, and the persecuting spirit that pervaded the upper and lower classes, no Dissenting brother would be allowed generally to preach to his fellowmen the gospel of Christ.

But the people of this locality had much cause for thankfulness; God at length remembered them, and the Dayspring from on high visited Tattenhall.

Simultaneously from three quarters light broke in upon our benighted village: from Chester by the Rev. W. Thorpe of Chester; from Coddington through the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, curate of that place; and by means of the Cheshire Congregational Union. Mr. Nicholson was a stranger to Christ and His gospel when he went to Coddington, but the pious ladies who put into his hands sermons by the Rev. R. De Courcey of Shrewsbury were the instruments of his conversion. Then in that old edifice did ring the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone in the righteousness of Christ. All was novel to the people, the church became crowded, and many from Chester, Wrexham, and the surrounding villages came to see the great light. Satan was soon at work. An old squire—a lay rector—got the earnest curate removed; but his work was done there, and he *was* removed, for he left the church, joined the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion, and afterwards became tutor of Cheshunt College. He was succeeded by an hireling, but his converts banded together, became with their father in Christ Dissenters, chose Tattenhall for their place of meeting, and fitted up a room belonging to Mr. G. Walley of Newton Lane as a place of worship.

About the year 1795 itinerant duty was performed in this district by the Rev. Job Wilson in conjunction with the Rev. W. Sylvester of Sandbach. In 1796 a thatched cottage in the village of Tattenhall was fitted up for public worship, registered, opened by the Rev. W. Thorpe of Bristol, and supplied during several years by the ministers of Chester, Nantwich, Northwich, and Sandbach alternately.

In 1808 a gentleman in the village (Mr. Orton) gave a piece of land for the erection of a chapel (thirty-nine feet by twenty-four)

which was opened on the 10th October in the same year.* A gallery was afterwards added, and a small house adjoining the chapel was built for the use of the minister. For two years however the people were ministered to gratuitously by various supplies, till in 1810 the Rev. THOMAS HITCHIN was requested to make Tattenhall the centre of his itinerant labours. With this request he complied, and settled there about April. He laboured abundantly both in Tattenhall and in the neighbouring villages of Barton, Tilston, Bickerton, and others. The chapel was very well attended and several pleasing additions were made to the church.† Having laboured there about eight years, owing to an increasing family and small remuneration, he removed to Towcester, and was succeeded at Tattenhall by the Rev. JOHN MORRIS, formerly a student at Rotherham, who was ordained over the church and congregation on the 10th of November 1819, and still retains the charge.

The Rev. Messrs. Turner of Knutsford, Bennett of Rotherham, Raffles of Liverpool, Kidd of Whitchurch, Wilson, Sylvester, &c., took part in Mr. Morris's ordination.‡ The following statement occurs in an account of Mr. Morris's ordination given in the "Evangelical Magazine":§ "The congregation at Tattenhall has considerably increased under the ministry of Mr. Morris. The congregation was heretofore liberally aided by the Cheshire Union. Some pecuniary assistance is still afforded by some generous

* The Cheshire Union Report gives the date of the opening services October 19th, 1808, and states that the Rev. W. Evans of Stockport preached on the occasion, in the morning from Philippians i. 18; the Rev. Mr. James of Boughton in the afternoon, from 1 Corinthians ii. 2; and the Rev. Mr. Macdonald of Market Drayton in the evening, from Matthew xxiv. 14. "Though the weather was extremely unfavourable, there was an excellent congregation, and the marked attention with which the word was received evinced the deep interest those present took in the things delivered."

† Cheshire Union Report for 1811: which also contains brief but interesting obituaries of Mr. S. Meredith of Coddington, brother-in-law to the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, and of Mr. James Bromfield of Gateshead, communicated by Mr. Hitchin. The Report for 1814 contains the following:—"Our brother *Thomas Hitchin* continues to labour with his wonted assiduity, and to be instant in season and out of season in preaching the word at Tattenhall, Barnhill, Obb-hill, Sandy Lane, Buckley, and Edge, in all which places he represents the attendance as increasing in numbers and in serious inquiry after spiritual and eternal things. The communications of our laborious brother are rendered peculiarly interesting by accounts of five persons who have been enabled to give dying testimonies to the power and preciousness of that grace of God which brings salvation."

‡ Congregational Magazine for 1821, page 50. § Vol. xxviii. page 333.

“ individuals ; but the people finding themselves capable of raising a suitable salary for their minister with that assistance, have (much to their credit) informed the Union that they need no further aid from their fund.”

Though no debt was on the chapel when Mr. Morris became the pastor, necessary expenses were incurred in making the chapel comfortable, and in completing the parsonage, which were defrayed through the combined efforts of pastor and people. The congregation in the meantime increasing, it became requisite to provide room for the children of the Sabbath school, and for this purpose an addition was made to the chapel at a cost of 100*l.* Through the liberality of the friends of religion at home, in Chester, and in London, 500*l.* have been obtained at different times; which, added to the original cost of the chapel, makes a sum of 1,000*l.* Yet this sum, though large, obtained on the voluntary principle, is but a trifle when it is considered that the people of Tattenhall and its vicinity, from the year 1824 to 1862, have contributed the amazing sum of 1,114*l.* 2*s.* 5*d.* to the London Missionary Society alone. This may serve as an example of the liberality of the village.

For many years Mr. Morris was blessed with a number of pious, experienced, and co-operating men and women, of whom it may be truly said, “they being dead, yet speak.” Mr. Morris has continued his ministry under a variety of vicissitudes for forty-four years, and at the age of seventy has resigned his ministry to the church that chose him for her pastor; and he trusts that the same church will be directed by her Divine Head far more efficiently, to promote the glory of God and the extension of His heavenly kingdom.

TILSTON.

GEORGE BONNYMAN, M.A., was ejected from this living in the year 1662. Calamy gives his name only. He was preceded by *Essirius Clarke*, who died in the year 1655; but he entered upon the duties of the ministry in the year 1653, two years previous to Mr. Clarke's death. After his ejection the Rev. Robert King, M.A., was given the preferment. Mr. Bonnyman died in the year 1680.

WORTHENBURY, FLINTSHIRE.

A SMALL part of Flintshire separate from the rest lies to the south of the deanery of Malpas, and is interesting ecclesiastically on two accounts. Here lie the ruins of the monastery of Bangor, the oldest and largest in Britain, which at one time contained 2,400 monks, supplied thousands of religious persons—evangelists and others—to all parts of the country, among whom was the celebrated Pelagius, and for some centuries maintained a purer system of doctrine and discipline than existed in any other part of Europe. In the days of Augustine the monks of this monastery were distinguished for their zealous opposition to the usurpations of the church of Rome. They deputed seven bishops to meet that distinguished missionary from the Pope. “The Roman and the British clergy met, it is said, in solemn synod. The Romans demanded submission to their discipline; the British bishops demurred; Augustine proposed to place the issue of the dispute on the decision of a miracle. The miracle was duly performed—a blind man brought forward and restored to sight. But the miracle made not the slightest impression on the obdurate Britons. They demanded a second meeting, and resolved to put the Christianity of the strangers to a singular test—a moral proof with them more convincing than an apparent miracle. True Christianity,” they said, “is meek and lowly of heart. Such will be this man (Augustine) if he be a man of God. If he be haughty and ungentle he is not of God, and we may disregard his words. Let the Romans arrive first at the synod. If on our approach he rises from his seat to receive us with meekness and humility he is the servant of Christ, and we will obey him. If he despises us and remains seated, let us despise him. Augustine sate, as they drew near, in unbending dignity. The Britons at once refused obedience to his commands, and disclaimed him as their metropolitan. Augustine was so enraged at the noble and resolute stand which they made against the encroachments on their rights as to instigate the Saxon king Ethelfrid to commit the massacre of the monks at the siege of Chester. The forces of the Britons were attended by a body of 1,250 monks from the monastery of Bangor, who stood aloof on an eminence praying for the success of their countrymen. Ethelfrid inquiring the purpose of this unusual appearance was told

“that these priests had come to pray against him. ‘Then are they
“‘as much our enemies,’ said he, ‘as those who intend to fight
“‘against us;’ and he immediately sent a detachment who fell upon
“them and did such execution that only fifty escaped with their lives.
“The Britons were defeated, Chester surrendered, and Ethelfrid pur-
“suing his victory made himself master of Bangor, and demolished
“the monastery.”*

The other circumstance which distinguishes this part of Flintshire closely concerns the annals of Cheshire Nonconformity. Here lies the village of Worthenbury, the scene of the labours of the pious and excellent PHILIP HENRY, and here is situated Broad Oak, his residence for many years, and the birthplace of his son Matthew Henry. For a full history of Philip Henry’s life and labours, the reader is referred to the beautiful memoir of him written by his son, and enlarged with copious and valuable extracts from his diary by Sir J. B. Williams. An history of Nonconformity in Cheshire would not be complete without a brief notice of one who, though residing only on the borders of the county, was intimately associated with its religious life and movements.

PHILIP HENRY was born at Whitehall, Westminster, on August 24th, 1631, being Bartholomew Day;—“the day of the year on which
“I was born,” says he, “and also the day of the year on which I
“died, as did also near two thousand faithful ministers of Christ,
“1662.” He was a scholar at Westminster school, and made such proficiency in the classics that the head master, Dr. Bushby, employed him to collect some materials for the Greek Grammar which he afterwards published. To this excellent tutor he attributed his first religious convictions. At the age of sixteen, he was admitted student of Christ Church Oxford. He distinguished himself as a classical scholar during his course, and some Latin verses of his were printed among the poems which the university published upon the peace with Holland, 1654. He took his B.A. degree in 1650, and his M.A. in 1653. But though he had a good prospect of promotion at Oxford, he preferred to accept the offer of the poor curacy of Worthenbury far away in the country, together with a tutorship in the family of the Pulestons the principal family in the parish; because “the salvation of souls was that which his heart

* Milman’s Latin Christianity, book iv., c. 3. Hume, c. 1.

“ was upon.” He was ordained by the Presbytery of Bradford North in Shropshire, of which Mr. Porter of Whitchurch was moderator, in September 1657. His sphere of labour was narrow and obscure, there were but forty-one communicants when he settled there, and they were never doubled, but he had such low thoughts of himself that he never sought a larger sphere and even refused an invitation to the vicarage of Wrexham. His congregation was made up of poor farm tenants and labourers, and his income guaranteed to him by Judge Puleston 100*l.* a year, a tenth of which he regularly laid by for charity of which he would say, “this is not our own but the ‘poors’.” He was hindered in his work by the Quakers, who challenged him to dispute and maligned him. The leader of them, a blacksmith in Malpas, being asked by a drinking and swearing gentlemen, “Whether it is better for me to follow drinking and ‘swearing or to go and hear Henry?” he answered, “Of the two ‘rather follow thy drinking and swearing.” Such were the Quakers in those days.

On April 26th, 1660, Philip Henry married Katharine only daughter of Mr. Daniel Matthews of Broad Oak, in the township of Iscoyd, Flintshire, but in the parish of Malpas. By her he had six children : two sons, John the eldest died in his sixth year, Matthew was the second ; then four daughters, Sarah afterwards Mrs. Savage, Katharine wife of Dr. Tylston, Eleanor wife of Mr. Radford, and Ann, the youngest, wife of Mr. Hulton. As to family religion his motto was, *Let prayer be the key of the morning and the bolt of the night. Family worship is family duty.* Each of his children signed the following as their baptismal covenant :—“ I take God the Father “ to be my chiefest good and highest end ; I take God the Son to be “ my Prince and Saviour; I take God the Holy Ghost to be my “ Sanctifier, Teacher, Guide, and Comforter; I take the Word of God “ to be my Rule in all my actions, and the people of God to be my “ people in all conditions ; and this I do deliberately, sincerely, “ freely, and for ever.”

At the Restoration Mr. Robert Fogg, who had for many years held the rectory of Bangor, was turned out to make way for Dr. Henry Bridgman, son of the Bishop of Chester, and as Worthenbury was a chapelry in that parish Philip Henry’s position became somewhat critical and uncertain. He tried to make Dr. Bridgman his friend, but his salary was now withheld because he did not read the Common

Prayer. On January 31st, 1661, he writes in his diary, " Things are low with me in the world ; but threepence left. My hope is yet in the Lord that in due time he will supply me." " July 8th, I received a letter from Dr. B., wherein he informed me if I did not speedily conform his power would no longer protect me." In October 1661 Dr. Bridgman dismissed him from his chapel, and Philip Henry preached his farewell sermon on Philippians i. 27. His pulpit was often vacant afterwards and before August 1662, yet he never was permitted to preach ; a Mr. Richard Hilton was put in, and Mr. Henry was wont to hear him. In September 1662 he left Worthenbury, and came with his family to Broad Oak, and for many years attended public worship at Whitewell Chapel, which is close by in Malpas parish. He was twice seized and taken prisoner (with Mr. Steel) to Hanmer, first upon pretence of having taken part in a plot against the government, and again on the charge of holding private meetings. Neither charge could be established against him, and he was liberated ; but an affront was put upon him by making him collector of the *Royal Aid* tax, the object of the authorities being to show that they looked upon him merely as a layman. When the Five Mile Act came into force, though the measured distance of his house was outside the limit prescribed, he was obliged to remove for a year to Whitchurch ; and because his collectorship guaranteed his immunity from the penalty, it was taken from him, out of the same malicious design to injure him, which had prompted its imposition.

When the King's Declaration of Indulgence came out, March 1672, he obtained a licence to preach in his own house at Broad Oak, and had service on the evenings of the Sundays on which there was public worship at Whitewell Chapel (where Mr. Green, Conformist, preached once a fortnight), and both morning and evening on the alternate Sundays. He preached abroad also in Shropshire and Cheshire. This interval of Indulgence, as it was called, which the Nonconformists enjoyed from 1672 to 1682, was not a time altogether free from severity. They were still closely watched and suspected, they were looked down upon and despised by the dissolute court and its lax ecclesiastics ; everything that spite and contempt could devise was attempted against them, and they met from time to time at their religious services—which were rather family and social than public—with fear and constraint. Nothing but firm conviction could have enabled them to stem the tide of fashion, and, facing obloquy, to be

true to their Nonconformity. But they were men who would scorn to mould their religious creed by fashion. They needed not this prop to secure their repute for learning or their respectability. They were scholars and gentlemen as well as Christians, and knowing that vulgarity and bigotry only will despise men for their Nonconformist convictions, and sacrifice conscience to position and pelf, they maintained their self-respect and independence, as well as their Christian principle, by daring to be Dissenters in the face alike of contempt, ridicule, and persecution. To Philip Henry in particular these remarks apply. A gentleman by birth, a scholar by education, and an eminently pious Christian by the grace of God, he persevered in his dissent, patiently doing well and suffering for it, labouring in his master's service and bearing his master's cross. The Indulgence was not the abolition of the persecuting statutes, but only the connivance of authority regarding them, and therefore Philip Henry was taken unawares, like many other Nonconformist ministers, while—trusting to the Indulgence—he was holding services forbidden by the Conventicle Act. In 1681, while preaching at a friend's house in a Shropshire parish, in the middle of his sermon two *justices of the peace*, accompanied with an armed force, broke into the dwelling, suddenly interrupted the preacher, cursing, swearing, and reviling bitterly. They took the names of all who were present, and afterwards, in virtue of their power as magistrates, fined the master of the house 25*l.*, each of the congregation five shillings, and Mr. Henry 40*l.*,—to pay which his goods were distrained and carried away. This made a great noise in the country, and raised the indignation of many, but Philip Henry bore it with his usual evenness and serenity of mind; as he used to say, *Bene agere et male pati vere Christianum est*. In 1685 he was three weeks prisoner in Chester Castle.

It is a curious circumstance that on the occasions when Philip Henry had to do with the two most bigoted and tyrannical men of the royalist party—Archbishop Laud and Judge Jeffries—he experienced only kindness from them. When he was a child Archbishop Laud took a particular kindness to him, because he used to attend at the water-gate to let the archbishop through as he went from Whitehall across the river to Lambeth. And when Laud was a prisoner in the tower, the boy's father took him with him to see him, and he would remember that the archbishop gave him some new money. Judge Jeffries also was wont to speak with respect of him, saying that

he knew him and his character well, that he was a great friend of his mother's (a very pious good woman), and that sometimes at his mother's request Mr. Henry had examined him in his learning when he was a schoolboy, and had commended his proficiency. "Of all the times that Judge Jeffries went that circuit he never sought any occasion against Philip Henry, nor took the occasions that were offered, nor countenanced any trouble intended him, though he was the only Nonconformist in Flintshire."*

When James II.'s Indulgence was issued on behalf of Popery, giving Dissenters liberty to hold their meetings, Philip Henry resumed his more public labours, and on Tuesday June 14th, 1687, preached in the very same place and from the same text (finishing what he had delivered) as he had that day six years before, when he had been interrupted and fined. He also had an outbuilding near his own house at Broad Oak fitted up decently, where he had service on Sundays—morning and afternoon. In November 1687 he took part in a public ordination at Warrington, probably the first that the Nonconformists had held since the Restoration, at which there were six ministers engaged, and six young men set apart with solemn fasting and prayer to the work of the ministry.

Upon the passing of the Toleration Act, June 1689, he wrote as follows:—"The words of the Act of Uniformity were that Nonconforming ministers should be *as if naturally* dead, but, blessed be God, there hath been a *resurrection* in some measure; a coming out of the grave again, of which, whoever was the instrument, the Lord Jesus himself hath been the principal Agent. He is the resurrection to us." When a company of Nonconformists went to court to congratulate the King and Queen, and to thank them for the present liberty, being clothed alike in long black cloaks, such as ministers usually wear in London, a scoffer said, "Whither are all these going—to a burial?" "No sir," said one of them, "to a resurrection."

After seven years' enjoyment of religious liberty and active devotedness in the ministry, this holy and heavenly servant of Christ was called to his rest on the 24th June 1696, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. His mortal remains were laid in Whitchurch Church, where there is a marble monument, with Latin inscription, erected to his memory.

* Williams's Life of Philip Henry, page 150.

The Minute Book of the Cheshire ministers contains the following reference to the death of Philip Henry:—

“The next meeting was appointed to be at the Whitefriars in Chester, August 11th, 1696, and it was unanimously desired that the Rev. Mr. Philip Henry of Broad Oke would meet us there and give us a sermon; in hopes of which the meeting was appointed at Chester. But it pleased God in the meantime, viz., June 24th, 1696, to put out that burning and shining light by death, as to the unexpressible grief of multitudes, so to the particular disappointment of this class.”

The reader is referred for further information regarding Philip Henry to the admirable memoir of him by Sir J. B. Williams, which is based upon the life written by Matthew Henry.

DEANERY OF NANTWICH.

(By the Rev. W. URWICK, M.A.)



NANTWICH Deanery includes the hundred of that name, together with the extensive parish of Bunbury. It contains twelve parishes, in eight of which there were Presbyterian ministers who signed the Attestation to the solemn League and Covenant in 1648. There were five Nonconformist ministers ejected in this deanery in 1660 or 1662, viz., Edward Burg-hall of Acton, Mr. Smith of Barthomley, Mr. Hassell of Haslington, Mr. Higginson of Church Minshall, and Mr. Bruce of Marbury.

ACTON AND NANTWICH.

THE town of Nantwich is situated in the south of Cheshire, and though of little note in the present day, is one of the oldest and most interesting towns in the county. The first part of the name is said to be derived from *nant*, a British word signifying a brook or valley; the second part is an Anglo-Saxon corruption of the Roman *vicus* (Greek *οἶκος*); and though locally assumed to be the appropriate designation of a salt work, is in reality a general designation of a group of habitations whether in town or country.

In the year 1069 Nantwich was the scene of an unsuccessful attempt by the Cheshire men to resist the advance of the Normans. In 1438 and 1583 the town suffered considerably from fire. The damage on the last occasion was estimated at 30,000*l.*, showing that the town at that time even must have been of considerable size. Philip Henry used "to wrestle in prayer for Chester, Shrewsbury, and *Nantwich*, those *nests of souls* wherein there are so many that cannot discern between their right hand and their left in spiritual things."

During the civil wars the people of Nantwich were strong Parliamentarians. Lord Grandison gained possession of the town on the eve of the battle of Edgehill in 1642, but Sir William Brereton the Parliamentary general regained and fortified it. It was besieged (January 1643-4) by Lord Byron commanding the Royalist troops, but was gallantly held by the townsmen under Sir George Booth, until the siege was raised and the enemy entirely defeated by Fairfax and Brereton.

Nantwich has the honour of being the birthplace of several distinguished men. GEOFFREY WHITNEY the earliest of our English emblem writers was a native of Nantwich. The title of his work is as follows :—

A Choice of Emblemes, and other Devises, For the moste parte gathered out of sundrie writers, Englished and Moralized. And divers others newly Devised, by Geffrey Whitney.

A worke adorned with varietie of matter, both pleasant and profitable : wherein those that please maye finde to fit their fancies : Bicause herein, by the office of the eie and the eare, the minde may reape doable deligte throughe holsome preceptes, shadowed with pleasant devises : both fit for the virtuous to their encouraging, and for the wicked for their admonishing and amendment.

To the Reader.

Peruse with heede, then friendlie judge, and blaming rashe refraine,
So must thou reade unto thy good, and shalt requite my paine.

Imprinted at Leyden, in the house of Christopher Plantyn, by Francis Raphelengius. MDLXXXVI.

The contents of this work prove that Whitney was a first-rate poet, and in his religious views a thorough Puritan. One of the emblems, headed with the motto *Veritas invicta*, and dedicated "to my uncle Geffrey Cartwright," is an open Bible with the outstretched wings of the Spirit above throwing light on its pages, on which is printed the text *Et Usque ad Nubes Veritas Tua*; and with a chain attached to it, at which (at the bottom of the picture) the Devil with his imps is pulling hard. The lines under this device express the characteristic idea of Puritanism in that day. They are as follows :—

Thoughe Sathan strive, with all his maine and mighte,
To hide the truthe, and dimme the law divine ;
Yet to his worde, the Lorde doth give such lighte,
That to the East, and West, the same doth shine.
And those that are so happie for to looke,
Salvation finde, within that blessed booke.

Whitney's work being a very rare one, another quotation may be given relating to social life. The piece is entitled *Vxorix virtutes*, and is dedicated "To my sister M. D. Colley." The emblem represents a fair woman standing on a tortoise, holding her tongue in one hand, and a large bunch of keys in the other. The explanation is as follows :—

This representes the vertues of a wife,
Her finger staies her tonge to runne at large ;
The modest lookes doe shewe her honest life ;
The keys declare shee hathe a care and chardge
Of husbandes goodes ; let him goe where he please
The tortoyse warnes at home to spend her daies.

Another Cheshire writer of worth born at Nantwich was JOHN GERARD the celebrated botanist, who three hundred years ago took his first lessons in the book of nature along the banks of the river Weaver near this town. He was the author of "The Herball or Generall Historie of Plants, gathered by John Gerarde of London, "master in Chirurgerie." MILTON was also connected with Nantwich by the marriage with his third wife, Elizabeth Mynshul, a native of the neighbourhood. The proverbial stories of her harshness are in great part if not altogether fabulous. She died at Nantwich, in March 1726-7, aged eighty-seven years, having resided as a widow nearly forty years in the town.

She was of the Baptist persuasion, and appointed Mr. Samuel Acton, the Baptist minister at Nantwich, one of the executors of her will. Her remains, as tradition says, there being no record of her death or burial, were interred in the graveyard of the Baptist chapel. Active steps (we are informed) are about to be taken for ascertaining the fact by search, if possible. The Rev. Mr. Kimber, Baptist minister, is stated to have preached her funeral sermon, but this is doubtful, because there were no fewer than three ladies bearing the name of Milton residing at Nantwich about the time when the poet's widow died there, to whose memory the sermon referred to is represented as being inappropriate. It is worthy of remark that Mrs. Milton, the poet's widow, was incorrectly assumed by several of her illustrious husband's biographers to have been the daughter of Sir Edward Minshull, Knight, of Stoke Hall in Acton parish, a gentleman of a very ancient Cheshire family ; an inaccuracy which however has been satisfactorily corrected within the last few years.

If the intended search for her remains should prove successful, it is very probable that a suitable tablet will be raised to her memory by public subscription.*

Nantwich is also celebrated as the birthplace of Major-General HARRISON, one of the generals in Cromwell's army and one of the king's judges who was put to death on the Restoration of Charles II. Like the rest of the regicides he has met with sweeping condemnation, and even Ormerod disposes of him in an off-hand way as "the son of a butcher, and of infamous notoriety in the annals of treason and fanaticism." Guizot and other historians of the Commonwealth who describe the career of Harrison, represent him as one of the most consistent and courageous of Cromwell's generals. He accompanied Charles I. on his memorable journey from Hurst Castle to Windsor, and in an interesting account of this journey given by Guizot, we are told, "Charles, struck with his countenance, passed slowly by him, and received a respectful military salute. Rejoining Herbert, 'Who,' asked the king, 'is that officer?' 'Major Harrison, 'sir.' The king immediately turned round and looked at him so long and so attentively that the major, confused, retired behind the troops to avoid his scrutiny. 'That man,' said Charles, 'looks like a true soldier; I have some judgment on faces, and I feel I have harboured wrong thoughts of him.' In the evening, at Farnham, where they stopped to sleep, Charles saw the major in a corner of the room; he beckoned him to approach; Harrison obeyed with deference and embarrassment, with an air at once fearless and timid. The king took him by the arm, led him into the embrasure of a window and conversed for nearly an hour with him, even telling him that he had been given to understand that Harrison had been engaged to assassinate him. 'Nothing,' said Harrison, 'can be more false. This is what I said, and I can repeat it, it is that the law was equally obligatory to great and small, and that justice had no respect of persons;' and he dwelt upon the last words with marked emphasis. The king broke off the discourse, sat down to table, and did not again address Harrison, though he did not appear to attach to what he had said any meaning which alarmed him."

On October 9th, 1660, Harrison was brought to trial for the "murder" of the king, and was among the ten who suffered the

* This information has been kindly supplied by T. W. Jones, Esq., of Nantwich.

extreme sentence of the law, unjustly administered by partial judges and packed juries. During his trial the common hangman stood beside him, halter in hand, as a brutal device for testing the prisoner's courage. But he did not flinch. He neither blinked the part he had acted, nor attempted to palliate it. "My lord," said he, "the matter that hath been approved to you was not done in a corner; I believe the sound of it hath been in all nations. I have desired, as in the sight of him that searcheth all hearts, whilst this hath been, to wait and receive from him convictions upon my own conscience; and to this moment I have received rather assurance of it, that in the things that have been done ere long it will be made known there was more of God in them than men were aware of. I do profess I would not of myself offer the least injury to the poorest man or woman that goes upon the earth. I followed not my own judgment. I did what I did out of conscience to the Lord; and when I found those that were as the apple of mine eye to turn aside, I did loathe them and suffered imprisonment many years." In the last sentence of this honest utterance Harrison refers to his imprisonment in 1657 on a charge, as stated to Parliament by Mr. Secretary Thurloe, of attempting to establish by carnal weapons the *Millenium*, or "reign of the saints on earth;" the real accusation being that he was a participator in conspiracies against the Protector. Henry Newcome of Manchester quaintly says, "Another mercy I have oft thought at and acknowledged is that Major-General Harrison was once on his way from Newcastle on purpose to have seen me, and this might have puffed me up, he being then in his greatness; and he was a most insinuating man and a furious separatist (his authority and interest once drew a near brother of mine, when at London with him, to keep from the public congregation, and to keep the Sabbath with him in the way of separation); but the Lord would not suffer me to be tempted, for he was some way hindered, and I never was acquainted with him nor ever saw him."*

Ecclesiastically considered Nantwich was, down to the close of the seventeenth century, only a chapelry; the parish church being at ACTON, a village about a mile from Nantwich along the road to Chester. Acton Church is an extremely handsome and well-finished

* Newcome's Autobiography, page 27.

building of red sandstone. In this place EDWARD BURGHALL, the Puritanical vicar of Acton, laboured sixteen years during the Commonwealth, and from this place he was ejected in 1662. He signed the Cheshire Attestation as *pastor of Acton* in 1648. Henry Newcome* mentions him thus:—"November 1st, 1652, met Mr. Johnson of Stockport, and at Alderley met Mr. Burghall of Acton, and was greatly refreshed with this acquaintance with these eminent men." The Free School, at the dedication of which Mr. Burghall preached, was founded in 1660 by private subscription as a maintenance for him. The subscriptions amounted to 400*l.* The school is managed by thirteen trustees, according to statutes made for the purpose, and they nominate the master.† It is evident from this liberal effort that Edward Burghall was held in high esteem by rich and poor in his parish, though it would seem he did not enjoy the provision they made for him. He must have been an affectionate preacher as well as a beloved pastor. Lieutenant Illidge (who was apprenticed at Nantwich, where he afterwards married and kept a farm, and became an officer in the militia) relates in some of his papers "that when he was about ten or eleven years of age there was a solemn fast kept in Nantwich Church, upon occasion of a great drought, where his father and the family attended. Divers ministers prayed and preached, but he was particularly affected with a sermon of Mr. Burghal's of Acton (who was afterwards silenced by the Act of Uniformity); his opening the evil of sin, and man's misery because of it, brought many tears from his eyes." Lieutenant Illidge also relates that he had a book written by Mr. Burghall, called *The Perfect Way to Die in Peace*, which when he was old he delighted much in. He adds, "I knew Mr. Burghal of Acton very well; he was a serious godly divine, was cast out of his living at Acton on Black Bartholomew Day 1662, among a great number of his pious brethren all England over—the more the pity. I have heard him preach often; once in Nantwich Church, a soul-searching sermon that did much affect me."‡

Edward Burghall's diary entitled *Providence Improved* indicates an active energetic mind, fully alive to the momentous events of the time, yet with a keen and witty observation of the trifling occur-

* Autobiography, page 35.

† Gastrell's *Notitia Cestriensis*, i., 202.

‡ Matthew Henry's *Life of Lieutenant Illidge*.

rences of daily life, and above all with firm faith in the special providence of God. The diary is mainly valuable on account of its detailed history of the siege of Nantwich, and it shows that the people of Nantwich were liberal patriots on the side of freedom and the Parliament. After the siege had continued a month, during which the town was wholly without supply of provisions, the Royalist Captain Sandford sent a threatening letter, given in full by Burghall, in which he says, "You now see my battery is fixed, from which fire shall eternally visit you day and night to the terror of your old and females, and consumption of your thatched houses. Believe me, gentlemen, I am now resolved to batter, burn, and storm you. Accept of this as a summons that you forthwith surrender your town, and by that testimony of your fealty to his Majesty you may obtain favour." These threats failed to move the people. "The siege continued," says Burghall, "things began to be very scarce both for man and horse. A special providence now appeared, for it pleased God, upon the thawing of the snow the Weaver began to rise, and the enemy fearing the water would take down the platt which they had laid over it a little below Beam-bridge for their free passage to relieve one another, they therefore on the 24th of January conveyed all their ordnance over the river. February 13: A solemn day of thanksgiving in Nantwich and Acton churches, and on Thursday after, a day of humiliation."

As illustrating the annoyance Mr. Burghall in common with other ministers in those days was subject to from the Quakers, the following extracts may be given:—

"1660, March 16th: Two Quakers came to disturb me in the public congregation. I so ordered my studies that the sermon was pat against them; they had liberty to speak and were answered; at last one of them denied the Scriptures to be the word of God, on which they were with shame turned out by the congregation. June 9th: Two Quakers came into my church with a lanthorn and candle while I was preaching; their design was (as they confessed) to have lighted a sheet of paper which they had, as a sign of God's anger burning against us."

The diary concludes with the following entry regarding Burghall's ejection:—"August 24th, 1662: The severe Act of Uniformity was put in execution, and many ministers were outed everywhere that would not conform, and among the rest myself. I preached

“ that day two sermons, one at Wrenbury the other at Acton from
 “ 2 Corinthians xiii. 11, *Finally, brethren, farewell.* October 3rd :
 “ Came an order from the Archbishop of York to suspend me from
 “ the vicarage of Acton : and the 28th, Mr. Kirks, who had been
 “ chaplain at Woodhey, was presented and had institution and induc-
 “ tion from the Bishop of Chester, which would not serve, but he
 “ had it again from the Archbishop and took possession of the
 “ church November 10th, the day before Martinmas, when all the
 “ tithe-calves in Wrenbury and Acton were due to me (the substance
 “ of my means) and were wont to be gathered ; yet I had but one
 “ half of the calves in Acton, he had all the rest, though I had taken
 “ the pains the whole year before. This year there were many
 “ strange prodigies. In January came forth a declaration from the
 “ King promising some liberty of conscience the next sessions of
 “ Parliament, but it came to nothing.

“ 1663. Written by Ed. Burghall, minister of Acton.”

This aged and eminent servant of Christ did not long survive his ejection. Having patiently endured the poverty to which he was reduced, but which was alleviated by the assistance of sympathising friends, he died in the year 1665. Calamy gives him the following character :—

“ He was a devout man, a laborious faithful preacher, and
 “ generally well spoken of. He not only bore the mean condition
 “ to which he was reduced after his ejection with great patience,
 “ but justified his Nonconformity in a very solemn manner on his
 “ deathbed, when many devout expressions dropped from his lips.
 “ He had the eighth chapter of Romans read to him, and when he
 “ heard those words, *There is now no condemnation to them that are*
 “ *in Christ Jesus,* he cried out, ‘Then there is none for me.’ When
 “ his end drew near he made a large and comfortable confession of
 “ his faith in Christ, telling the standers by, ‘that he had made his
 “ ‘peace with God, had abundance of inward comfort, and was glad
 “ ‘to think his time here was but short ;’ adding, ‘I doubt not but
 “ ‘it will go well with me ; the Lord hath dealt very favourably with
 “ ‘me, and suffered me to live to a great age ; and now I can cheer-
 “ ‘fully leave the world and die.’ When one present repeated those
 “ words, ‘I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I
 “ ‘have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown
 “ ‘of righteousness,’ he said, ‘I do verily believe it is laid up for

“ me ; and I bless my gracious God, I verily believe I shall behold
 “ his face in his glorious kingdom quickly.’ He expired praying
 “ for others, December 8, 1665.”

Mr. Kirkes, vicar of Acton, who succeeded Mr. Burghall, is named by Philip Henry in his account of Mr. Zachariah Thomas, ejected from Tilstock, Salop, who died at Nantwich and was buried at Acton. Philip Henry says, “ Mr. Kirkes preached, and gave my friend a “ worthy character, such as he deserved for uprightness, humility, “ moderation, prayer, faithfulness in reproving, patience under affliction ; and in saying he was an *Israelite indeed* without guile, he “ said all.” Mr. Upshan succeeded Mr. Kirkes in 1670, and died 1675. Henry Newcome then sought the living for his son (the Conformist, afterwards settled at Tattenhall), but he did not succeed in getting it. It was obtained by Samuel Edgeley, who died 1705.*

In Acton churchyard lie the remains of another Nonconformist minister, ROBERT FOGG, ejected from Bangor in Flintshire, on the borders of Cheshire. Calamy describes him as a strong man, of a stern countenance, of warm passions, and of a bold and zealous spirit. He was ejected from the rectory of Bangor in 1660, when Henry Bridgeman, son to John bishop of Chester, returned to the possession of it.† He afterwards lived in the vicinity of Nantwich, and went constantly to church at Nantwich or Acton, and preached after sermon on the Lord’s Day, and also on week days. In the latter part of his time he lived alone, and kept his coffin by him. The day before he died, Philip Henry coming to see him, he begged him to pray with him, and afterwards Mr. Henry asked him about his Nonconformity. He said, “ I have conformed too far;—thank Mr. Henry for it.” Philip Henry says of him, “ My dear old friend Mr. Robert Fogg was “ buried at Acton, near Nantwich, April 21st, 1676. He died in a “ good old age, about eighty. He was minister of Bangor in Flintshire “ till after the king came in, and thenceforward to his death was a “ poor silent Nonconformist, but of a bold and zealous spirit, giving “ good counsel to those about him. A little before he died he had “ this weighty saying among others, *Assure yourselves the spirit of God “ will be underling to no sin.*”

We must now retrace our steps to the Parochial Chapelry of Nantwich, from which, according to Walker, a Mr. John Saring, A.M.,

* Newcome’s Autobiography, p. 212.

† Williams’s Life of P. Henry, p. 87.

was sequestered in 1643. "He was also forced," says Walker,* "to quit the country. He was a very worthy man insomuch that the inhabitants have to this day a great veneration for his name." We can find no mention of this name in the parish registers.

The minister of Nantwich during the Commonwealth, at least from 1648, was RICHARD JACKSON. The following note in Platt's Nantwich† furnishes this information:—"When we came to the years you mention we found a quantity of leaves wanting which were torn or cut out, but after making inquiry we were informed the information we desired might probably be obtained from the inscription on the tomb within the communion. We copied as follows: 'Richard Jackson, minister of Nantwich twenty-nine years, was interred the 15th October, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, anno 1677.'" He must have been a young man when he came to Nantwich, and he was moreover a Presbyterian, for he signed the Cheshire Attestation in 1648, but it is evident from the registers of the church which are now found, though the inscription on his tomb is no longer visible, that he conformed in 1662, and remained minister of the place till his death. He was succeeded by Gabriel Stringer, in whose time Nantwich was made a parish in itself.

The twenty years of religious restraint and persecution which followed the Act of Uniformity were not able to subdue the strong liberal and Puritan element that existed during the Commonwealth in Nantwich. Immediately upon the Indulgence of 1687, the Non-conformists of the town united publicly for worship, as they had done privately for several years, and were visited by various ministers, among whom was Mr. William Turton, M.A., ejected in 1662 from Rowley in Staffordshire. Calamy says regarding this good man:—"When he had almost brought himself to the grave by hard study and labour in his ministerial work, his ejection gave him some ease, and was a means of recovering his health and strength. He afterwards preached frequently in churches and chapels as he had opportunity, but chiefly in private houses." Mrs. Savage, Philip Henry's daughter, who resided at Wrenbury Wood tells us in her diary:—"In the year 1688 we had old Mr. Turton for a while at Nantwich." He ended his days however as pastor to one of the Dissenting congregations at Birmingham, where he died in 1716. He had a son in the ministry at Killingsworth.

* Sufferings of Clergy, *in loco*.

† Page 62.

Nantwich was also the scene about this time of Matthew Henry's first essays in preaching. On his return from London, June 1686, when he was twenty-three years of age, he was invited to visit Nantwich by his dear and intimate friend George Illidge, and he preached there every night to a considerable audience, and with encouraging success. "Some persons that had lived very loose and profligate lives attended through curiosity, and were very much startled at what they heard. One instance is very remarkable. Mr. Matthew Henry preached the last evening from Job xxxvii. 22, *With God is terrible majesty*. Mr. Illidge saw one man there that had been very notoriously wicked, and went the next morning to his house to see what impressions the word had made, and found the man and his wife all in tears; the man was under great convictions of sin and sense of his miserable state, the woman wept to see her husband weep. As soon as he could speak he told Mr. Illidge what work the word of God had made in his conscience, and what dreadful apprehensions of the majesty and of the wrath of God he had been under that morning. His kind neighbour gave him the best advice he could, and presently sent an account of it to Broad Oak (Mr. Henry's residence), and desired directions from thence how to deal with this poor convinced sinner. The man went on under a great concern about his eternal state, taught his wife to read, set up prayer in his family, went often with Mr. Illidge to Broad Oak, and after some time was admitted to the Lord's Supper. There appeared a great change in him, and thus it continued for some years. His wife in the meantime died, to all appearance a very good Christian, but he afterwards was guilty of very sad backslidings, from which it does not appear that he is recovered to this day."*

Having thus enjoyed the occasional ministrations of various worthy and devoted men, the church at Nantwich at length invited Mr. Samuel Lawrence to be their pastor.

SAMUEL LAWRENCE was one of Matthew Henry's fastest friends, and nephew of Edward Lawrence ejected minister of Baschurch, Shropshire. He was born at Wem in that county 1661, was educated at Mr. Moreton's academy, Newington Green, London—"a nursery of many that have since done worthily and been famous in their generation"—and was first chaplain to Lady Irby relict of

* Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, pages 52, 53.

Sir Anthony Irby of Westminster. Matthew Henry gives the following account of Mr. Lawrence's settlement :—

“ In the year 1688 he came down into the country to see his relations, and a society of Dissenters in and about Nantwich (that had lain concealed, yet living in obscurity during the twenty-five years of oppression) being then in quest of a minister, after several motions made to them had miscarried, desired Mr. Lawrence to come and spend a Lord's Day with them, which he did to their great and universal satisfaction, so that they unanimously chose him to be their minister ; and after some time taken to consider of it and consult his friends he accepted it, but went first to London to take leave of his friends there. The Lady Irby was extremely loth to part with her chaplain, and was very angry with Mr. Baxter and my father for persuading him to go to Nantwich, but thither he came in September that year. In the beginning of November following he was publicly ordained to the ministry by a class of Lancashire ministers at Warrington ; six more were ordained at the same time. Mr. Crompton preached and Mr. Risely gave the exhortation. I remember the time by a good token, for when we were there at Warrington we received the news of the Prince of Orange's landing. He is now settled at Nantwich, and some there will remember with what wisdom, industry, and zeal he applied himself to his work. His greatest encouragement there was at first, but he continued there till his death ; though if he had had bodily strength and a voice proportionable to his other ministerial abilities, his friends would have removed him into a larger sphere of usefulness. He preached constantly twice every Lord's Day, winter and summer, and read and expounded the Scriptures in order both parts of the day, the Old Testament in the morning and the New in the afternoon ; and catechised the children every Lord's Day, winter and summer, except Sacrament days. He constantly administered the Lord's Supper once a month with great solemnity and seriousness. He preached every Saturday about noon ; 'tis the market day, and so he gave an opportunity to the country people of spending an hour for their souls in the midst of their worldly business. He was a very solid, serious, judicious preacher ; his discourses were generally short, but pithy and substantial and well studied. He was one that loved his work and his heart was in it. It is not remembered that of all

“ the time of his being at Nantwich, which was near twenty-four
 “ years, he was ever taken off from his work till the last Sabbath of
 “ his life. The tendency of his preaching was to bring people to
 “ Christ and heaven, to heaven as their end and to Christ as their
 “ way. He said to one of the lambs of his flock, *Well, I hope you*
 “ *learn Christ, I preach Christ as plainly and well as I can.* He
 “ used this argument to persuade people to lay up their treasure in
 “ heaven;—If our treasure be on earth we are going from it, if it be
 “ in heaven we are going to it. He had an excellent faculty of giving
 “ reproof; he flattered none, but freely told people their faults, but
 “ in the spirit of that rule of Scripture upon which he preached an
 “ excellent sermon at a meeting of the Cheshire ministers, 2 Timothy
 “ ii. 24, *The servant of the Lord must not strive.* He was a very good
 “ scholar and very communicative of his knowledge. He constantly
 “ attended the meetings of the Cheshire ministers twice a year, and
 “ was much beloved and respected by them, was often chosen
 “ moderator, and his advice in any matter hearkened to as much as
 “ anyone’s. In his Nonconformity he was considerate and conscien-
 “ tious; he was so far from being determined to it by custom and
 “ education that if he could have been satisfied with the lawfulness of
 “ Conformity he would gladly have conformed; and he was tempted
 “ to it by some good preferment offered to him in the church which
 “ would have been more than double or treble to his temporal advan-
 “ tage; he studied the point with the greatest impartiality imaginable,
 “ but he could not conform without wronging his conscience, and
 “ therefore chose rather to suffer than to sin.”

This is an abridgment of the more lengthy account of Mr. Lawrence, to be found appended to the funeral sermon preached on the occasion of his death by Matthew Henry. In accordance with the foregoing statements, the name of *Samuel Lawrence of Nantwich* occurs among the signatures to the Cheshire Agreement of ministers, 1691, and the Cheshire Minute Book shews that he regularly attended and took part in their meetings. His death is thus noticed by the scribe of the association, Mr. Jones of Hatherlow. “April 24th or
 “ 25th, 1712. It pleased God to remove by death Mr. Samuel Lawrence of Namptwich, a person of great worth. He was one of good
 “ natural parts, and a very considerable scholar, a judicious and
 “ excellent preacher, of moderate principles and exemplary conver-
 “ sation. He laboured faithfully in the work of the ministry at

" Namptwich above twenty years. His death was very much lamented.
 " Mr. Joseph Mottershead succeeded him, having a clear call to that
 " congregation." Tong gives the following account of Mr. Lawrence's
 death :*—" Mr. Henry had lived to see a great many of his brethren
 " laid in the silent dust, and was a true mourner for them ; but still
 " he had the comfort of the neighbourhood and frequent conversation
 " of his dear and intimate friend Mr. Samuel Lawrence of Nantwich,
 " and this was a great support to him under the sorrow he felt for
 " the death of others ; but in the year 1712 God took away that
 " excellent servant of his, to the great loss and grief of his people
 " and all his friends. The first news of his illness Mr. Henry met
 " with at Knutsford, at the meeting of ministers on the 24th of April ;
 " the next day he returned to Chester, and there the sad tidings met
 " him that Mr. Lawrence died the evening before, about ten of the
 " clock. *A sad providence* (says he) ; *Lord teach me the meaning of it.*
 " On the 28th he writes, ' I went early to Nantwich, attended the
 " ' remains of dear Mr. Lawrence to the grave ; he was my intimate
 " ' bosom friend from my youth ; he was of a serious spirit betimes,
 " ' a good scholar and a serious judicious preacher ; he hath been at
 " ' Nantwich twenty-four years, an instrument of much good there,
 " ' respected by all, and well spoken of ; he died on the ninth day
 " ' of the fever, was delirious by fits from the fifth day ; he was buried
 " ' in the chancel at Nantwich much lamented. I preached from
 " ' Philippians ii. 7, *Sorrow upon sorrow.*' I shall take the liberty to
 " add (continues Mr. Tong) that I happened at that time to be down
 " in Cheshire, and having spent the day before—which was the
 " Lord's Day—with those of my good old friends at Knutsford that
 " were still alive, I there heard of Mr. Lawrence's death, and that he
 " was to be buried on Monday. My sincere esteem and affection
 " for him constrained me to attend his funeral, and I must say I never
 " saw a more mournful one in all my life, both at the house and in
 " the assembly ; Mr. Henry was almost dissolved in tears, had much
 " ado to proceed, and so was the whole auditory. Mr. Lawrence had
 " a good report of all and of the truth itself ; he was a man of won-
 " derful prudence, integrity, and good temper ; his way of preaching
 " was not altogether so affectionate as that of some others, but it was
 " very spiritual and serious, and very much fitted to move and melt the

* Life of Matthew Henry, pages 289, 290.

“ hearts of the hearers; there was much in him that resembled old Mr. Henry both in temper, conversation, and preaching. All his friends rejoice that he has left a son behind him engaged in the same sacred work, and walking in the same spirit and in the same steps.” This was his second son, the amiable Dr. Samuel Lawrence, for many years pastor of the congregation in Monkwell-street, London. Thus uncle, nephew, and nephew’s son were successively Nonconformist ministers. Of the first of these three, Edward Lawrence, of Magdalen College Cambridge, ejected from Baschurch Vicarage in Shropshire, we are told* that, having eleven good arguments against suffering, namely a wife and ten children, he was asked how he meant to maintain them all, and cheerfully replied, “ They must all live on “ the sixth chapter of Matthew, *Take no thought for your life,*” etc., and he often sang with his family Psalm xxxvii. 16.

Samuel Lawrence was succeeded in the ministry at Nantwich by the Rev. JOSEPH MOTTERSHERD, who was ordained at Knutsford on August 5th, 1712. Mr. Jones of Hatherlow offered the ordination prayer, “ praying with hands now laid on.” He likewise gave the exhortation from Hebrews xiii. 22. Mr. Mottershed must have settled without delay at Nantwich, because the next year, 1713, on August 10th, Matthew Henry, then on his summer visit to his old friends in Cheshire, tells us in his diary, “ With much ado I set out for Nantwich, where Mr. Mottershed is well settled. I preached from Joshua i. 5, 6, *As I was with Moses, I will be with thee; be strong and of a good courage,*”—an encouraging sermon doubtless to the young minister. It is an interesting fact that Matthew Henry’s death took place at Nantwich in Mr. Joseph Mottershed’s house. He was paying his second annual visit to his friends in Cheshire (according to a promise given them when he settled at Hackney), and having preached two Sundays at Chester, on Monday, June 21st, he set out for Nantwich. Before he came to Tarporley his horse stumbled and threw him, but he felt no hurt, and against the urgent advice of his friends he went on to Nantwich and there preached from Jeremiah xxxi. 18, his last sermon. After sermon he dined at Mr. Mottershed’s house. His biographer† continues, “ His old and intimate friend Mr. Illidge, son of Lieutenant Illidge before mentioned, was then with him, and had been desired by the

* Conformist’s Plea.

† Tong, page 386.

“honourable Sir Thomas Delves and his lady to invite him to Dodington, and he had fully intended to have waited on them, and their steward was there with Mr. Illidge to have conducted him to a house that has been famed for impartial and disinterested religion, and I hope will be ever so, but he was not able to proceed any further. He went to bed at Mr. Mottershed’s house; he had but a restless night; about five in the morning he was seized with an apoplectic fit, and at eight o’clock he breathed out his precious soul into the hands of Christ.”

Nantwich was thus, to adopt the expression of worthy Mr. Tong, the *Mount Nebo* of Matthew Henry. Mr. Mottershed was one of the bearers at his funeral in Chester. In 1715, as Wilson’s MSS.* inform us, Mr. Mottershed had three hundred hearers, of whom ten were gentlemen. He removed to Manchester about the year 1718, where he lived many years in much reputation. He continued to attend the meetings of the Cheshire ministers in May and August for many years, frequently taking a leading part as preacher or as moderator.

Mr. Mottershed was succeeded by the Rev. WILLIAM VAWDREY from Allostock, in whose ordination, 1718, he had taken part. Mr. Vawdrey came to Nantwich in 1719, and was the esteemed pastor of the congregation here nine years, during which time the interest so increased that a new chapel was deemed requisite. The following extracts from the diary of Mrs. Savage, the well-known daughter of Philip Henry, relate to the ministry of Mr. Vawdrey and the erection of the chapel:—

“1725, March 28th. This week ground is bought for the building of a new chapel at Namptwich. Lord, be thou seen in that affair. Tuesday, May 4th. Our friend Mr. Braddock came hither from Namptwich, and brought us good tidings. Chapel work begun, and great encouragement from some of our friends, especially at Manchester, where they have collected 40*l.* for us. June, Wednesday. This week our friend Mr. Illidge called on us, who had been at London, Bristol, and other places negotiating for us, and has experienced much of the Divine goodness in answer to prayer. 50*l.* collected. Blessed be God who inclined the hearts of our friends thus liberally to contribute to this great work; I trust it is a token for good.

* Williams’s Library, Red Cross-street, London.

“ 1726, Wednesday, 18th May ; a day much to be remembered. We went to Nantwich and most of our family to the dedication of our NEW CHAPEL there. I should have remarked how our good minister (Mr. Vawdry) took leave of the old chapel with that text, *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence.* The presence of God is all in all to adorn our new place. Mr. Owen preached first, then Mr. Gardner [of Chester], Mr. Lawrence [son of Samuel Lawrence] prayed. A very full congregation. Mr. Vawdry's good humble remark affected me, ‘ I must endeavour to preach better, you to hear better, and both to live better, and then our light will shine indeed.’ I would own the goodness of God that we may set up our Ebenezer—hitherto kept, helped, taught ; very few alive now that were members of this society when we began in the old chapel. One generation passes away and another comes, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.”*

These extracts indicate the energy of the members of the church in the cause with which they were connected, the interest and sympathy evinced by their brethren in different parts of the country, and the high esteem in which their pastor Mr. Vawdry was held. He did not however long remain to minister in the new chapel. In the midsummer of 1728 he left Nantwich for Bristol :—“ 1729, January 3 : The most considerable event of the past year has been the removal of our dear minister Mr. Vawdry from Nantwich to Bristol ; borne away from us by a violent importunity, as a mighty torrent which we were not able to make head against, wherein God is righteous, punishing us for our barrenness.”†

Mr. Vawdry's successor was the Rev. THOMAS HAINES, who was minister fifteen years at Nantwich from 1729 to 1745, when he removed to Sheffield. The diary of Mrs. Savage contains the following notices of Mr. Haines :—

“ Thursday, August 7, 1729 : This day Mr. Haines our new minister, and cousin Eddowes's daughter, came to see us. Returned at night. He prayed with our family and for each of us. I trust he leaves a blessing behind. 1731, Tuesday, March 1st : This week our minister Mr. Haines and cousin Betsey Eddowes were married at Nantwich. Lord, furnish them with suitable graces for this new state, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our

* Congregational Magazine, 1831, page 69.

† Diary of Mrs. Savage.

“Saviour. Wednesday, 19th, 1732 : At Namptwich, a double lecture.
 “Mr. Colthurst preached first, from Genesis iii. 15, *The seed of the
 “woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.* Blessed be God for Jesus
 “Christ, that blessed promised seed ; He came in the fulness of
 “time, and has wrought out eternal salvation for all his elect.
 “Afterwards Mr. Dobson of Salop, whose subject I thought well
 “followed, 1 Peter v. 12, *The true grace of God wherein ye stand.*
 “Tuesday morning, in bed, I said over to myself the Assembly’s
 “Catechism—an excellent form of sound words which I was taught
 “in my childhood, and trust I shall hold fast ; and am glad to find
 “that notwithstanding sad decays those good old things I do not
 “forget ;—one said of it, ‘that it’s a body of divinity.’ Wednesday :
 “Mr. Haines and his wife made us a visit. I rejoice in the society
 “of such as love and fear God, and had some advantage by a good
 “hint of his ; when I excused for some neglect in the garden, he
 “replied, ‘I hope you keep your own garden clean—your heart.’
 “Lord, help me to do it. Above all keepings, I should and would
 “keep my heart, and now I have no excuse.”

Mr. Haines’s name occurs as regularly present at the meetings of Cheshire ministers from 1729 to 1743, but he seems not usually to have taken any prominent part in their services. In the year 1745 he removed to Sheffield and was succeeded by the Rev. RICHARD MEANLEY. The last entry in the Cheshire Minute Book relates to his ordination. “Sept. 3, 1745 : Ministers met at Knutsford. Mr. Meanley at the request of his people at Namptwich consented to ordination next meeting. In which occasion Mr. Rogerson was requested to preach and Mr. Worthington to support him ; Mr. Hopkins ask questions and take his confession ; Mr. Mottershead pray over ye candidate, and Mr. Whitacre support ; Mr. Braddock give ye charge. Ye meeting to be first Tuesday in May next.” Thus ends the Cheshire record of the meetings of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers. No further mention is made of this proposed ordination, though probably it took place at the time appointed.

The circumstance that the minutes of the meetings of the united ministers come thus abruptly to an end calls for an explanation which is not given to us, but which it is left to conjecture to suggest. It is not improbable that the doctrinal views of Mr. Meanley may have been so distinctly Socinian, that his ordination became the

occasion for the manifestation of a contrariety in creed (which for some years had been growing silently among the ministers) ending in the total disruption of the union.

Mr. Richard Meanley having continued at Nantwich for about eleven years removed to Platt, near Manchester, where he died in the year 1790. The succeeding ministers who were Arian or Socinian in their views are enumerated in the Wilson MSS., Dr. Williams's library, as follows :—

The celebrated JOSEPH PRIESTLEY succeeded Mr. Meanley, and was minister at Nantwich from September 1758 till September 1761, when he removed to Warrington.

The Rev. JOHN HAUGHTON was the next minister. He entered Dr. Doddridge's academy in 1747, and on the death of this eminent tutor he removed with his fellow students, Messrs. Urwick, Capp, and Clayton, to Glasgow. He was three years at Hyde, 1758—1761, and remained ten years at Nantwich, 1761—1771. He removed to Elland in Yorkshire, and in 1782 he settled at Wem. About the year 1788 he followed his son to Norwich, where he died.*

The Rev. RICHARD HODGSON came to Nantwich from Monton in 1771. He had been at Opell near Wakefield before. He kept a school at Nantwich, and continued here thirty years, 1771—1799. He removed to Doncaster.

The Rev. ROGER MADDOX was here a short time about 1800.†

The Rev. — PARTRIDGE, 1800, 1801.

The Rev. WILLIAM JOHNS, 1801—1803. He was a Welshman, educated under Hervey of Northampton. He removed from Nantwich to Manchester, where he kept a large day school.

The Rev. DAVID WILLIAM JOHNS, 1804—1815. He kept a school. In April 1815 he gave notice of his intention to leave Nantwich, and was about to return into South Wales, but accepted an invitation to succeed Mr. Jenkins at Whitchurch.

The Rev. FRANCIS KNOWLES, not educated for the ministry, settled here as his first place early in 1816. He was of Sheffield, of Dr. Philip's congregation. He published "Observations," &c.

The following are the names of the ministers down to the present time, according to a list which has been furnished us :—

The Rev. JAMES HAWKES from Lincoln succeeded Mr. Knowles in 1823, and was minister of the place till 1846.

* Monthly Repository, vol. ix. page 526.

† *Ibid*, vol. v. page 426.

The Rev. FRANCIS HORNELOWER, 1849—1853.

The Rev. THOMAS BOWRING, 1853—1857.

The Rev. ROBERT WILKINSON, 1859—1861.

The Rev. THOMAS WILLICOTT, 1862.

BAPTIST CHAPEL, NANTWICH.

There must have been a congregation of Baptists in Nantwich at the beginning of the eighteenth century, because we are informed that when Matthew Henry died in the year 1714, Mr. ACTON minister to the Baptist Congregation in Nantwich, took very particular notice on the day before the funeral of the great loss the church of God had sustained.* This Mr. Samuel Acton was a leading man among the Baptists in Nantwich. He had been a wealthy salt proprietor, and became the first Baptist minister there. Bishop Gastrell states the number of Dissenters in Nantwich thus:—Presbyterians 157, Anabaptists 109, Quakers 13. He also names an Anabaptist meeting house with about forty members as existing in Wybunbury parish, where there were twenty-four families of Dissenters, fourteen of whom were Anabaptists. This would be about the year 1720. In 1725 the present Baptist chapel in Barker-street, Nantwich, was erected under the superintendence of Mr. Acton. "The earliest document connected with this chapel which "has fallen under my notice," says Mr. Jones of Nantwich, "bears "date in 1726, followed by subsequent Deeds renewing the chapel "trusts from time to time as occasion required. Mr. Acton in his "life time, after serving the chapel for a considerable time, invited "the Rev. ISAAC KIMBER the historian to become its minister, and "he officiated in this capacity for three years. Mr. Acton's sermons "were collected and printed after his death, but the volume con- "taining them is not easily to be met with."†

The next settled minister was the Rev. JOHN ASHWORTH, the

* Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, page 387.

† I am indebted to the kindness of T. W. Jones, Esq., for this and other items of information. As has already been stated, Mrs. Elizabeth Milton widow of the illustrious poet was a Baptist, was probably buried in the graveyard of the Nantwich chapel, and appointed the Rev. Samuel Acton its first minister one of the executors of her will.

date of whose coming is not known, but who removed to London in 1740. He was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN GREEN who was minister here in 1743.*

About the year 1772 the followers of John Wesley obtained a lease of the chapel, and it was supplied by preachers in that connexion till 1812. Mr. John Cooper then began to preach in it to a congregation who professed General Baptist sentiments; and he was still there in 1820. The congregation has for many years been falling off, the chapel being without a minister through want of funds to support one; and the services are conducted by members of the church without pecuniary remuneration.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, NANTWICH.

During the eighteenth century there were three Dissenting chapels in Nantwich—Hospital-street Chapel, the Baptist Meeting House, and the Quakers', which last is named by Bishop Gastrell as having in his time about ten members only. The Quakers must have considerably decreased in numbers during the sixty years since the days of Burghall, who suffered so much annoyance from them.

In the year 1753 the celebrated GEORGE WHITFIELD visited Nantwich, but was so persecuted that he could not preach within the town. He was assaulted by the mob, and was taken over the Flood Gates to a place called Marsh Lane, where the rabble obtained a bull intending to drive it among the congregation; but being thwarted in their designs by the animal falling into a pit, they left Whitfield to deliver his discourse.† In 1770 the Baptist Chapel was occupied by the Wesleyans, but they had no stated minister, the town not being the head of a circuit; they were supplied with preachers from Whitchurch, Chester, and the Potteries. About this time the Rev. R. De Courcey, a Conformist, from Shrewsbury, and a Calvinist in doctrine, preached occasionally at Wrenbury, and in the house of Samuel Barrow, Esq., at Nantwich. A few Dissenters who had left the old Nonconformist chapel on account of the Socinian doctrines preached there, were wont to attend at the Baptist Chapel, but not being Wesleyans in their religious sentiments they began in the year 1778

* MSS. in Dr. Williams's Library, Red Cross-street, London.

† Whitfield's Life, page 131, and Letter 997.

to hold meetings for prayer. Henry Hitchen and Mr. John Smith were the leaders in this movement. They obtained a room for worship, a coachmaker's shop, at a low rent, and fitted it up at a cost of 40*l.* This place was opened in 1780 by the Revs. Jonathan Scott and William Armitage of Chester, and for several years continued to be dependent upon the services of neighbouring ministers for support. During this period a small legacy was left to it in the following way. An old female servant of Mr. Samuel Barrow, who had resided with her master twenty-six years, entertained strong prejudices against itinerant ministers, but being led by curiosity to hear the Rev. Rowland Hill and Captain Scott, she some time afterwards deposited with her mistress the sum of 20*l.*, which she bequeathed by will *for the use of this chapel or meeting house if ever there should be one.* In the spring of the year 1796 an attempt was made to obtain a settled pastor by an offer from the before-named Mr. Barrow to the Rev. Job Wilson of 50*l.* per annum, in addition to whatever sum the people might be able to raise, if he would take charge of the congregation. A regard to the interests of the church at Northwich led to the refusal of the offer by Mr. Wilson; and in a few months afterwards Mr. GARDNER was invited, accepted the call, and remained at Nantwich (as first minister of the Independent Church) two years. He was followed by the Rev. WILLIAM JONES, who was ordained in the Baptist Chapel on the 16th October 1799, but who left in 1800. In the latter end of that year the managers of the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapels sent the Rev. JOHN TISIER to Nantwich, and in 1801 a new CHAPEL was erected. Mr. Tisier officiated in it till 1804, when he quitted his charge, and was succeeded by Mr. JOHN JAMES, formerly a student at Wrexham Academy, who continued to superintend this congregation till September 1807.* He was considerably assisted in his ministerial duties by the frequent visits of Captain Scott. As this eminent and zealous servant of Christ was a frequent labourer in Cheshire, and spent the latter part of his life at Nantwich chiefly, a brief notice of him may here be appropriately given.

JONATHAN SCOTT was born at Shrewsbury in 1735, the second son of Captain Richard Scott. Having received a polite education, he entered the army in his seventeenth year, and was in due time promoted to the rank of captain in the Seventh Dragoons. He continued

* Christian Instructor, vol. iii., page 683.

to serve his country as a soldier seventeen years, and was at the battle of Minden, August 1st, 1759. It was his daily practice to read the Psalms and lessons of the day, but nevertheless he was not brought to feel the power of the truth till by accident he heard the excellent Mr. Romaine preach, and from that time he became a most earnest and zealous believer in Christ. Beginning his efforts to do good among the soldiers of his regiment, he held daily meetings in his lodgings, which he invited them to attend. This was in the year 1766. While still in the army he preached at Berwick, York, Leeds, Manchester, and various other places to which military duty called him. Yielding to the advice of his superior officers, who deemed his ministerial work incongruous, he sold his commission in 1769, and fully devoted himself to home missionary work. He took up his abode at Wollerton, and from time to time visited Drayton, where he organized a church; Newport, where he built a chapel; Stoke-upon-Trent, where in 1773 he had a thousand hearers; Whitchurch, Newcastle, Nantwich, and various other places. He contributed much by his zealous labours to the establishment of the congregation in Chester to whom Mr. Armitage afterwards ministered, frequently supplying for them two or three Sabbaths at a time. In 1774 he was ordained at Lancaster to the office, not of settled pastor, but of "presbyter or teacher at large," the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Leeds receiving his confession of faith, offering the ordination prayer, and giving the charge from Acts ix. 15. In the year 1802 he married for his second wife the relict of Samuel Barrow, Esq., of Nantwich, and taking up his abode there, he preached alternately to the Independent congregation whose history is traced in this paper and to the Nonconformists at Matlock. On the 12th April 1807 he administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the church at Nantwich, and this was the last public service he performed. He died May 28th, 1807, and his remains were interred in a vault within Queen-street Chapel, Chester. Mr. Scott was a most earnest, humble, and zealous minister. For many years he was wont to travel much—frequently twenty miles on the Lord's Day—and to preach five or six times a week. His sermons were not studied discourses, but simple, pointed, and affectionate. He was very liberal in his contributions to every worthy object, not only labouring gratuitously himself but spending his own proper income in religious and charitable purposes. A short time before his death he united with his brethren in the establishment of an association for

promoting the spread of the gospel in Cheshire, and he liberally contributed to the funds of that association.*

Upon the death of the Rev. Jonathan Scott, Mr. James the minister of the Independent chapel resigned his pastorate. He was succeeded by the Rev. ROBERT SMITH from Leek, in Staffordshire, who continued pastor of the church till the 10th January 1818, when he resigned in consequence of age and infirmity.

The church next made choice of the Rev. PETER HENSHALL as their pastor, who was ordained July 10th, 1819, and left in 1825, having preached during the interval 1,344 sermons. The following is a list of the successive ministers who followed Mr. Henshall :—

Rev. Mr. SENIOR, from July 16th, 1825, to November 12th, 1832.

Rev. Mr. BURY, from January 20th, 1834, to March 25th, 1835.

Rev. Mr. MC.CLEAN, from September 8th, 1835, to June 1840.

Rev. Mr. SIMSON, from November 23rd, 1840, to June 1851.

Rev. Mr. SADLER, from 1852 to 1855.

Rev. E. L. ADAMS, 1856, the present minister.

In the year 1842 a NEW CHAPEL was erected at the cost of 2,200*l.*

WRENBURY.

THIS living is in the gift of the vicar of Acton, and the church though called a parish church so early as 1622 was originally a chapelry attached to Acton parish, the vicar of Acton being obliged to maintain a curate to read prayers there.†

The Rev. JULINES HERRING, an eminent Nonconformist who lived before the second Act of Uniformity in 1662, resided some years in this parish. He was born at Flamber-mayre, Montgomeryshire, 1582, graduated his M.A. at Cambridge, and being ordained with Mr. John Ball of Whitmore, by an Irish bishop, began his ministry at Cawk, in Derbyshire, where he spent eight years, and removed thence to Shrewsbury. There he was silenced on account of his Nonconformity, but resided in the town about seventeen years. “ When all hope of regaining the liberty of his ministry in Shrewsbury

* See Evangelical Magazine, 1807, page 489.

† Notitia Cestriensis, vol. i., page 203.

“ was quite gone, he removed with his wife and such of his family who were not disposed of elsewhere, unto Wrenbury, in Cheshire, where he sojourned with his wife’s dear sister Mistresse Nicholls, a godly woman, the widdow of worthy Master Robert *Nicholls*, who had been very famous in those parts both for his labours and great abilities, of whom this true character may be given—*he was a man who had a clear head and a tender heart, who led an holy life and abounded in the work of the Lord.* Here Master Herring lived privately and comfortably under the ministry of his good friend Master WILLIAM PEARTREE, doing what service he could by comforting afflicted consciences and confirming the hearts of God’s people in the faith of the gospel as opportunities were offered.”* Having spent about seven years at Wrenbury, he removed in the year 1637 to Holland, to be pastor of a Presbyterian church, and died there 28th March 1644. William Peartree, who is named in the above quotation as minister of Wrenbury, ended his days at S. Mary’s, Chester.

HENRY GRIFFITH signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648, as *minister at Wrenbury*. He was probably succeeded by the Rev. ZACHARY CROFTON, who was ejected in 1662 from S. Botolph’s, Aldgate, London, and of whom Calamy says:—“ He was an upright man, but of a warm and hasty temper; an acute, learned, and solid divine, and an excellent preacher. He was pastor of a church at Wrenbury in Cheshire, where he met with much trouble, of which there is an account in his preface to *Bethshe-mesh Clouded*. He was turned out from Wrenbury for refusing the Engagemēt, and appearing very zealous to dissuade others from taking it. Soon after the Restoration he was sent prisoner to the Tower, but regaining his liberty he came down again into Cheshire, where he was again imprisoned. When he once more regained his liberty, he set up a grocer’s shop to maintain his family.”

The Rev. George Mainwaring, ejected from Malpas in 1660, was born at Wrenbury. At Wrenbury Wood, in this parish, Philip Henry’s eldest daughter, Mrs. Savage, lived for many years. Her valuable diary is well known. The Rev. Silas Sidebottom of Wheelock married one of her daughters.

In the year 1695 Matthew Henry notices in his diary the illness

*Clark’s Lives, annexed to the Martyrologie, page 164.

and death "of a young candidate for the ministry, *Mr. Becket*, chaplain to that great patroness of religion and Nonconformity, the Lady "Sarah, daughter to the Earl of Chesterfield and widow of Sir R. "Hoghton." It seems that Mr. Becket had been ill of consumption, and during his illness Matthew Henry often visited him. He died March 15th, 1695-6, and was buried at Wrenbury, the minister of the place preaching his funeral sermon from 2 Corinthians, v. 1.*

COMBERMERE ABBEY, in Wrenbury parish, was founded in 1133 by Hugh Malbank, for the monks of S. Benedict, "in honour of the "most blessed and glorious Virgin Mary, and the Mother of God, "and the Lord Jesus Christ and S. Michael the Archangel;" and Roger, then bishop of the diocese, declared "If any shall in any ways "violate, diminish, or wilfully hinder this alms gift and grant, let him "have the curse of God, and the blessed Virgin and S. Michael the "Archangel, to whom in special manner all these things are granted, "together with my own, unless he be repentant of his misdeed. Be "it so, be it so, Amen." After the dissolution of the monastery Henry VIII. granted it to George Cotton, Esq., from whom the present Viscount Combermere is descended. BURLEYDAM Chapel was built by the lords of the manor after the confiscation of the abbey. In the year 1648 EDWARD MERCER signed the Presbyterian Attestation as *minister at Burldam Chapel*.

At WOODHEY Chapel, in the opposite extremity of this parish, the Rev. J. Cartwright preached as chaplain to the pious Lady Wilbraham, after his ejection from West Kirby. He had been preceded by Mr. Kirks, who conformed and obtained the vicarage of Acton.

AUDLEM.

WALKER, in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, names *Patrick Carr* as sequestered from this living during the Commonwealth. He says, "He was a man of good learning and exemplary life, and as I am "informed was forced to wander about for a livelihood till the "Restoration, so that I presume he was repossessed of his living." DA. KERR, *minister at Audlin*, signed the Cheshire Attestation in 1648, and the similarity of names (considering Walker's frequent inaccuracies)

* Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, page 270.

suggests that he may have been the same person whom Walker refers to.

It seems that the holy and zealous *John Machin*, ejected from Whitley, was invited to become minister of Audlem previous to his removal from Whitchurch in 1649. Henry Newcome says,* "Colonel Massey of Audlem saluted me very kindly, and used me with much respect, and yet fell to mention a passage long since about a letter which I writ to Mr. Machin when he should have settled at Audlem."

A Grammar School, free only to the parish, was founded and endowed in the year 1655 by Sir W. Bolton and Mr. Gamull, citizens of London.

There is a Baptist chapel at Audlem, built in 1841, which will accommodate about two hundred worshippers. The Dissenters in this parish are numerous.

BADDILEY.

THE Rev. George Mainwaring, ejected from Malpas, was in his early days rector of Baddiley and chaplain to Sir Thomas Mainwaring. Newcome says he was curate to Dr. Bret. He probably left about the year 1646, when Mr. Swan became minister of Baddiley. *Thomas Swan, pastor of Baddiley*, signs the Attestation in 1648, but it appears that a *Mr. John Swan* was ordained as minister of the place in 1647. There is probably a mistake in the christian name, and the same individual is referred to in both extracts. In the Minute Book of the Manchester Classis† there is an account in full of the examination and ordination of "Mr. John Swan, aged twenty-nine years, B.A., of Magdalen College, certificated from Weverham, Cheshire, desired and freely elected by the people of Baddaley in Cheshire." He was set apart for the work of the ministry in the church of Baddiley, and received a certificate according to the usual form to exercise his ministry there on October 6th, 1647. He probably conformed in 1662, because, "upon the death of John Swan," in 1681, Thomas Burroughs, who had been ejected from Harthill, was instituted to the living.

Bishop Gastrell notes in his time seven Dissenters in this parish—five Presbyterians and two Quakers.

* Autobiography, page 133.

† Chetham Library.

BARTHOMLEY.

THE church of this parish, which lies about six miles east of Nantwich, was in the year 1643 the scene of a dreadful massacre, committed by a division of the Royalist forces proceeding to the siege of Nantwich. Burghall, the Nonconforming minister of Acton, gives the particulars. He says, "The enemy, now drawing nearer to the town, spread themselves into Stoke, Hurleston, Brindley, Wrenbury, and all the country about, robbing and plundering everywhere; till December 22nd they passed over the river to Audlem, Hankelow, Buerton, Hatherton, and on Saturday they came to Barthomley (giving an alarm to the garrison at Crewe Hall). As they marched they set upon the church, which had in it about twenty neighbours that had gone in for safety; but the Lord Byron's troop, and Connought—a major to Colonel Sneyd—set upon them and won the church. The men fled into the steeple; but the enemy burning the forms, rushes, mats, &c., made such a smoke that being almost stifled they called for quarter, which was granted by Connought; but when they had them in their power they stripped them all naked, and most cruelly murdered twelve of them, contrary to the laws of arms, nature, and nations. Connought cut the throat of Mr. John Fowler, a hopeful young man and a minor; and only three of them escaped miraculously, the rest being cruelly wounded. Christmas Day and the day after they plundered Barthomley, Crewe, Haslington, and Sandbach of goods and clothes, and stripped naked both men and women."

Such is the trustworthy and simple narrative of the worthy and observing Burghall; and well does it illustrate the "military honour" of one branch at least of the Royalist army.

The Rev. RICHARD FOWLER signed the Attestation of Cheshire Presbyterian ministers as *pastor of Bartomley* in 1648. He had held this office since 1617, and died at the latter end of 1648, having been minister here upwards of thirty years. Sir C. Crewe, eldest son of Chief-Justice Sir Randolph Crewe (who was removed from his office for his opposition to the levying of ship money, and who died in 1646), gave the living of Barthomley in 1648-9 to the Rev. Zachary Cawdrey.

ZACHARIAH CAWDREY was the son of the Rev. Z. Cawdrey, vicar

of Melton Mowbray, where he was born in the year 1616. His grandfather, the Rev. Robert Cawdrey, minister of South Luffingham, Suffolk, had been suspended by the Bishop of London for refusing the oath *ex-officio*, and was deprived by the High Commissioners in 1590 on account of his Nonconformity, and with his wife and eight children was left to starve as a layman; though he was one of the most learned clergymen and best preachers in the country. His uncle, Daniel Cawdrey, was minister of Billing in Northamptonshire, whence he was ejected, after thirty-six years' labour in the gospel, in 1662. He was a noted member of the Assembly of Divines. Belonging to such a family, Zachary Cawdrey, though a Royalist and Conformist, was nevertheless a Puritan. He was educated seven years in the Free School at Melton Mowbray, under Mr. Humphrey, then master. At the age of sixteen he was sent to S. John's College Cambridge, where he was admitted sub or proper sizar to the then master, Humphrey Gower.* He had Mr. Masterton, one of the fellows there, for his tutor. He graduated M.A. in 1642, and was fellow of his college in 1644. Henry Newcome was his pupil. "I was admitted (he says) "in the very heat of the wars, May 10th, 1644, of S. John's College "in Cambridge, pupil to that ingenuous, learned, and pious man Mr. "Zachary Cawdrey, fellow of that college."† A friendship was here formed between tutor and pupil, which lasted for life. In 1649 Mr. Cawdrey obtained the living of Barthomley, but being a Royalist it appears that he was greatly harassed during the Commonwealth. Philip Henry says he was a great sufferer for the king, and Calamy names a Mr. SMITH as minister of Barthomley, ejected in 1660. The probability is that Mr. Cawdrey was not at Barthomley throughout the Commonwealth, but was restored in 1660. Newcome speaks of visiting him at Langor in Nottinghamshire in 1651, and Calamy says that "Mr. Cope of Sandbach preached at *Eccleshall* and *Barthomley* "for the old incumbent that was to come in there, Mr. Z. Cawdrey, a "worthy moderate Conformist." He was generally respected by his Nonconformist brethren. Newcome visited him frequently after 1660 at Barthomley, and having heard him preach at Manchester, says:—"A very sweet day it was, and we had sweet repetition and "evening duty." On another occasion he speaks of "his dear "tutor's sweet and pleasant company." Mr. Cawdrey assisted in

* History of Leicestershire, vol. ii., page 259.

† Autobiography, page 7.

getting the appointment to Tattenhall for Henry Newcome's son. He preached the funeral sermon for Lord Delamere (Sir G. Booth) in 1684, and in December of the same year he died.

Philip Henry thus speaks of this holy and liberal Conformist :—
 “ Mr. Zechariah Cawdrey minister of Barthomley in Cheshire, a
 “ learned and godly divine, was buried December 24, 1684 ; a Con-
 “ formist and formerly a great sufferer for the king, but in his latter
 “ times much maligned and reproached by some people for his
 “ moderation towards Dissenters, for his book *Preparation for*
 “ *Martyrdom*, and for his zeal in keeping up the monthly lectures
 “ at Nantwich and Tarvin. But he is gone to the world of peace
 “ and love, and everlasting praises.”

He was the author of a pamphlet entitled *A Discourse on Patronage, with a proposal of some expedients for regulating it most agreeable to the primitive pattern, wherein at once the just rights of pastors are secured, and the people's liberty of election of their own ministers indulged.* London 1675.

At HASLINGTON in the parish of Barthomley Edward Burghall was invited to preach May 1st, 1644, and, says he, “ I tarried there “ two years upon thirty-four pounds a year.”* Mr. HASSEL of Haslington is named by Calamy as one of the ejected ministers in 1662, who afterwards conformed. His signature occurs in the registers at Haslington chapel in the year 1675. Mr. Cope the Nonconformist minister of Sandbach was allowed to preach at Haslington, by Mr. Z. Cawdrey, until his death in 1704. The Rev. Richard Kelsal, Conformist, was appointed curate of Haslington in 1705.†

BUNBURY.

THE parish church of this place, dedicated to S. Boniface, is celebrated as the scene of the labours of an eminent Puritan divine, the Rev. WILLIAM HINDE, M.A. He was born at Kendal, 1569, and educated in Queen's College Oxford, of which he became perpetual

* Burghall's Diary.

† For a further account of Nonconformity at Haslington, see the paper on SANDBACH in this volume, by the Rev. W. Rhodes.

fellow. In 1603 he left the university and became minister of Bunbury, where he continued to the close of his life. Antony à Wood describes him as a close and severe student, an eminent preacher, and an excellent theological disputant. His Puritan opinions brought him into collision with Bishop Newton. Among other works he composed a life of John Bruen of Stapleford, but it was a posthumous publication. Burghall, the Puritan vicar of Acton, and schoolmaster at Bunbury for some years, speaks in high terms of Mr. Hinde. He says, "That worthy man Mr. Hinde, who then preached at Bunbury, had, not without cause, much inveighed against those disorders that were usual at Bunbury wakes, and had threatened God's judgments against the same, but could not prevail utterly to remove them, though he endeavoured it to the uttermost. . . . This year, 1628, June 19th, Mr. Hinde, the worthy minister of Bunbury, departed this life after much weakness. A great loss of him! having been a great inveigher against the wickedness of the times. He was buried June 21st. Mr. Langley preached from Proverbs xiv. 22."

Mr. Hinde was succeeded by *Samuel Forshall*, A.M., who is called vicar of Bunbury in the year 1629.* But in the year following, 1630, *John Swanne* appears as minister. The parish registers contain accounts of some ludicrous contests between him and the lessees of the rectory. One article signed "John Swanne, 1630," is full of abuse directed partly against Lord Cholmondeley and partly against Mr. Aldersey, "for dividing the herse of Lady Calveley with the parish clerk," to which the minister asserts his right. In 1649 the "herse" of Sir Hugh Calveley afforded a fresh temptation, and the minister again enters a bitter complaint against this invader of his rights, whom he states to be merely the farmer of the tithes. Mr. Aldersey subjoins a concise note: "Mr. Swanne is mistaken. He is neither preceptor, vicar, or curate, but a stipendiary; all he can claime is his twenty pounds. Thomas Aldersey."†

Mr. Swanne was probably succeeded by the Presbyterian minister the Rev. *Daniel Sunderland*, whose name occurs among the signatures to the *Attestation* of Cheshire ministers in the year 1648—"Daniel Sunderland, pastor of Bunbury." How long he remained here is

* *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. 1., page 217.

† *Ormerod*, vol. ii., page 141.

uncertain, but in the year 1654, owing to his death or removal, Mr. *Francis Mosley* was appointed minister of the place.

The records of the Manchester Classis inform us that Mr. *Francis Mosley* was examined in classics, divinity, and ecclesiastical history, and approved as a candidate for ordination. He also brought a testimonial subscribed by several of the inhabitants of the parish of Bunbury, of the truth of his affixing his instrument on the church door; and on the 10th January 1654-5, he was solemnly ordained in the church of Manchester by the Presbyters there, and testimonial letters were given him of his ordination, subscribed by Richard *Hollingworth*, Richard *Heyrick*, John *Angier*, and other ministers.* *Newcome* mentions Mr. *Mosley's* marriage in these words:—"Wednesday December 19th, 1655, Mr. *Francis Mosley* and Mrs. *Katharine Davenport* were married at *Congleton*, on the exercise day; and on Saturday January 9th following, he carried her from *Morten* to Bunbury, where he was then minister." He was inclined to Episcopalianism, and received the appointment of fellow in the Collegiate Church Manchester, at the Restoration. He read the two acts against the Covenant, which the Presbyterians were so loathe to read, in Manchester Church on December 15th, 1661, and preached there December 29th following, on Psalm xxxiv. 7. *Newcome* makes the comment, *He had a vain fling at the end.* He left Bunbury about this time, and seems, from certain incidental allusions in *Newcome's* Autobiography,† to have fallen into trouble a few years afterwards. He was succeeded at Bunbury by *Mr. Thomas Porter*, son of a Nonconformist minister ejected from *Whitchurch*, Shropshire. *Mr. Tallents* says the Bishop of *Chester* would not admit this *Mr. Porter* to orders till he solemnly renounced his former ordination from his father and the Classis, which he submitted to do.

WILLIAM SPURSTOW, D.D., was a native of Bunbury parish. He was master of *Katharine Hall* Cambridge, from which place he was turned out for refusing the Engagement. He became vicar of *Hackney*, and was ejected thence in 1660. He was a friend of *Richard Baxter*, who mentions him among "those famous and excellent divines who attended the Earl of *Essex's* army, being chaplain to *Mr. Hampden's* regiment." He was one of the *Westminster* Assembly, and afterwards one of the commissioners at the *Savoy*. The famous

* Minute Book of Manchester Classis, page 157.

† Pages 174, 288.

Dr. Lightfoot, who succeeded him at Katharine Hall Cambridge, offered at the Restoration to resign the mastership back into the hands of Dr. Spurstow, but he declined it. The initial letters of his name W. S. are the three last in *SMECTYMNUUS*, the title of the celebrated work upon Episcopacy, written in reply to Bishop Hall by five authors, of whom he was one.

The elements of Puritanism remained in this parish, though driven to the outskirts of it by the Test and Conventicle Acts. An association of Baptists formed a church at *BRASSY GREEN*, about three miles north-west from Bunbury, and erected a chapel. Bishop Gastrell mentions* a "Dissenting Meeting House, Anabaptist, about fifteen "meeters." The meeting house, about thirty-six feet by twenty, with a small house adjoining for the minister, was erected about the year 1715 by Mr. Thomas Walley of Rhode-street, and bequeathed by him, with a good burying ground adjoining, for the use of the Particular Baptists. He willed the property to the first son of his who should become a Baptist; but the eldest not being a Baptist it went to the second son. He again bequeathed the chapel, &c., to his four sons and their heirs for ever, and thus it has been handed down to the present generation. About sixty or seventy years ago, Independent ministers were wont for a time to preach in the chapel, some of the Walley family being then Independents. On the 14th September, 1817, seven candidates for baptism were immersed by Mr. John Cooper, then Baptist minister at Nantwich, who came over for the occasion. About that time Mr. *CORNELIUS GREGORY* of Beeston preached as a Baptist minister at Brassy Green and Tarporley, and was the means, under the Divine blessing, of raising a very promising cause. He administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper once a month, and also preached at other places in the neighbourhood. Shortly after his death, the Rev. D. *GAYTHORP* became minister of the church, which some time before had removed to Tarporley, and remained there about ten years. After him the Revs. J. *HOWARTH* and *HENRY SMITH* were successively pastors of the church, and each of them died there. The last minister, the Rev. J. B. *LOCKWOOD*, has been obliged to resign his pastorate on account of ill health.

* *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i., page 216.

COPPENHALL.

WILLIAM ANDERTON signed the Attestation of Cheshire ministers in 1648, as *pastor de Coppenhall*. Isaac Simpson was here in 1662 and conformed ; but he resigned the living in 1676, and was followed by John Harrison, A.B.

The well known town of Crewe is principally in this parish. It has grown to be a very important place on account of the North-Western Railway Company's extensive works. There is a neat Independent Chapel here, erected in 1846. The Rev. T. DAVISON is the present minister.

CHURCH MINSHULL.

SAMUEL HIGGISON was appointed pastor of this church in the year 1656, and was ejected in 1660 to make way for the old curate Lawrence Newton, who was buried at Minshull October 24th, 1667. An account of Nonconformity in this place will be found in connexion with Over, in the Deanery of Middlewich.

WIBUNBURY.

WIBUNBURY parish is very extensive, and lies about four miles east from Nantwich. The fine old church was taken down and rebuilt in 1790. In King's *Vale Royal* it is described as a parish church to a great precinct, and on every side so garnished and adorned with the seats of baronets, knights, and gentlemen as is scarce to be found the like in any country parish. The Rev. Edward Maynwaring was vicar here for twenty years, and conformed in 1662. He was succeeded by the Rev. THOMAS JENKS, a Conformist. In the life of Lieutenant Illidge, who held a farm in the parish, on the road to Nantwich, called Cheerbrook, and whose son was an intimate friend of Matthew Henry his biographer, there are several references to Mr. Jenks. Mr. Illidge used to attend Wibunbury church, and had a great regard for Mr. Jenks, as the following statements in his diary show. "I got much benefit
" to my soul by his good preaching and exemplary living. He was a
" man of good natural temper, an ingenious preacher, sober, temperate,

“and very charitable, of a public spirit. He was diligent in the duties of a minister; carefully catechised the children and servants in the summer time; visited the sick in all quarters of his parish, both poor and rich; took great pains to get subscriptions for the maintaining of petty schools to teach children to read, and did his utmost towards the suppression of vice.” Mr. Jenks died July 19th, 1700, and Mr. Lancaster preached his funeral sermon from Acts xx. 30, *I have taught you publicly, and from house to house.* “In the time of our vacancy (continues Lieutenant Illidge) it was my frequent prayer to Almighty God that he would be pleased to send us a minister that truly feared God and loved religion.” He even wrote to the Bishop of Lichfield, beseeching him for Christ’s sake to provide for this great parish (being eighteen townships) such a minister as may answer the great charge and trust he undertakes; and when his lordship had presented *Mr. Bromfield*, and he had some trial of him, he writes, “What great cause have I to thank and praise the Lord who hath heard my prayers and sent us such a good minister.” Lieutenant Illidge, while thus commending his own pastors, gives a lamentable picture of the morals of the Conformist clergy generally. “Some of our high clergymen (he says) will preach against profaneness in the pulpit, but allow it and laugh at it in the alehouse; and will rather reproach and persecute an honest Dissenter for truly serving God than make complaint of or endeavour to punish a profane swearer, a drunkard, or a debauched wretch that blasphemes the great God.”

In Wibunbury parish was situated Doddington Old Hall, the property of Sir John Delves, one of the famous *five men of Cheshire* who distinguished themselves for their bravery at the battle of Poitiers in the reign of Edward III. During the Commonwealth it was besieged by the Royalists, and the defenders, after three days’ gallant resistance, surrendered and fled to Nantwich. It was soon afterwards won back again. Mr. George Mainwaring, ejected from Malpas, was for some time chaplain to Sir Henry Delves. Sir Thomas Delves, son of Sir Henry, was a warm friend and admirer of Matthew Henry. Mr. Tong says, “that house, Doddington Hall, has been famed for impartial and disinterested religion, and I hope will ever be so.” Bishop Gastrell names a Dissenting meeting house, Anabaptist, at Wibunbury, with forty members. “Dissenting families, twenty-four. Presbyterian six, Anabaptist fourteen, Quakers three.”

The township of WISTASTON is partly in Wibunbury parish. HUMPHREY WHITTINGHAM signed the Attestation in 1648 as *pastor at Wistaston*. Andrew Downs was inducted in 1653, conformed, and died here in 1674. Bishop Gastrell names two Dissenting families here in his time.

MARBURY.

THE picturesque village of Marbury lies about eight miles south of Nantwich, on the borders of Cheshire but in Whitchurch parish. In the church, under the communion rails is an epitaph in capitals, "Charles Jonas ractor of Marburie, who died the 18 of Dec. an^o 1647." This Mr. Jones was succeeded by Mr. BRUCE who was minister here during the commonwealth, and was ejected for his Nonconformity in 1662. Calamy gives the following account of him :—

"He was a lively affectionate preacher and of an unblameable conversation. He took abundance of pains in catechising publicly, and in repeating sermons at his own house every Lord's Day in the evening. He was much lamented when he was ejected. His parishioners were kind to him upon his removal, and there was sufficient occasion for it, for he had a wife and several small children, with but little to subsist upon. On his leaving Marbury, he retired to London and preached to a pretty numerous auditory at his own house in George Yard near Smithfield; and afterwards he preached frequently at Islington. He was for some time chaplain to Sir Anthony Irby, but at length went into Scotland, which was his native country. What became of him afterwards is uncertain."

DEANERY OF MIDDLEWICH.

BY excluding Great Budworth parish from what is now called the Northwich hundred, and adding the parish of Over, we define with tolerable accuracy the Deanery of Middlewich. Seven Nonconformist ministers were ejected from their livings in this Deanery between 1660 and 1662, viz., George Moxon from Astbury, Thomas Brook from Congleton, Richard Bowker from Middlewich, Thomas Cope from Sandbach, John Buckley from Goostree, John Ravenshaw from Holms Chapel, and Samuel Langley from Swettenham.

ASTBURY AND CONGLETON.

(*By Dr. BEALES.*)

CONGLETON is picturesquely situated on the sides of the river Dane. From the somewhat secluded position of this town it might have been supposed it would have escaped the political and ecclesiastical shocks of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but not so, for marks of both are traceable in the records of this ancient borough.

Retired as the situation of Congleton is, it possessed from the time of Edward the First certain privileges which conduced to its prosperity. Historically it is celebrated as the residence for a considerable time of John Bradshaw, who was president of the council which condemned Charles I. He was evidently a man of great ability—active, energetic, and uncompromising. He practised for many years as a barrister at Congleton, and was well thought of by his townsmen, for in 1637 he was elected mayor. At the present

day opinions differ about him ; but I have no doubt Milton's description of his character in the Second Defence of the People of England, is a fair and just one. Ecclesiastically, Congleton is situated in the parish of Astbury. The church, under which the one at Congleton is a chapel of ease, stands a mile and a half from the town, and in this short sketch of the history of Nonconformity in the district any fact relating to the ministers of Astbury will naturally be included.

Dr. Thomas Dod, nephew of John Dod commonly called the decalogist, was minister of Astbury for many years in the early part of the seventeenth century. He was presented to the rectory in 1617, and was still here in 1641. He died in 1647 and was buried at Malpas. Henry Newcome whose eldest brother was master of the Free School at Congleton, went to school there in 1641, "at which time," says he, "that eloquent and famous preacher Dr. Thomas Dodd was parson at Astbury, where I several times (though then but a child) heard him preach." Walker in his *Sufferings of the Clergy* names *Thomas Hutchenson* as sequestered from the living of Astbury and re-instated in 1660. After his sequestration the celebrated JOHN LEY of Great Budworth became minister, and his name occurs as the first signature to the Attestation of Cheshire ministers to the solemn league and covenant in June 1648. He signs himself as "for the present preacher at Astbury." While here he had two young men successively as assistants who afterwards became distinguished Nonconformists—John Murcot and Henry Newcome.

John Murcot was ordained to the church at Astbury March 8th, 1647, and though here but a short time "the Lord was pleased to own him in his first attempts and endeavours, giving him a seal unto his ministry by the conversion of two especially, who being awakened by his sound doctrine, smart expression, and powerful delivery, sadly bemoaned themselves and mourned over their lost condition even in public."*

Henry Newcome preached his first sermon at Congleton in 1647, on 1 Corinthians, x. 31 ; and "not long after this," he adds, "I was entertained reader to Mr. Ley at Astbury (Mr. Murcot just then removing from him), and shortly fell to preaching, sometimes at

* *Moses in the Mount*, page 5.

“Congleton and sometimes at Astbury.” He did not remain here many months but removed to Goostrey.

John Pemberton signed the Cheshire Attestation as pastor of Congleton in 1648. He could not long have remained here, because in 1649-50 *Mr. Thomas Brook* removed from Gawsworth to Congleton.*

In Calamy's Nonconformist Memorial *Mr. THOMAS BROOK* is mentioned as the ejected minister of Congleton. He is described as “a humble good man, a great adversary to pride, and no mean scholar, of which some manuscripts of his give full proof. It was true of him as of Knox, that he never feared the face of man. His reproofs, though blunt, were always levelled against sin, and often were ingenious, keen, and convictive. He took great pains to serve his master. He expounded in the public chapel in Congleton on Lord's Day morning by six o'clock. He expounded, prayed, and preached both morning and afternoon; and repeated in public in the evening. He preached also on Tuesdays and Fridays. In 1660 he was turned out of Congleton, and preached for some time at Moreton Chapel. By the favour of the old incumbent, *Mr. Hutchinson*, he preached his last public sermon in Astbury Church, on August 24th, 1662. He was very infirm in his latter days, and preached in much pain. He was buried August 31st, 1664, aged “seventy-two years.”

By the kindness of the town-clerk I have been allowed to search the corporation records of the period, and find this account substantially correct. I cannot find the exact date of *Mr. Brook's* appointment or dismissal, but his name is mentioned several times in a period of five or six years, and there are several entries of money paid to him. The corporation does not appear to have been very liberal towards him, nor very punctual in the payment of his salary; for there is a memorandum that ten shillings had been offered to *Mr. Thomas Brook*, which he declines to accept, and wishes it to be given to the New England clergy. This refusal suggests two things—that *Mr. Brook* was not entirely dependent on his salary, and that he wished to rebuke the niggardliness of the authorities.

The last time his name appears in the corporation records is in a resolution passed at the meeting of the council held May 17th, 1662,

* *Newcome's Autobiography*, page 20.

in which it is ordered that all persons who are behind, not having paid any money due unto the borough, shall be proceeded against by letter of attorney, and that such sums as shall be received "bee paid over unto Mr. Thomas Brooke, late minister of this Burrough, towards his satisfaction, for his last year's payns amongst us in ye ministry." From this entry we find that in May 1662 Mr. Brook is alluded to as "late minister." It is also evident that he still remained in the neighbourhood, as a year's salary was due to him, which was to be paid as obtained by legal means from the inhabitants; a very singular mode of raising a clergyman's salary, and which seems to show that the leaven of the Restoration was already at work. It is probable that Mr. Brook, like Baxter and others, seeing the storm coming, and finding it impossible to bow to it, resigned his living a short time before the Act took effect.

Adam Martindale mentions him as still minister of Congleton in 1661. Referring to a sermon preached to reprove the people of Rosthern for their folly in erecting a Maypole, he says, "This sermon somewhat nettled some of them, and they resolved to procure Mr. Brook of Congleton (who had formerly preached at Rosthern and Leigh eight years, and was so well respected in the parish and by me that they knew I would not hinder him) to bestow his paines upon a Lord's Day with us. Well; they prevailed, and he came; but when he saw the Maypole in his way, and understood by whom and to what end it was set up, he did most smartly reprove their sin and follie, calling them by most opprobrious names, as the scumme, rabble, rife-rafe (or such like) of the parish; in so much that my words were smooth like oyle in comparison of his, so full of salt and vinegar."*

After his ejection from Congleton Mr. Brook continued to preach in the neighbourhood, especially at the chapel in old Moreton Hall, the owner of which, William Moreton, was his patron and admirer. This building is one of the most perfect and interesting specimens of a timber house now in existence. That the owner of it was a Puritan is evident from the inscriptions cut in wood outside the windows:—"Richard Dale carpenter made these windows by the grace of God;" "God is all in all things, These windows were made by William Moreton in the yeare of our Lorde 1559." The walls of the little

* Martindale's Autobiography, page 157.

chapel are covered with texts of Scripture, and a fine oak panelled room runs the length of the building on the top story, in which it is said Mr. Brook preached till his death in 1664.

There is an old memorandum regarding Congleton significant of the change produced upon the manners of the people by the restoration of prelacy and the ejection of the Puritan ministers. It is dated 1662, and says, "About this time arose the saying of Congleton *selling the word of God to buy a bear.*" It appears that a new Bible being wanted for the use of the chapel, a collection had been made and money laid by for the purpose. But bear-baiting, which had been put a stop to during the Commonwealth, was now to be revived, and the said money was given to the bear-ward to buy a bear, so that the minister was obliged to use the old Bible a little longer.

During the time that the bold and zealous Thomas Brook was minister of Congleton two eminent men were labouring at ASTBURY, as pastors of that parish, John Machin and George Moxon. JOHN MACHIN (of whom a full account will be found in connexion with Whitley Chapel, whence he was ejected in 1662) says in his diary, "I was ordered and called to Astbury in Cheshire November 17th, 1652, but exprest not my full consent till the spring following, at which time I left Atherston." Not long after he removed to Astbury he married Miss Jane Butler, the 29th September 1653; and in May 1654 he began to keep house at Astbury. In the end of that year, March 1654-5, he set on foot the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and continued it without interruption monthly till 1660. "The Lord did mightily strengthen his hands and encourage his heart in this ordinance, and he took great care in preparation for it, spending the Friday before the sacrament in public prayers and preaching, and the day after in thanksgiving, in his own or in some neighbour's family, especially where there fell out in any communicant's family any occasion of special thanksgiving—as recovery from sickness or the like. By the coming of another incumbent unto Astbury he had only opportunity of preaching there each other Lord's Day, and for the other he had liberty to preach abroad upon charity, which yet he heartily rejoiced in, and was ready freely to help any of his brethren, so that he was seldom a day at ease."*

The other incumbent referred to in this extract was the Rev.

* Clark's Lives, page 87.

GEORGE MOXON, of whom Calamy gives the following account :—
“ He was born near Wakefield in Yorkshire, and educated at the
“ University of Cambridge. He was a good lyric poet and could
“ imitate Horace so exactly as not easily to be distinguished. He
“ was sometime chaplain to Sir William Brereton in this county, and
“ afterwards preached at S. Helen’s chapel in Lancashire, where he
“ met with much trouble from Dr. Bridgman, Bishop of Chester, for
“ his Nonconformity to the ceremonies. He stayed there till about
“ the year 1637, when a citation for him being hung upon the chapel
“ door, he rode away in disguise to Bristol, where he took shipping
“ for New England ; and upon his arrival there became pastor to the
“ church at Springfield. He returned to old England in the year
“ 1653, and became pastor to a Congregational church at Astbury.
“ Both he and Mr. John Machin lived in the parsonage house with
“ their families, and preached on the Lord’s Day alternately. When
“ it was Mr. Machin’s turn to preach at home, Mr. Moxon preached
“ at Rushton on the edge of the moorland parts of Staffordshire, till
“ 1660, when the old incumbent Mr. Hutchinson returned to the
“ possession of the living.”

Mr. Machin removed to Whitley and was silenced the following year. Mr. Moxon continued preaching at Rushton until the passing of the Act of Uniformity, after which he preached up and down in the neighbourhood in private houses and wherever he could until the issuing of the Declaration of Indulgence enabled him to obtain a licence to preach in his own house at Congleton, which was situated on Dane Bridge. Not far from the Episcopal chapel of Rushton where Mr. Moxon preached before his ejection, is an old farmhouse adjoining which is an ancient burial ground. From tradition as well as certain names in the district, as “gospel stone,” there is no doubt but that this was the haunt of the persecuted Puritans, who though silenced by the Act of Uniformity were compelled in spite of bonds, imprisonment, and death, to proclaim in this wild moorland district the everlasting gospel of the blessed God. A spot more suitable could not have been chosen, for from its seclusion the assembly could scarcely be traced, and the minister could avoid the penalty of the Five Mile Act it being equally distant from Congleton, Macclesfield, and Leek. In this farmhouse no doubt Mr. Moxon preached, and the owner of it must have been favourable to the Congregationalists and probably a Baptist, for he left by deed the

use of the house as a preaching station and a piece of land adjoining as a burial place to the Baptist denomination for ever. This right has not been lately claimed ; the last time it was so was by the venerable and respected Baptist minister of Hanley, the Rev. L. J. Abington, who has kindly communicated to me all the information he obtained about this ancient and interesting place, which I will give in his own words :—“ Nearly forty years ago I visited the place “ and examined the burial ground, which is a triangular spot in the “ corner of a meadow, not fenced off from the other part. The grassy “ turf had accumulated upon and had totally concealed the stones of “ memorial laid upon the graves. With my stick I bored and found “ them ; with a knife I cut through the turf and rolled it off. It was “ found to cover a gravestone having the *initials only* of the deceased, “ and the date 1672. I carefully collected all the traditions of the “ place from the oldest inhabitants, which I am sorry to say are too “ few, as they relate to those ‘ of whom the world was not worthy.’ “ The last funeral took place somewhere about 1780. The corpse “ was taken into the farmhouse for a religious service, but the crowd “ of followers was so great that the floor gave way and let them “ altogether with the corpse into the cellar. The Baptists have a “ perpetual right to the use of the large room in the house. I con- “ sulted an old gentleman in the neighbourhood, a lawyer, who “ assured me he had seen the deeds of the estate, and was confident “ of the fact that Baptists had an equal right with the owner of the “ house for ever. That right I therefore claimed, and published a “ notice that Divine worship would be held on Whit-Monday at two “ o’clock. The people assembled, but the owner would not open “ the door. He was a very old man and resisted my entrance by “ the back door, but I forced my way and opened the front. People “ seated themselves by fetching chairs or stools from the neighbours. “ The old man was very noisy, and obstructed us all he could until he “ heard something which melted him to the gentleness of a child. “ When all was over he took my hand and thanked me for coming. “ He would not part with me without a promise that I would soon “ come again. He died within a fortnight after !”

These interesting facts are worthy of being recorded and preserved from oblivion.

Returning again to Mr. Moxon, we find him preaching in his own house until age and repeated attacks of palsy disabled him. He died

September 15th, 1687. In the same year, 1687, a NEW MEETING HOUSE was built, but before it was opened Mr. Moxon died, and the first sermon preached in it was his funeral sermon, which was preached by the Rev. Eliezer Birch, of Dean Row near Wilmslow.

The immediate successor of Mr. Moxon cannot be positively ascertained, but the next minister of whom we have any account is the Rev. THOMAS IRLAM. In April 1687 he entered Mr. Frankland's academy in Yorkshire, and probably after completing his studies he settled at Congleton, for he was present at the first meeting of the Cheshire Presbyterian and Congregational ministers, and signed their agreement in 1691 as minister of Congleton. In 1713-14 he was moderator of this assembly. He preached twice before the ministers at Knutsford, in 1698 and in 1710. His name occurs as present at their meetings down to 1722, when censure was passed upon Mr. De la Rose of Stockport; and the circumstance that he never afterwards attended the ministers' meetings, though he was still living and at Congleton, seems to indicate that he disapproved of that censure.

Mr. Moxon having been himself a Congregationalist, and having formed a church according to his principles, it is likely that Mr. Irlam, his successor and their chosen pastor, was a Congregationalist likewise. His eminent piety and prudence procured for him universal respect, and he was frequently permitted to preach in the Episcopal Chapel at Bosley, but his amiable character did not prevent the inroads of a lawless mob into his meeting.

On the accession of George I. to the throne in 1714, from the state of parties in Congleton a riot took place, and the Tories proceeded to the meeting house and completely ransacked it, carrying away the pulpit and forms to Dane Bridge, where they were destroyed by fire.

In 1733-4 a new meeting house was built on the west side of Mill-street, which still exists, and is now occupied by friends of the Unitarian denomination.

Mr. Irlam laboured in Congleton for about half a century, but the exact time of his death cannot be ascertained.

The next minister of whom we have an account is the Rev. JOSEPH BOURN, son of the Rev. Samuel Bourn of Birmingham. After preaching for some time, he removed in 1746 to Hindley in Lancashire.

The Rev. BENJAMIN DAWSON officiated here for a short time, and in 1754 removed to Southwark, and was succeeded by the Rev. WILLIAM TURNER from Allostock. He passed through a course of academical studies under Dr. Latham of Findern near Derby, and afterwards at Glasgow, and first settled at Allostock, thence removed to Congleton, and thence in 1761 to Wakefield, where he died in 1791, aged eighty years. He was an acquaintance of Dr. Priestley's. His son and grandson became Unitarian ministers.

The Rev. THOMAS ASTLEY succeeded Mr. Turner. He came hither from Warrington, and was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN BOULT, who removed about 1773 into Derbyshire. In 1775 the Rev. Mr. COOPER settled here, and left in 1781, having previously buried his wife in the chapel. He was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN ROWBOTTOM from Cambridge, who continued minister until his death in 1797, and in the same year the Rev. JAMES HAWKES from Northampton was chosen minister, and filled that office until March 1800, when he removed to Manchester as Latin assistant to a school kept by the Rev. Mr. Grindrod. Mr. Hawkes was succeeded by the Rev. THOMAS JONES in 1800, who continued till 1811, and was followed by the Rev. THEOPHILUS BROWN, who did not continue long before he removed to Gloucester. He was succeeded by the Rev. WILLIAM FILLINGHAM in 1814, who died in 1853, having officiated for thirty-nine years.

Since Mr. Irlam's time most of the ministers were of Arian or Unitarian sentiments; still they were recognised by the Congregational board until the settlement of Mr. Turner, when that board refused to continue the exhibition which had been granted to his predecessors. Since then the Unitarians have been the recognised owners of the chapel, of the minister's house and ground attached, and of an endowment bequeathed by Mr. Rowbotham; but there has been no settled minister since the death of Mr. Fillingham in 1853. What became of those persons holding orthodox or Trinitarian sentiments? They must for a number of years either have continued to worship in the old meeting house, or have met privately amongst themselves, for no other place of worship was erected until 1790.

The Independents of Congleton are indebted for their present chapel to the pious and generous Captain SCOTT, whose itinerant labours as a minister of the gospel were very useful in this part of the country. About the year 1780 two or three persons went over from

here to Hanley to hear the captain, and at the conclusion of the service they requested him to preach at Congleton. Ever willing to comply with invitations of this kind, although no room or even barn could be offered him, he came over shortly after, and preached either in the street or the yard of the inn at which he lodged. The Rev. Rowland Hill, who happened to be with him in the neighbourhood, also preached on the following week in the open air. In the following year, seeing there was a work to be done at Congleton, Captain Scott fitted up at his own expense a room wherein either he, a neighbouring minister, or a student stately preached to the people. But Mr. Scott's generosity did not stop here, but in 1790 he erected, at his own expense, in Mill-street, the present excellent and commodious chapel, forty-two feet by thirty-six feet, with three galleries. It was registered for public worship, and on the 17th November was opened.

The Rev. J. REECE was the first minister of the new chapel. He had previously supplied the congregation worshipping in the room, having his abode at Newcastle. He was ordained April 24th, 1793. His labours were successful, both in Congleton and the surrounding villages. In 1797 he removed to Sheffield, where he continued till his death, which happened January 8th, 1801. There is a memoir of Mr. Reece in the *Evangelical Magazine*, vol. x., page 41.

A successor to Mr. Reece was not appointed until 1800, in which year the Rev. JOHN HANDFORTH became pastor; but he continued only about a year, and was followed by the Rev. Mr. PARSONS late of Chorley. He removed in December 1802. From this time the pulpit was supplied with occasional preachers, till the Rev. THOMAS BENNETT settled here in 1805. He continued but little more than two years, then removed to Dukinfield, and afterwards settled at Hatherlow. Again, until 1810, there was no settled minister; in that year the Rev. JAMES HOWES became the pastor. The following year he was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN WILLIAMS, who in 1813 was followed by the Rev. JAMES BRIDGEMAN, who removed the next year to Chester, and was succeeded by the Rev. GEORGE MARRIS. He and the three preceding ministers belonged to the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion, but by the trust deed, which bears date January 1812, the chapel is expressly declared to be for the use of a congregation of Independents, agreeably to the intention of Captain Scott. It was therefore mutually arranged between Mr. Marris and the church that he should resign, and for the future the pulpit

should be occupied by ministers of the Independent denomination. Mr. Marris preached his last sermon January 20th, 1822. This determination on the part of the church caused the friends of Mr. Marris and those who liked the form of worship adopted by the Countess of Huntingdon to build a new chapel in Park-street. It was opened in the same year, 1822, and Mr. Marris was the first minister. He was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Newman. A few years after, the congregation having gradually decreased, the chapel became the property of the Baptists; but they have not been strong enough to maintain a resident pastor.

Returning again to the Independent Chapel, after Mr. Marris left, the church records do not afford us much information about his successors. There must have been an interval of a few years, during which the pulpit was occupied by supplies. In April 1826 the Rev. JOHN JOHNSON commenced his ministry. He resigned in November 1830, and eventually took orders in the Episcopal Church, and is now the travelling secretary of the Church Missionary Society. In January 1843 the Rev. G. EDGE became pastor, and continued in his office twelve years. He was followed by the Rev. S. Gibbon, who only remained about twelve months.

The present minister, the Rev. JOSEPH MOORE, began his labours May 21st, 1848. During his ministry the church and congregation have increased, and peace and harmony have prevailed. The friends too have not been inactive, for a new school, with class rooms, has been built, and the chapel has been re-pewed and in other points improved. Our earnest wish is that this branch of Christ's church may long exist not only to diffuse the common and saving doctrines of Christianity, but also for maintaining the supremacy of Christ in his church, and the duty of loyalty to conscience. And to our opponents we say, in the words of Dr. Bates, one of the ejected, "It is neither fancy, faction, nor humour that makes us not comply; but merely the fear of offending God."

CHURCH LAWTON.

RANDALL SILLITOE, pastor of Lawton, signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648. He was a faithful labourer in this parish during the Commonwealth, and would probably have been a

Nonconformist in 1662, but he was removed by death in the very week the Act of Uniformity came into force. Newcome of Manchester knew him, and notes in his Diary,* "August 30th, 1662. I heard of "the death of my good friend Mr. Sillitoe." The register of his burial occurs at this date, *Anno 1662. Randulphus Sillito, Rector, August 30.* A letter from him to Newcome is printed in the Autobiography,† giving an interesting account of a dreadful thunderstorm at Lawton, on Sunday June 20th, 1652, when eleven young men were killed by lightning in the belfry of the church during service. Mr. Sillitoe, writing on the Monday, says, "This day they were "interred in eleven several graves. We had a mighty throng of "people, to whom I preached out of Luke xiii. 4, 5. There was "not among the dead any one vicious liver."

Mr. Sillitoe was succeeded by William Uxsham, Conformist.

DAVENHAM AND MOULTON.

AMONG the signatures to the Attestation of Cheshire Presbyterian Ministers in the year 1648, there occurs that of *James Marbury, pastor of Davenham.*

Bishop Gastrell mentions a Dissenting meeting house of Anabaptists in this parish with "about fifteen meeters." This probably refers to the chapel at Allstock, on Rudheath, an account of which will be found in another part of this volume.‡

AN INDEPENDENT CHAPEL was erected at MOULTON in this parish, in the year 1833. Mr. William Darlington (whose family had been wont to attend the ministry of the Rev. Job Wilson of Northwich) gave the ground, and was the main supporter of the place. The chapel was supplied by lay brethren till the year 1839, when the Rev. WILLIAM MOORE, now of Leigh, in Lancashire, became the settled pastor, and remained there for about eight years. In the year 1847 the Rev. EDWARD RUSS, from Seaton, in Devonshire, became the minister, and laboured among the people for four years. In the year 1851 the Rev. C. H. PARRETT succeeded, and he continues minister.

About the year 1835 two schoolrooms were erected, capable of accommodating about 170 children. In 1851 Mr. Parrett began a

* Page 117.

† Page 310.

‡ See Allstock.

service on Sundays at DAVENHAM, and in the year following the foundation stone of a NEW CHAPEL was laid by Mr. R. Dutton of Stanthorne Hall; and the place was opened on Good Friday 1853, by the Rev. R. Ford of Manchester. It is a neat building, capable of seating about 140 people, and the cost of it was 270*l.*, the ground being given by Mr. J. Darlington of Moulton. Mr. Parrett officiates at both chapels on the Lord's Day.

MIDDLEWICH.

(By the Rev. W. B. MACWILLIAM.)

MIDDLEWICH, a town in the parish of that name, contains a population of upwards of 3,000. Although not a place of historic note, its antiquity is undoubted. The site of a Roman station is in the immediate neighbourhood, and Kinderton—a part of which is included in the town—is identified by many as the Roman *Condote*. In the time of the civil war, in 1642, Middlewich was the scene of a conflict in which nearly all the fighting was left by the Royalists to their Parliamentary opponents. Sir Thomas Aston, the leader of the Royalist troops, himself evidently a man of bravery, in his letter detailing the events of the day, gives a very graphic description of the behaviour of his men. Their valour was not even up to the standard of that which “fights and runs away;” for they did not fight and they did run away. A few of their leader's words are worth recording. He says of a company of “musketeers,” “As soon as “they were up neare to where the cannon was pointed, they laide “themselves all downe in a sort of hollow way, and their arms by “them, so that I was forced to ride amongst them and beate them “up, and myselfe on horseback brought them up to the hedge where “the other musketry were, but *neither these nor those* durst put up “their heads, but shott their pieces up into the air, noe one foot “officer being by them to save or order them.” “All the whole “stand of pikes in the rere of the horse clearly run awaye, and all “the musketeers placed for the defence of the end of the street “leading to Booth Lane, did quitt their trenches, having *never dis- “charged their shotts, nor even seene theiremie.*” “I found all the “foote wedged up in the church, like billets in a wood pile, noe one

“man at his arms.” Sir Thomas himself made good his retreat by way of Kinderton, leaving the town in possession of the Parliamentary troops.

The parish church of S. Michael has, during the last few years, been beautifully restored, with the exception of the fine old tower. This tower still bears the marks of the balls of the Parliamentary cannon in the contest above noticed. Among the tablets contained in the building there is one to the memory of the Rev. John Hulse, founder of the Hulsean lecture. He was born at Middlewich in the year 1708, and died in 1790.

Middlewich does not stand out prominently in connection with the events of 1662, but the evidence contained in the following pages will, we think, establish the conclusion that long before Brave Bartholomew 1662, seeds were there sown which grew into Nonconformity, and spread into the Dissent which claims, as its heavenly birthright, religious equality.

The names of two contemporary ministers of Middlewich appear during the half century preceding the passing of the Act of Uniformity. The Rev. THOMAS LANGLEY was minister of the parish for forty-eight years—from 1609 till his death on 7th June 1657; and the Rev. Thomas Halliley from 25th October 1616, till his death in 1641. Of the latter the writer has not been able to learn anything, but it may be presumed that he officiated as curate to Mr. Langley, and during Mr. Langley’s suspension. A few extracts will show the moral and spiritual worth of Thomas Langley, and the good report which he had of his brethren. He seems to have been a man of such a mould that if the angel of death had not taken him away from the evil to come, his would have been found enrolled with the names of his son and his friends—Newcome and Martindale—in the annals of English Nonconformity.

Mr. Hinde of Bunbury, in his life of John Bruen of Stapleford, near Tarvin, says, “January 16th, 1625. Mr. Langley and myself “came unto him” (when he was lying on his deathbed). “After this Mr. Langley spake a word unto him to comfort him in “the midst of all his sorrows, that he knew that shortly he should be “released and freed from all sin and sorrow.” “Next morning, “though he (Bruen) did wear away very much, yet he called upon “Mr. Langley to pray with him, being up very early to go a long “journey to preach his usual Tuesday lecture. Of whom he was so

“very careful that he caused some provision to be made for him, especially a posset, that he himself at their parting might drink with him.”

Among the signatures to the Attestation of Cheshire ministers in favour of the solemn League and Covenant, and the resolutions of the Westminster Assembly, there occurs under date June 6th, 1648, the name *Thomas Langley, minister at Middlewich.*

Adam Martindale thus refers to Mr. Langley:—

“They procured the baron to send over to us the Reverend Mr. Thomas Langley of Middlewich, to preach upon the 24th day of December 1648, being Lord’s Day, the design being to gull the people with the hope of that worthy old gentleman, so as to prevail with them to cast off me, and then they hoped to introduce another; but he spoiled their game by declaring publicly that he could not leave Middlewich, leaving me the next day, being Christmas Day, and giving me a very good character.”*

“I told him that if Mr. Langley would then declare himself willing to accept the place, I would freely depart.”†

Henry Newcome says:—“On the 22nd of August this very year (1648) I was ordained at Sandbach. Old Mr. Langley preached.”‡

“I began to think about this time what a while I had lived near old Mr. Langley, and had never had any intimacy with him, and how it would trouble me if the Lord should take him away, and I a stranger to him, and so I resolved to make a journey (from Gawsorth) on purpose to see him; and on January 29th (1652) I got up betimes and called of his son (the Rev. Samuel Langley) at Swettenham, and we went together to Middlewich to see the good old man, who made me very welcome, and I had a sweet entrance into a very intimate acquaintance with him, which lasted till I removed to Manchester, he dying the first year after my coming thither, in the year 1657. A precious friend and father he was unto me upon all occasions after this while he lived.”§

Newcome also mentions that at this time his great ambition was “to see Mr. Langley . . . and Mr. Baxter,” and in speaking with admiration of the Christian graces which adorned some of his contemporaries, he mentions “Mr. Langley’s discretion.”

* Martindale’s Autobiography, page 78.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Newcome’s Autobiography, page 11.

§ *Ibid.*, page 34.

In a different strain is the following:—"Old Mr. Langley hath told me that Mr. Simeon Ash was hugely kept down when young, and drooped under it sadly. One day he was with Mr. Langley, and had hap to let fall such a word as this—that he might happen drop into heaven shortly. Mr. Langley presently retorted, 'Speak sense, man; do folks use to drop upwards?'"*

In 1664, Newcome gives this closing testimony to the worth of his departed father and friend. "How hath the Lord weakened us of late! What prophets hath he taken from mine head! What admirable men of my acquaintance within this seven years. Holy and meek Langley," &c.†

The epithet here employed is referred to *Samuel* Langley, by the editor of *Martindale*;‡ clearly, however, it is a tribute to the memory of his father.

As an instance of a minister remaining in the same place, though courted to more public spheres of labour, Oliver Heywood remarks:—"Old Mr. Langley of Middlewich, in Cheshire, may also be mentioned, who was minister there before the wars; and though *he was seven years together silenced*, yet when he was restored to his liberty he returned to them, where he had but a very pitiful maintenance, and continued there to the day of his death."§

Samuel Clark says that Mr. John Ball of Whitmore "took a journey unto London in 1640 with his neighbour and endeared brother Master Langley, in order to procure liberty, that men unconformable to the Ceremonies might not be thrust out." The journey was in vain. Clark further says, "Master Thomas Langley of Middlewich, in Cheshire, besides his former intimateness with Mr. Ball, continued under his ministry above five years; he being taken off from the exercise of his own ministry by episcopal power."||

These extracts will be regarded as a warrant for holding the memory of Thomas Langley dear, and for enshrining his name as that of a father of Nonconformity.

After the death of Thomas Langley, the name of RICHARD BOWKER appears as minister in the church register of the parish. The Minute Book of the Manchester Classis contains the following

* Pages 49, 50.

† Page 143.

‡ Autobiography, page 78.

§ Oliver Heywood's *Life of Angier*, page 25.

|| Clark's *Lives*, annexed to the *Martyrologie*, pages 153, 155.

entry, which probably refers to him. "12th July 1653. Mr. Richard Bowker presented himself for ordination. He hath been examined in the languages, in Greek, logic, philosophy, ethics, physics, metaphysics, and approved; had an instrument given him to be affixed." Other references in the Minute Book show that he first settled at Thornton, Cheshire, probably as assistant to old Mr. Fisher. In 1662 Mr. Edgley, a student, was Mr. Fisher's assistant, so that it would appear that Richard Bowker removed to Middlewich and was successor to Mr. Langley. In the parish church register there is no date appended to the name of Richard Bowker, but only the significant sentence "went away after some time." Taken in connection with the following entry, "Laurence Griffith, A.B., licensed 15th October 1662," the record regarding Richard Bowker affords a strong presumption that he "went away" because he could not conform.

The Nonconformists must have had a place of worship in the township of Newton, Middlewich, before the year 1692; for the Cheshire Minute Book has this entry under date 24th May 1692, "Dr. Holland advised to go to Middlewich." Dr. Adam Holland was a pupil of Mr. Frankland's at Natland, whose academy he entered March 2nd, 1679-80.*

Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, who was present at the services, records the ordination of Adam Holland, M.D., on the 27th day of September 1692. The ordination service took place at Knutsford; some of the most eminent Nonconformists of the time being present. The solemnities of the day were conducted in the following manner. "The candidates—who were six, including Dr. Holland—were examined in the languages the preceding evening at Mr. Kynaston's house, and read and defended their theses; the day following was kept as a fast on the solemn occasion. Mr. Bradshaw prayed; Mr. Aspinwall preached from Romans x. 15; Mr. Crompton, as moderator, took their confessions and ordination vows; Mr. Angier concluded with an excellent exhortation, delivered with great affection." Mr. Henry has recorded it as a "good day;" "the candidates (he says) gave good satisfaction; blessed be God for the rising generation; the Lord double his Spirit upon them." Each of the candidates ordained received a certificate of ordination upon parchment. The following is a copy of that granted to Dr.

* *Vide* List of Mr. Frankland's Students in Toulmin's History, page 578.

Holland :—“ Knutsford—Whereas Adam Holland, Doctor of Physic, hath addressed himself to us ministers of the gospel in the counties of Cheshire and Lancashire, whose names are subscribed, desiring to be ordained a Presbyter; and having given sufficient testimonial of his diligence and proficiency in his studies, and unblameableness of life and conversation, and all exercises duly performed; These may certify to all whom it may concern that upon Tuesday ye 27th day of September 1692, we have proceeded solemnly to set him apart to the office of a Presbyter, and work of the ministry of the gospel, by the laying on of hands with fasting and prayer: By virtue whereof we do declare him to be a lawful and sufficiently authorized minister of Jesus Christ, to exercise his ministry at or near Middlewich, in Cheshire, or any other place where Providence shall call him; Exhorting his people in the name of Jesus Christ, willingly to receive him and encourage him in the execution of the said office, that he may be able to give up such account to Christ of their obedience to his ministry in the Lord, as may be to his joy and their everlasting comfort. In witness whereof we have hereunto put our hands this 27th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1692. Thos. Risby, A.M., Oxon; Thos. Crompton; Peter Aspinall; Adam Bradshaw; Ralph Ainsworth.”

Dr. Holland appears to have taken the oaths prescribed by the Act of 1st of William and Mary, at the sessions previous to his ordination, of the registration of which he also obtained a certificate dated 18th July 1692.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Holland's thesis at his ordination was “*An αυτοζουζισ σιt licita?*” An ordination thesis on the lawfulness otherwise of suicide sounds strangely in our day.

Middlewich was one of the places at which the Cheshire ministers planned that the movable lecture against profaneness should be given. Mr. Cope gave the lecture there on the first Wednesday in December 1699, and Mr. Henry of Chester on the first Wednesday in April 1701.

Some time after the death of Mr. N. Scholes, in 1702, “Dr. Holland had a call to Macclesfield, upon which he consulted some brethren in the ministry, and did by their advice remove from Middlewich to be the fixed pastor of the congregation at Macclesfield, in the room of Mr. Scholes.”

“The people at Middlewich upon Dr. Holland's removal were

“well provided for in Mr. KIRBY, a hopeful young man, bred up in “academic learning under Mr. Chorlton of Manchester.”*

Matthew Henry’s diary has the following entries referring to this period :—“Middlewich, August 7th, 1705. The Middlewich people “were willing to part with Mr. Kirby. We recommended Mr. Sidebotham of Wheelock to them.” “August 25th. Liberty to settle “Mr. Sidebotham.” “1706, April 6th. Writ to Mr. Culcheth to “invite him to Middlewich.” From these extracts it would appear that if Mr. Sidebotham “settled” at all, his ministry cannot have lasted more than eight months. Mr. Culcheth did not accept the invitation given to him. At this date the name of Mr. Kirby disappears from the lists of the persons present at the meetings of ministers, and that of Mr. Twemlow first occurs.

“May 13th, 1707. We met at Knutsford. Mr. Nath. Twemlow “of Middlewich, and Mr. Samuel Garsyde of Lostock were this day “solemnly set apart to ye work of ye ministry, having been first “examined in the several parts of learning, having also the night “before exhibited a thesis, each of them, and defended it, and produced testimonials of the agreeableness of their conversation. Mr. “Low, Dr. Holland, and Mr. Angier prayed. Mr. Lawrence preached “from Psalm xvi. 11, and gave the exhortation in much meekness.”†

The living in this town must have been as poor as in the days when good Mr. Langley received “but a very pitiful maintenance.” Mr. Twemlow received in the years 1707-8-9, four pounds a year, a share of the legacy of Thomas Lee of Darnhall for the Cheshire ministers; and the Cheshire Minute Book records, a few years later, the following appeal to brethren in the metropolis for aid to the poor saints :—“May 5th, 1713. Some of the congregation at Middlewich “were present here (ministers’ meeting at Knutsford), and petitioned “y^e ministers of this class y^t they would write to our dear and revd. “brother Mr. Henry, and earnestly request him to use his endeavour “at London (whither he had removed) to procure some assistance “towards y^e maintenance of their minister, he being not able to sub- “sist w^hout some further augmentation. And in compliance wth the “desire of y^e forementioned, a letter was written and sent to London.”

Probably this appeal was not successful, for Mr. Twemlow’s name disappears in the following year, and we are led to the conclusion that he was starved out.

* Cheshire Minute Book, page 34.

† *Ibid*, page 37.

The position of Dissent in Middlewich about the year 1720 is ascertained by the statistics given in *Notitia Cestriensis*,* where we find that at that time there were in the town five hundred families, of which two were Roman Catholics, and sixty Dissenting. Two meeting houses are also mentioned, one Presbyterian, the other Quaker.

During the period of about forty years subsequent to Mr. Twemlow's ministry, the names and dates which follow constitute the sum of the information which has been obtained. They are taken from Wilson's MSS. in Dr. Williams's library, Red Cross-street. George Hammet, minister from 1724 to 1730; Edward Hopkins "preacht "here" until the year 1742; and having undertaken the charge of the congregation at Northwich, it is probable that he occasionally supplied Middlewich from 1742 till 1751.

Soon after the cessation of the labours of Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Phillips of Kingsley succeeded to the charge, and seems to have retained it for some time, though it was in a very declining state. A legacy of four pounds per annum had been bequeathed to the minister officiating to the congregation so long as there should be preaching in the chapel and only two hearers. To secure this legacy Mr. Phillips visited the town once a month on the Tuesday, and thus fulfilled one of the stipulations. The other was not so directly in his power, and so he was compelled to hire one James Hervey to attend his lectures for eightpence each time. James being dissatisfied with his quota of the legacy struck for an advance of wages, and the hearer's hire was advanced to tenpence each time, and the labourer's hire lessened by two shillings per annum. This mockery of public worship was terminated by the death of Mr. Phillips: the meeting house was converted into cottages, and at length the building was altogether removed in 1859 to make way for a proposed cemetery for the parish.

In the year 1789 the Rev. William Maurice of Stockport, and subsequently of Fetter Lane London, went to Middlewich and preached in a registered house; and for three years occasional services were kept up in the same place by the ministers of Congleton, Hanley, Drayton, Delph, Stockport, and Northwich. Thereafter a small chapel was fitted up, and opened for public worship in the month of December 1792, when services were conducted by Rev.

* Vol. i., page 247.

Messrs. Boden of Hanley, and Scott of Drayton. The opening of this place of worship occasioned an assault from without on the part of the enemies of evangelical religion. During the day of the opening a mob assembled with evident disposition for clamour and riot, and availed themselves of the shades of evening to assail the unoffending worshippers with brickbats and other missiles.

The opposition with which Independency had to contend during its infant years in Middlewich was stirred or at least augmented by the influence of one noteworthy incumbent, "Parson Adams." "De mortuis nil nisi bonum" must be set aside in reference to him; the "bonum" is not recorded, but tradition is not silent as to the "malum." The writer adverts to the deplorable state of things in those "good old times," chiefly to contrast it with things as they are. Open-air services, house to house visitation, and cottage meetings have now to contend only with indifference and sin. In two of these departments the present incumbent is himself a zealous workman, and few it is believed will give a heartier God speed to such efforts when put forth by others than will Archdeacon Wood.

Notwithstanding the spirit of opposition with which they had to contend, regular Sabbath evening services were conducted by Rev. Mr. Jervis of Northwich, the congregations bearing with patience the manifestations of hostility until the spirit had exhausted itself. In June 1795 the Rev. Job Wilson settled at Northwich, and until 17th July 1808 continued to supply Middlewich each Sabbath evening.

The Congregational church was first formed in 1797 by the Rev. John Meldrum of Hatherlow, who visited the brethren for that purpose, and united them together as a church of Christ under the following declaration:—"We whose names are hereto subscribed, "having given ourselves first to the Lord, and then to one another "by the will of God, agree to walk together according to the laws of "Jesus Christ, the only head and lawgiver of his church: and with "an eye to his glory solemnly pledge ourselves to watch over each "other, to pray for each other, and by all Scriptural means endeavour "to promote our mutual edification.

"Apprehending that any number of real Christians united together in such a manner constitute a true church, we as a church "of Christ deem it to be our duty to walk in wisdom towards those "that are without, and in love and tenderness towards each other. "Yet should any professed member of the body of Christ be guilty

“ of violating the Word of God, we will in anywise reprove him, and
 “ if he remain regardless of the Word of God, we must finally disown
 “ him. Moreover, as we are bound by divine authority to keep
 “ God’s ordinances as they have been delivered unto us, we deem it
 “ our duty to obtain some acquaintance with the religion, experience,
 “ and practice of those who may be desirous to walk with us in the
 “ ways and according to the laws of God.

“ Conscious of our own inability to do all or any of these things,
 “ as we ought, may God fill us with wisdom and fortitude, faith and
 “ patience, conscientiously and perseveringly to discharge our several
 “ duties to the Lord, to his church, and to the world.”

Reports of the Cheshire Union for the years 1808-9-11, make mention of efforts that were being made for the spiritual well-being of this town. “ At Middlewich, another itinerant (Mr. R. NIEL, late “ of Idle Academy, Yorkshire) is for the present engaged, and the “ prospect is in several respects pleasing and encouraging.” “ Our “ brother Niel labours with acceptance and success at Middlewich, “ where we hope the cause begins a little to revive ; much precious “ seed has been sown here, which was accompanied and is followed “ by many prayers from many quarters.” “ Let us now cross the “ forest of Delamere and take a view of the transactions on the east “ side. A few miles brings us to the town of Middlewich, where our “ brethren Niel and William Hitchin labour in word and doctrine. “ In the town itself it is at present the day of small things ; yet we “ feel convinced that with persevering labour, in due time we shall “ reap even on this barren spot, if we faint not. Good seed has “ been sown here by many a faithful hand, and has been followed “ and watered by plenty of strong cries and tears, which are not “ forgotten above.”

From the year 1808 till 1820 the church was supplied in succession by Mr. Niel, Mr. Capps of Rotherham College, Mr. Hope classical tutor of Blackburn Academy, Mr. Dransfield from the Academy at Idle, and the Rev. Nathanael Scholefield father of the late Professor Scholefield of Cambridge.

“ In the district connected with Middlewich until lately we have “ had no stated labourer for a considerable time past, but the itineracy “ has been supplied by the occasional labours of various preachers as “ they could be obtained. We hope however a good providence has “ at length smiled upon our efforts to obtain a suitable minister for this

“ place. The Rev. J. ROBINSON from the Academy at Rotherham
“ came thither in July last, having consented to labour there at least
“ for a time. The appearances at present are encouraging. In a letter
“ dated October 5th, Mr. Robinson says:—‘The state of the Sabbath
“ school was the first object of my inquiries, and this I found to be
“ encouraging. A considerable number of children attended, and
“ through the praiseworthy perseverance of their teachers many of
“ them were able to read the Scriptures, and correctly to repeat their
“ catechisms. . . . I cannot close this statement without
“ earnestly soliciting the prayers of the churches on behalf of this
“ town. Long have sin and iniquity awfully prevailed, and many an
“ endeavour to promote its everlasting welfare has been abandoned,
“ through the discouragements arising from the indifference, the
“ ignorance, and the depravity of the people. But for the honour of
“ those principles with which we profess to be actuated, and for the
“ sake of those souls who are here perishing in ignorance and sin,
“ let us have the co-operation, the sympathy, and the prayers of the
“ county, lest we also faint under the pressure of these difficulties.’
“ Mr. Robinson visits Minshull and Peover, at which places it is
“ hoped the Gospel has not been preached in vain. Several persons
“ from Peover have lately joined the church at Knutsford. He has
“ also paid a kind attention to the people at Over in their destitute
“ condition.”*

Mr. Robinson having supplied the pulpit for a period of fourteen months was ordained to the pastorate of the church on the 25th September 1821, and retained his office till the month of December 1825, when he resigned. For the next eighteen months the church was ministered to by the Rev. JOHN RAINES formerly of Bolsover. He was succeeded by the Rev. JOSEPH EVANS of Flockton in Yorkshire, who entered on the pastoral charge of the people on 5th October 1827, and laboured among them for about four years, when ill health compelled him to resign. The next minister was the Rev. WILLIAM CHAMBERS now of Newcastle-under-Lyne. His ministry extended from June 1832 till March 1837, when he removed to a larger sphere. From August 1837 till July 1843 the Rev. JAMES COOPER was the people's servant for Jesus' sake. Mr. Cooper is the only minister of Middlewich who has ventured into the domains of

* Cheshire Union Report, October 1820.

authorship. He compiled a memoir of Joseph Hitchin, and a recent work called "Death Personification" is the product of his pen. Mr. Cooper, after living in retirement for a considerable time, died at Norwich on the 27th May 1863. In 1845 the Rev. JOHN ROBINSON from Airedale College entered upon the pastoral office in Middlewich, and continued to labour there till the end of December 1856, when he resigned the pastorate. After a brief ministry at Burley he became minister of the Congregational Church Saltaire, where he laboured till the period of his sudden death in June 1861. An interval of a few months having passed, the present pastor, the Rev. W. B. MACWILLIAM, accepted the church's invitation to minister in Middlewich, and entered upon the duties of his office on the first Sunday of October 1857. No ordination services were held until the 21st June 1860.

The records of the church do not furnish more than the bare outline of names and dates which has now been given; and the writer has carefully abstained from attempting to clothe the skeleton facts with any airy garb of fancy's weaving.

It is now fifty years since the chapel in Queen-street was opened for public worship: the year 1863 being its Jubilee year. During that time it has undergone many alterations, all of which have been improvements, and despite the somewhat peculiar aspect presented by its bay windows, it is now, if one of the least, not one of the least amiable tabernacles of Nonconformity in the county palatine of Chester. Commodious school rooms in Queen-street were purchased about four years ago, and together with the old rooms connected with the chapel afford good accommodation for between 200 and 300 Sunday scholars. The school which is under the superintendence of the pastor is well and regularly attended. The church and congregation are not below the average of any past portion of their history. At a time when many of the most zealous supporters of the "poor man's church," are making strenuous efforts to throw open parish and other episcopal churches, which have been virtually closed to the common people, it may not be without interest to readers to show by an example the perfect adaptation of Voluntaryism to meet the most extreme views in this direction. For four years pew rents have been abolished in the Independent Chapel in Middlewich, and whosoever will may enter wherever there is room, and worship and learn without money and without price. The most simple and un-

obtrusive arrangement is made whereby "he that is taught in the word" may obey the apostolic injunction and "communicate to him that teacheth," "according to his ability, and as God hath prospered him." These free-will offerings being given in secret, only the constraints of principle and love are brought to bear upon the givers. The pastor receives the amount of these offerings instead of and in preference to any stipulated salary.

Reference has been made to a Quaker Meeting House in Middlewich. This edifice has not been regularly used by the Society of Friends as a place of worship for many years. For a considerable time the building was occupied as a British School, but in January 1863 it was opened as a place of worship by the local representatives of the United Methodist Free Churches. The religious equality of Nonconformists has been freely recognised in the division of the land of the proposed cemetery; although it is to be regretted that legal difficulties have hitherto retarded the opening of the cemetery for burial purposes. In Middlewich, Nonconformity has in addition to its Independent representatives, adherents more or less zealous among the Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists, and more recently among the United Methodist Free Churches. The Roman Catholic population, given in the *Notitia Cestriensis* as two families in 1720, now numbers about 300 persons constantly resident. Their religious wants are in a degree supplied by the Roman Catholic minister of Northwich, who visits and ministers to his flock in an "upper room" in the town. This population is not so inaccessible in Middlewich as it is in many places to the Christian effort of Protestants. The presence of Roman Catholic hearers at a Protestant meeting for worship and preaching, and the presence of a Protestant pastor by the sick bed of his Roman Catholic neighbour, are perhaps faint rays of the brightness of the coming perfect day when there shall be "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," and all shall unite in saying and singing, "One is our master even Christ, and all we are brethren."

OVER AND MINSHULL.

(By Mr. THOMAS RIGBY, *Fenny Wood, Over.*)

THE neighbourhood around these places has a history, from a very early date, which may be regarded with some interest by the readers

of this paper. When William of Normandy achieved the conquest of England he gave the county of Chester and parts of adjacent counties to Hugh Lupus, one of his followers, and with this the title of Earl of Chester, both of which he was to hold for his own benefit, but in subjection to the will and rule of the successful monarch. The principal seat of this local sovereign was no doubt at Chester, but he had other residences in the county, which he seems to have used when visiting those parts of his extensive domain that were situate at a distance from the city. Darnhall, a manor and township about a mile and a half from Over, was one of his favourite seats, and he and his successors to the seventh generation frequently resided here. Continued feuds between these earls and the Welsh prevailed almost without intermission until the marriage of John—surnamed the Scot, nephew of Randle Blundeville, the seventh earl—with Helene, daughter of Llewellyn, prince of North Wales, which marriage was one of the conditions of final peace between them. Expediency and personal interest however can never make up for the want of mutual esteem and affection in the married state, and there is a dark suspicion resting upon the memory of the wife as accessory to the murder of her husband by poison at their residence in Darnhall. Sir Peter Leycester uses the following strong language in reference to her. “This bosom enemy of his, instead of cherishing and comforting as a faithful helper, she devilishly, like a wicked serpent, plotted his destruction and brought his life to an end, languishing upon a grievous torment.” With his death the title became extinct in that succession, but was afterwards revived by Henry III., whose son Prince Edward assumed it, and it has ever since been held by successive Princes of Wales. In 1273 Prince Edward founded an abbey here in fulfilment of a vow made by him in a storm at sea, when returning from the Holy Land. The vessel in which he sailed, it is said, was in great danger, and the prince vowed to the Virgin that if she would interpose her aid for the preservation of himself and crew he would, on his reaching shore in safety, found a monastery for a hundred monks of the Cistercian order. The moment the vow was made the wind ceased, and the ship brought safely to port; but no sooner were they landed—Prince Edward being the last that left the vessel—than the storm arose again, and the ill-fated vessel was dashed to pieces. Eight years after this the monks prevailed upon him to remove the abbey to Vale Royal, a fertile district situate about

three miles from Over, in an opposite direction. "Because, as some think," says Webb, "it is a more wholesome seat, and this place, as amongst woods and waters, was not pleasant enough forsooth to their fat worships, for some write it and think the name came from *Dernhole*."

The ancient Abbey of Vale Royal must have been a large and imposing edifice, as it was fifty-three years in building, and no less a sum than 32,000*l.* was paid for its erection from the royal treasury, besides large sums that were subscribed among the wealthy families of the neighbourhood. Upon its completion the monks took possession of their magnificent home with great pomp and ceremony. "A solemn feast and jubilee was proclaimed, numerous peers and prelates were present, and all the families of importance in the county; and so large was the number of the guests that the abbey, vast as it was, could not contain them all." The power with which the abbots were endowed was very great, and their privileges numerous. They lived in all the splendour of powerful barons for three centuries, had an extensive right of the advowry or protection of criminals, (Over Church it is supposed having been one of their sanctuaries for guilty fugitives), and had the power of life and death within their three manors of Darnhall, Over, and Weaverham. But the monks of Vale Royal soon lost favour with their tenants and the public, in consequence of their arbitrary manner of collecting tithes and other irritating exactions; and they were resisted with a spirit that speaks highly for the independence and self-respect of our forefathers. Many instances of their opposition to the State Established Church of that day might be related, compared with which the most active opposition of our own Liberation Society pales into mere passiveness. On one occasion they shot the abbot's horse under him while collecting his tithes. On another, headed by Sir William Clifton, they obstructed his gatherers, overturned their waggons, flogged the abbot's secretary, and hamstringed the rector of Kirkham's hunting palefrey. On several occasions they assaulted the monks separately, when going or returning on business. Once Friar John Lewis, returning from Chester, had rough usage at their hands, and would have been killed had he not found friendly asylum in the house of one Simon Blaley; and on another occasion two brothers named Oldington, exasperated at the conduct of one of these brethren while exacting tithes, actually cut off his head, and with their neighbours played at

football with it afterwards on the village green. The abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII., and Vale Royal, with the manors of Over and Weaverham, was granted to Sir Thomas Holcroft in 1545, and sold in 1616 to Mary, widow of Sir Hugh Cholmondeley, in whose descendant the estate is now vested. Darnhall and its appendages were given to Sir Rowland Hill, Knight, and merchant of London. In the reign of James I. Darnhall was sold by the Corbets (into whose hands it had passed) to Sir Richard Lee of Lee Hall, in Wybunbury parish. In King's *Vale Royal* it is described as "now, 1656, a fine seat, with a sweet house of brick lately erected, and now the possession of Henry Lee, Esq., heir to Sir Richard Lee before mentioned." Darnhall remained the property of the Lees, who were a Puritan family, for about a century, when it was re-purchased by the Corbets.

The Parish Church of Over is a fine old building, but the precise date of its erection is involved in doubt. The eastern wall of the chancel and the north aisle bear the date of 1350, and the other part of the church was rebuilt in 1543. It is dedicated to Saint Chad, the first Bishop of Lichfield, in which diocese Cheshire was then included. How the good man got this saintly title is not very clearly known; the church must have been lavish of such honours, or S. Chad's claim better than one of his successors, for Godwin in his Latin work on the English Bishops tells us of one Bishop of Lichfield who presided over the diocese for upwards of thirty-eight years, and adds "that in all that space of time he never did anything worthy of mention, except perhaps we may say he did a good action in dying at last." In Ormerod's *History of Cheshire* there is a list of the vicars of Over from the year 1307, but who was vicar in 1662 is not very clear. In Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy* a Mr. FORD is stated to have held the living in 1643, and is said to have been "harassed and threatened out of it." This Mr. Ford must have been vicar of Over many years. The celebrated John Ball when a young man about the year 1610, was "placed in Lady Cholmley's house in Cheshire [Vale Royal], as tutor to her children, where many other children also were taught by him. Whereas there was a great scarcity of godly painful preachers in that corner of the country in those times, he did much frequent the ministry of the Reverend Master *John Ford*, whereby he was not a little edified."* The

* Clark's *Lives* annexed to the *Martyrologie*, page 147.

signature of *John Ford*, pastor of *Over* is appended to the Attestation of Cheshire Ministers to the Covenant in 1648. He was not therefore sequestered in 1643, as Walker intimates, though he may have refused the Engagement to the Parliament in 1649. He must have been minister of *Over* upwards of forty years, and he was a staunch Puritan. He was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. HALL.

The Parliamentary Survey describing *Over*, 1649, says, "The church is supplied by a very able minister, one "Mr. Hall;" and in *Oliver Heywood's* Diary it is stated that he and *Angier* of *Denton* "visited Mr. *Lea* of *Darnhall* in 1666, where they were nobly treated "and entertained. They remained there several days, and on the "Sunday heard Mr. Hall a Conformist at the church of *Over*." The probability is that Mr. Hall conformed in 1662, and we cannot therefore chronicle the name of the minister of *Over* among those noble men who voluntarily resigned their livings for conscience toward God; but that there were good men of Nonconformist principles in *Over* at this time cannot be doubted. In a rare book published about this time, and printed on alternate pages in Latin and Old English, entitled *Four Journeys to the North of England* by "*Drunken Barnaby*," there occur these doggrel lines ridiculing the Puritanism of *Over* :—

I came to *Over*,—O profane one,—
And there I saw a Puritane one,
A hanging of his cat on Monday
For killing of a mouse on Sunday.

More lengthy mention however must be made of *Thomas Lee* then proprietor of *Darnhall*. In conjunction with his mother who seems to have outlived a second husband, and who is frequently spoken of as the pious widow of Colonel *Venables* of *Wincham*, he purchased an estate in *Tattenhall*, and conveyed it to trustees for the purpose of providing free education for the youth of the parishes of *Whitegate* and *Over* and the township of *Weaver*. He also drew up a code of rules to be observed in the school, which prove him to be as liberal in sentiment as benevolent in spirit, and as some of them illustrate the customs of the time, they may serve to amuse as well as to inform :—

"The repairing to the school in the morning by the teacher and "scholars from the last of *March* to the first of *September*, shall be "at six of the clock; and from the first of *September* to the last of " *March*, at half-past seven o'clock; their departure to dinner shall

“ be at eleven of the clock ; their return again at half an hour before
 “ one ; their departure at night from the last of March to the first of
 “ September, at six of the clock—the rest of the year at four of the
 “ clock.

“ The master may permit the accustomed breaking up of school
 “ nine days before the nativity, provided it be not done by the scholars
 “ barring, bolting, or locking out of school the said master.

“ Each morning at their repairing to school, some part of the
 “ Scriptures shall be read, and the master shall pray with his scholars ;
 “ their departure to dinner shall be with singing a stave or two of a
 “ psalm ; before departure at night a chapter shall be read, prayer
 “ used, and a psalm sung ; the master shall see that each scholar be
 “ provided with a Bible according to his friends’ capacity, to be
 “ daily used in Christian exercise.

“ The master shall one day in the week catechise and instruct his
 “ scholars in the *principles of the Christian religion*, and shall pro-
 “ vide that all the scholars repair to church, *or other lawful tolerated*
 “ *place of public worship*, bring their Bibles with them, and take note
 “ of the things there taught.”

The last paragraph speaks volumes in confirmation of his catholicity, and is worthy the imitation of all those who may contemplate a similar work. One clause provides that “ the women-children
 “ continue not in the school above nine years, or longer than to
 “ learn to read English.” Another says that the boys shall proceed
 “ according to the sound knowledge of reading, writing, understand-
 “ ing, and perusing of the English, Latin, and Greek tongues, both
 “ in prose and verse.”

Mr. Thomas Lee of Darnhall, who died in 1705, was a staunch Nonconformist, and left the sum of 100*l.* as a legacy for the encouragement and support of the Presbyterian ministry. Four ministers, viz :—the Revs. Matthew Henry, John Angier, Samuel Lawrence, and Dr. Holland, together with John Hunt, Esq., were appointed to superintend the distribution of the money. It was paid in three yearly instalments to the most needy ministers in the Cheshire Association.

The history of the present CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF OVER dates from the year 1805, when the late Rev. Job Wilson of Northwich first preached in a registered house in the village, but the house being sold he was obliged to discontinue his services for a time. In

1808, however, a room that had been used by weavers, and designated "the cotton room," was obtained, and Mr. Robert Niel, an itinerant agent of the Cheshire Union, who resided at Middlewich, held regular services there for several years; and it was customary for a few friends from the church at Middlewich to accompany their minister to Over (a distance of five miles), with a view to countenance and encourage the attendance. In the year 1813 this building was required for other purposes, and the people were compelled to erect a CHAPEL, which was publicly opened for Divine worship on the 26th of October 1815. Great exertions were made by the people (none of whom were rich) to raise the necessary funds, but a debt of nearly 700*l.* remained after their best efforts had been made.

A church was formed about this time by the Rev. Job Wilson, and the little graveyard attached to the chapel was consecrated by the same apostolic man, not (as he said) by the assumption of any prelatial unction, but by depositing therein the remains of one of God's chosen people who had died in early life. The Sunday-school, which had been held in "the cotton room," was continued at the chapel. Mr. Niel having left Middlewich, the pulpit was supplied by neighbouring ministers and zealous laymen from adjacent churches for several years. In 1819, however, the Rev. NATHANAEL SCHOLEFIELD, who had been pastor of the church at Henley-on-Thames for upwards of twenty-five years, became their stated minister and pastor. He had been induced to come into Lancashire by Mr. Roby of Manchester, principally because of the extensive field of labour offered him there, and he was for a short time engaged with much acceptance and success in Oldham, but his zeal and devotion becoming known to the people of Over, they induced him to supply their pulpit for a season, and a mutual respect arising out of this visit they invited him to become their pastor. The settlement of Mr. Scholefield was the beginning of good days for the church here. His zeal and earnestness soon drew together a large congregation, and the most lively satisfaction was experienced. But a year had barely run its round when it pleased God to transfer this faithful servant to the ranks of the church triumphant, after a short but severe illness. He had conducted three deeply interesting services on the sabbath, and on the ensuing Wednesday, after having followed his pastoral duties, although ailing, he held a service in his own house, which was crowded to excess; but in the night he was taken suddenly ill, and in a few days, on the 10th July 1820, he entered upon his reward.

The ensuing November, however, witnessed the commencement of the ministry of the Rev. JOHN MARSHALL, who still continues the beloved and honoured pastor of an attached church and congregation, nearly all of whose members have grown up from infancy and youth under his supervision, and so closely has the history of pastor and people been connected that to write the history of the Congregational interest here since that time would be to write the chief part of his life. To say that the heavy debt he found upon the chapel has been long since paid, as well as the cost of further enlargement, of new Sunday-schools, and of a commodious house for the minister—together representing upwards of 2,000*l.*—is to say that his mind planned the mode, and his hand directed and principally executed the labour by which all this has been done. To speak of the difficulties—much greater then than now—of establishing a religious interest in a rural district, and raising it to the self-sustaining point, would be but to recount most of the difficulties he has had to surmount in life. To tell of the increase of the church, of its peace and prosperity, and of the chastened feeling of joy with which one after another of its members have gone down to the grave in sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto eternal life, would be but to tell of the chief sources of happiness its pastor has known during a long ministry; and to narrate the sorrow of the church when any of its members have walked disorderly or inconsistently would be only to narrate the keenest trials of his intensely sensitive spirit for its honour and the honour of his God. But this would be distasteful to him, and is unnecessary to our object. “His praise is in all the churches,” and he has made himself a name in the county that is second to none of the distinguished men it has known for disinterested consecration of time, of superior talents, and of a blameless life to the service of his Divine Master. It remains only to add that the chapel at Over is invariably filled with an intelligent and attentive audience; that the assistance the church had from the County Union in its early days was soon dispensed with, while it still retains and endeavours to manifest a grateful sense of its obligations for the same; that all its expenses have been cheerfully met by purely voluntary weekly offerings for upwards of six years, with increasing satisfaction to the deacons; that the Sunday-school connected with it numbers nearly 300 scholars; and that there is scarcely an inhabitant of Over of the labouring classes who has not had some connection with this institution.

MINSHULL, properly called Church Minshull, in distinction from its neighbouring township of Minshull Vernon, is a pretty village about four miles from Over, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Weaver, and in one of the healthiest parts of the county. Many instances of great longevity connected with this village are on record, one of which is so extraordinary that it may interest those who give attention to such subjects. "Thomas Damme of Leighton," says the parish register which commences in 1561, "was buried the 20th February 1649, being of the age of seven score and fourteen years!" In the olden time many families of distinction resided in Minshull, and several farmhouses still bear the names that more pretentious residences once had. Minshull Hall was the seat of a branch of the Cholmondeley family, which was continued in the male line by the Minshulls until the death of John Minshull in 1654, when his estate passed in marriage with Elizabeth, his sole heiress, to Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal. There is a painted tablet in Minshull Church which narrates the decease of six children of this family in one day:—

"In the middle of this chancel lyeth interred y^e body of Jane, daughter of Sir Lionel Tolmache of Helmingham in the county of Suffolk, Bart., and late the wife of Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal in y^e county Palatyne of Chester, Esquire, who had yssue several sones and daughters, of whome Robert, Elizabeth, Jane, Mary, Anne, and Diana; died ye 14th April anno D^m. 1666." The Hulgreve was a hamlet of great antiquity, and at a very early period was vested in the Vernons, one of whose descendants assumed the name of De Hulgreve. The Lea Green Hall, in distinction from Lea Hall, was the seat of the Prescots, and Eardswick Hall the seat of Thomas de Erdswick who in 1328 exchanged his hamlet for Leighton with the Oultons, and it afterwards was divided between the Starkies and Minshulls. From a branch of this latter family our great poet, Milton, married his third wife, and there is a tradition that connects Milton himself with this county that deserves a passing consideration. His father and grandfather lived in London, but their history deduces them from the Miltons or Milnetons of Milton in the parish of Handley and hundred of Broxton. It is also certain that there were several families of this name in and near to Nantwich during the civil wars, and it is difficult to explain how this marriage could have been effected except with the supposition that the poet had some relative connection at least with Cheshire.

Calamy tells us that the pastor of Minshull, SAMUEL HIGGINSON, was ejected at the restoration of Charles II. He was succeeded by Lawrence Newton who retained the living until his death in 1667. Newton himself had been supplanted in 1645 by Thomas Holford a Presbyterian, and he also was succeeded by John Bradley a brother of the same faith in 1651, and at his death Samuel Higginson an Independent minister became "pastor of Minshull," and was ejected as we have said in 1660.

The CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH at Minshull owes its origin to two brothers of the name of Jackson, who in the spring of 1806 came to reside in Minshull Vernon at an old farm house called Minshull Hill. At Cuddington, not far from Crowley near the village of Tattenhall, where they had resided, they had been blessed with the ministry of a godly and devoted clergyman of the Established church of the name of Nicholson, and the utter destitution of such teaching in their new abode was felt by them as a great privation. They had both joined the Independent church at Tattenhall before settling here, and after consulting with the ministers at Nantwich, Northwich, and Sandbach, they decided upon having their house duly licensed and opened for public worship. Accordingly the Rev. Job Wilson preached in their spacious kitchen for the first time in the month of June, from these words, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" and he and his friend, the Rev. William Silvester of Sandbach, with other ministers, continued these services on Wednesday evenings for two years. Many of the neighbours of Mr. Jackson desiring to hear the gospel more frequently, they resolved upon opening their house on the Sabbath also, themselves occasionally conducting the services when unable to get other suitable assistance. In a short time, the house becoming too small they were obliged to adjourn to the barn, and while worshipping here a church was formed in connection with that at Middlewich, consisting of eleven individuals. In two years more the barn became too small, and it was decided to build a more suitable and convenient edifice. Accordingly the site of the present chapel was purchased and the building commenced. Great liberality and good feeling were manifested by the neighbouring farmers in carting all the materials free of cost, and on the 10th of April 1810 the chapel was opened: Mr. Sheem of Liverpool preaching in the afternoon from the text "Arise, shine;

“ for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee ;” and Mr. Evans of Stockport in the evening from these equally appropriate words, “ Come thou with us and we will do thee good, “ for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.” Almost all who attended these services have passed into eternity, but there still lives one who was present, who indeed was one of the eleven of which the church was first composed, and who for fifty-five years has witnessed a good confession both in adversity and prosperity, and who still delights to tell of the remarkable unction and power which accompanied the word preached at these opening services. A Sunday-school was commenced in the ensuing year, and as there was then no other means of education for the children of the poor within many miles of the place; it increased rapidly in numbers, and soon had from eighty to a hundred scholars in regular attendance. After the chapel was opened, Mr. Hitchin, a deacon of the church at Middlewich, undertook to supply the pulpit regularly on the Sabbath, and this he did for upwards of twenty years gratuitously, with great acceptance to the people. “ He was a man whom God had endowed “ with a vigorous understanding (says one who knew him well), a “ clear knowledge of the truth, and an aptness to teach, and was “ greatly respected and beloved by the people at Minshull for his “ works sake.” On the 3rd of May 1832 this good man died, and his work was taken up by Mr. Evans, the minister of Middlewich; on his removal Mr. Chambers, now of Newcastle, his successor, discharged the same duties for a time, but his health failing he resigned the pastorate of the church here, upon which it was accepted by Mr. MARSHALL of Over, who from the latter end of the year 1834 has been its pastor, as well as pastor of the church at Over.

With the church at Minshull there have been connected many devoted Christians, who in their humble and retired spheres have been eminent for consistent devotion to the cause of true religion. Of Mr. George Jackson, one of the founders of the cause, and who to the day of his death had all the solicitude of a father for its welfare, Mr. Chambers thus spoke in his funeral sermon:—“ He was a man “ of God. Religion was seen in all he did and said. With him it “ was the business of life. His piety was simple and lovely in its “ simplicity. He was ever the same. It was impossible to find him “ unprepared to converse on religious subjects, and few Christians “ enjoy so much happiness as he realized. So far from religion being

“to him as it is to many, a source of constant disquietude, it was a fountain of living water, a perennial stream of consolation always pure and overflowing.” His brother, Mr. William Jackson, who was associated with him in the formation of the interest here, did not remain long at Minshull Hill, but returned to Tattenhall, where for many years he was a blessing to the village, an office-bearer in the church there, and a true and thoroughly consistent Nonconformist. He died full of years, honour, and usefulness, and his name is held in grateful remembrance by the pastor and people with whom he was long connected.

Many other names might be given of humble, pious, godly men who have long since passed away. Although not known much beyond the boundaries of their native village, yet their record is on high, and the remembrance of their communion is still fresh and fragrant in the minds of the Christian brethren they have left behind.

SANDBACH.

(By the Rev. WILLIAM RHODES.)

THE small market town of Sandbach is of more modern growth than some other towns in Cheshire, but is not wanting in memorials of a past age. In the market place are two remarkable ancient crosses, restored in 1816 through the exertions of Mr. Ormerod. They had been broken down, and the fragments carried to different parts of the county as objects of curiosity; but these have been collected as far as possible and re-adjusted. They are stated to belong to a period not long subsequent to the introduction of Christianity amongst the Anglo-Saxons. Near to these crosses stands the Parish Church, a noble structure, situated on a gentle eminence, on which spot past generations have worshipped for several centuries.

The present church was built in 1847-9, and is a restoration of the previous venerable fabric, which it is conjectured was erected about the time of Henry VII.; “although the remains of our earlier church, which have been met with during the recent restoration, place beyond a doubt the interesting fact that from the earliest period of the Christian era the ground upon which it stands has been devoted to the pious purposes of religious worship.”

Our present inquiry does not lead us to a period so remote, but we have to narrate the history of Nonconformity in this neighbourhood, and to look, so far as the dim light of the past two hundred years will allow, at the picture of a good man and a faithful minister of Jesus Christ preaching the gospel in this parish church for nearly twenty years, and then cast out of his living. His name was JOSEPH COPE, and he is worthy to rank with his companions in that evil day of persecution—the noble Two Thousand, who for conscience sake forsook all. We introduce him to the reader by the following extract from Palmer's edition of Calamy's *Nonconformists' Memorial*:—"Mr. Joseph Cope was ejected from the vicarage of Sandbach upon the old sequestered minister's coming in, though he allowed him 70*l.* per annum before. He preached afterwards at Eccleshal and Barthomley, for the old incumbent that was to come in there, Mr. Zach. Cawdrey, a worthy moderate Conformist; and afterwards at Biddulph, in Staffordshire, through the favour of the old Sir John Bowyer, till the church doors were shut upon him. He did much good as an itinerant preacher in Cheshire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire for many years. Soon after the Revolution of 1688 he settled in the public chapel at Haslington, in Barthomley parish, by the consent of the gentleman to whom it belonged, and kept up a very considerable congregation in it as long as he lived, which was to his eighty-third year, and through God's goodness he enjoyed a wonderful vigour of body and vivacity of spirit to the last, so that he could travel and preach with his usual ease. He preached twice, and it was thought with more than ordinary liveliness, the Lord's Day before he died, which was in August 1704. The first Lord's Day after his death the minister of Barthomley, Dr. Egerton, who had kindly connived at Mr. Cope's having the chapel while he lived, took possession of it himself; but was so obliging as to permit Mr. Matthew Henry to preach his funeral sermon there the week after, according to the old gentleman's desire."

In the above extract we have not followed the date of Mr. Cope's death as given by Calamy. The date given by Calamy is 1694, but this is evidently incorrect, for the entry in the minutes of the Association of Cheshire ministers made at the time states "Aug. 24th, 1704." This date is confirmed by Mr. Henry's diary, and by the registers in Haslington Chapel, where Mr. Cope's signature occurs in the year 1703. Mr. Cope then would be born in the early part of 1622.

It will be seen that Mr. Cope was "born for the day of adversity," and on the eve of "troubulous times." It would be interesting to know the particulars of his early youth and training for the ministry, but these the writer has no means of ascertaining, and we must pass on to inquire when he became vicar of Sandbach. It appears from Calamy's account that he was appointed in the place of one who had been cast out by the Parliament. Mr. Ormerod, in his history of Cheshire, in the list of vicars of Sandbach, names *Thomas Tudman* as having been presented to the vicarage in 1630, and Wm. Heyes in 1674. Now Mr. Cope must have come between these, though Ormerod makes no mention of him, and it is evident that Mr. Cope became vicar of Sandbach in 1644, because Tudman was sequestered in 1643—Mr. Cope giving him 70*l.* per annum as his fifths; and Mr. Cope was in the ministry sixty years, *i.e.* from 1644 to his death in 1704. His signature moreover occurs in the list of Cheshire ministers who signed the *Attestation* in 1648—*Joseph Cope, pastor of Sandbach*. Again, in the registers of Sandbach Church the following occurs:—*Margaret Cope, filia Josephi Cope, Bapt. ult. die Martii, 1648*. Newcome of Goostrey and Gawsorth says, "My first child was baptized at Goosetree by "Mr. Cope of Sandbach, on May 4th, 1649." Again, Newcome "was ordained at Sandbach, August 22nd, 1648."* Doubtless Mr. Cope took part in the service.

The next extract, from the autobiography of Newcome, shews the character of the times as they affected this neighbourhood. "The "battle having been at Worcester, September 3rd, 1651, by exchange "I preached at Sandbach. The poor Scots were miserably used in "the country, and so many of them put into the church at Sandbach "that we could not preach in it; but I preached in the churchyard "both ends of the day to a great congregation."†

In reference to this we have an historical notice "that at the "September fair or market day at Sandbach a remarkable occurrence "happened in the year 1651. A party (Whitelock says a thousand) "of the King's horse, on their retreat from the battle of Worcester, "were attacked by country people, and many of them taken prisoners." This would account for the crowding of the church with prisoners. The Scotch, however, though thus "miserably used," have left behind them a memento in Sandbach. The large common on which the

* Autobiography, pages 11, 13.

† *Ibid.*, page 33.

cattle fairs are held now passes by the name of "Scotch Common," doubtless from having been the scene of this rough encounter.

It is a pleasing contrast to this to fancy on the Sabbath the "great congregation," as they were gathered together in the churchyard, "both ends of the day," to listen to the gospel of peace from the lips of Newcome. And probably good Mr. Cope, man of peace as we take him to have been, would not be sorry to be absent for a time from the scene of strife. We should be glad if we could furnish some details of his ministry at Sandbach, which in all probability was useful, and drew on every Sabbath a good congregation; but these are buried in the grave of the past, and may not be known until the resurrection of the just.

We must now notice his ejection. It would seem that Mr. Cope's predecessor (Tudman), the sequestered vicar, was living at the time of the Restoration, and obtained his living again by Mr. Cope's ejection. But Mr. Cope was not ejected probably till 1662, because 1662 is the date given in the Cheshire Minute Book—"he was turned out from Sandbach in the year 1662."* Following these data, Mr. Cope must have preached in the Parish Church of Sandbach for about nineteen years. How far Nonconformity in this place may have been originated and influenced by him we may perhaps infer from the statement of Bishop Gastrell, who tells us that in his time, about 1710—25, there were no fewer than "twenty-four Dissenting families at Sandbach."†

It appears from the extract already given from the *Nonconformists' Memorial* that Mr. Cope was employed for some years after his ejection as an itinerant preacher in Cheshire and Staffordshire, and also preached at Barthomley for the incumbent, Mr. Z. Cawdrey, and that his labours in these different places were productive of much good. Eventually he settled at HASLINGTON, a village four miles south south-west from Sandbach. There he was allowed to preach in what was afterwards the Episcopal Chapel, by the consent of the gentleman to whom it belonged, and kept up a very considerable congregation in it as long as he lived, which was up to his eighty-third year, preaching twice with great fervour on the very Sabbath before his death. It may be necessary to explain that this chapel, Bishop Gastrell says, "was built by the Vernons, for the ease of themselves and their tenants, but not consecrated. An Act of Parliament was prepared to make

* Cheshire Minute Book, page 35.

† Notitia Cestriensis, vol. i., page 253.

“ this a parochial church, at the desire of the Bishop and J. Crewe, Esq., and Z. Cawdrey, rector of Barthomley, and C. Vernon, Esq., lord of Haslington. The preamble stated the reason of this to be, to appease the several suits that had been between the Vernons, lords of Haslington, and the parsons of Barthomley. Anno 1689, the Hall of Haslington, with the Chapel, and all other buildings thereto belonging, were *licensed for a Meeting*.”* The structure underwent a complete reparation in the course of the present century.

On the death of Mr. Cope, Matthew Henry was allowed to preach his funeral sermon. Mr. Henry's text was Zechariah i. 5, *Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* † How appropriate the text, and how interesting must that sermon have been from the lips of Matthew Henry. The preacher's regard for Mr. Cope must have been great, for, though out of health at the time, having fainted in his own pulpit at Chester on the Sunday previous, he went on the Monday to Nantwich to fulfil an appointment there, and on the Tuesday to Haslington to preach the above sermon. Nor was the great commentator alone in his esteem, for there was a large congregation gathered to testify their respect for the departed. And to this we may appropriately add the testimony which appears on the minutes of the Cheshire ministers:—“ He was a very cheerful, lively, good man, and preached twice the Lord's Day before he died,” though eighty-two years of age. He was not soured by old age or persecution, and after a ministerial service of sixty years had not grown weary in well doing. Tong, in his life of Henry, has left this record of him:—“ An aged faithful minister, who by the favour of the honourable family of Crewe Offley, had for some years spent his time and pains there,” *i.e.* at Haslington Chapel.

The funeral sermon for Mr. Cope was the last sermon preached by a Nonconformist in the above chapel, for Dr. Egerton, the minister of Barthomley, now took possession of it himself. But Nonconformity in this neighbourhood was not to be buried in the grave of Joseph Cope. The next historical notice of it we give from Ormerod's history of Cheshire. “ Ancient chapel at Winterley, Haslington. At a short distance from the pool is an ancient meeting house for Dissenters, built of timber and plaster, and said to have been erected about the close of the sixteenth century.” This would no doubt correspond with the

* Notitia Cestriensis, i., 215.

† Tong's Life, page 389.

chapel now known as WHEELOCK HEATH CHAPEL, and which subsequently became a Baptist Chapel. The old edifice is now taken down, and replaced by another structure. From the minutes of the Cheshire ministers we gather the following notice:—"Mr. Edwards, "a young man, came to supply the congregation at Haslington in the "room of Mr. Cope deceased." This proves that Mr. Cope's principles were as precious seed sown in the hearts of the people, and that now there was a distinct Nonconformist congregation here, who probably erected the chapel named by Ormerod, and now identified with the Baptist interest at Wheelock Heath.

We have thus a connecting link established with Mr. Cope, the ejected vicar of Sandbach, and the cause of Nonconformity at Haslington and Wheelock Heath.

Wheelock Heath Chapel, about two miles south from Sandbach, was erected in the year 1704 or 1705 by subscription for a congregation of Nonconformists. Bishop Gastrell describes it as a Dissenters' Meeting House—Presbyterian—and intimates that there were eleven families of Dissenters "of all sorts;" and on August 6th, 1706, Mr. Silas Sidebotham, pupil of Mr. Jollie's academy, was ordained minister over it. This ordination is thus alluded to in Matthew Henry's Life. On the 6th of August 1706, Matthew Henry was present at an ordination fast at Knutsford. In his diary he says:—"We ordained Mr. "Leoline Edwards of Tinsel, Mr Thomas Perrot of Newmarket in "Flintshire, and Mr. SILAS SIDEBOTHAM of Wheelock" (referring no doubt to Wheelock Heath Chapel, which is about midway between Sandbach and Haslington and a mile from the village of Wheelock). "The thesis were taken the evening before. Mr. Angier of Dukin- "field prayed; Mr. Lawrence of Nantwich preached from 2 Timothy, "ii. 2. I took their confessions of faith and ordination vows, and "gave the exhortation. We were about eighteen ministers; we had "a comfortable day, and I hope many were edified."*

In the year 1715 Mr. Silas Sidebotham "had a hundred hearers, "four of whom were gentlemen."†

The next extract is from the Minutes of the Cheshire Ministers, September 7th, 1731. "The people at Whillock applied to the "Assembly for y^e ordination of Mr. WILLIAM BOND. The ordination "to be at Wheelock on Wednesday y^e 27th Oct. next;" on which

* Tong's Life, page 264.

† MS. Williams's Library.

day the ministers met at Wheelock and the service was performed ; the Rev. T. Irlam of Congleton offered the ordination prayer, and Mr. Sidebotham the retiring pastor gave the charge.

Mr. Bond was succeeded by the Rev. EDWARD HARWOOD, D.D., who preached on alternate Sabbaths at Wheelock and at Leek. He was followed by Mr. BENJAMIN RADCLIFFE who was minister in 1772, and also preached alternately here and at Leek. There was preaching in the chapel only once a fortnight during sixty or seventy years ; and towards the end of that period the congregation was reduced to ten or twelve persons. At length a difference arising between the minister and this small congregation the place was shut up in 1773, and so continued for several years till it had fallen greatly into decay. The second trust deed bore date 1753, and in 1788 the only surviving trustees under that deed transferred the property to fresh trustees. They put the chapel into repair, and invited Mr. CORNELIUS GREGORY of Beeston to come and preach the gospel in it monthly. Mr. Gregory occupied the pulpit for nearly twenty-eight years, except in extremely bad weather. Residing at a distance of eighteen miles, he could not come in later years more than three or four times each summer. His services were gratuitous. His congregation was numerous and respectable, and generally very serious in their deportment, from which it is hoped that much good was done by him. Mr. JOHN COOPER a minister of the Baptist church at Nantwich succeeded him.

The chapel is at present and has been for many years supplied by Mr. Pedley, who recently held a farm in the neighbourhood, but who now resides at Crewe. The congregation is respectable, and now adheres to the Baptist body ; but the first two ministers after Mr. Cope—Mr. Sidebotham and Mr. Bond—were not Baptists.

We now come to another and important era in the history of Nonconformity in Sandbach and the neighbourhood. We have seen how Mr. Cope's labours were transferred to Haslington, and at his death the result of them to the chapel at Wheelock Heath. Now we must return to Sandbach, where, as we have already seen, there were no fewer than twenty-four Dissenting families in Bishop Gastrell's time. These families probably went to Wheelock Heath Chapel to worship, as we have no trace of any Dissenting chapel in this town previous to the present century. There are however traditions of

ministers from Congleton having preached in private houses here to "as many as were willing to hear them," and possibly the descendants of some of these Dissenting families may have been found amongst those hearers, and others have been merged in the Methodist body; but certain it is that at the commencement of the present century Nonconformity was at a low ebb in Sandbach. The Rev. WILLIAM SILVESTER, whose praise has long been in all the churches of this locality, was to be the honoured instrument of infusing fresh life into the good cause. We thankfully avail ourselves of his biography, published in the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1848, to narrate the history of modern Nonconformity here. In the year 1807 the Cheshire Union applied to the venerable Roby of Manchester for a preacher to itinerate in "these parts." Mr. Silvester, then under the care of Roby, was selected as the very man fitted for this work of self-denial. After a month's deliberation and prayer on his part, and that of his fellow students, it was agreed that he should undertake this mission. Accordingly in April 1807 Mr. Silvester reached Sandbach a perfect stranger, and was a few days "abiding in the town to see what the Lord intended to do by him." "The country (says Mr. Silvester's biographer) in and round Sandbach was dark as midnight, and gross darkness covered the people. Ignorance, immorality, Sabbath profanation, and brutal sports prevailed among the inhabitants. "Even the zealous Methodists had failed to make an impression." Mr. Silvester commenced preaching in his hired room with fear and trembling. His congregation consisted of nine persons. But God was with him, and his room soon became so small that he had to stand at the door and proclaim the message to the people in the street. Four months after his arrival at Sandbach, a barn was taken and converted into a chapel capable of accommodating 150 hearers. This, after several enlargements, was at length abandoned for a new chapel—the present HOPE CHAPEL—capable of seating about four hundred hearers, and with a small schoolroom attached. This structure was erected at a cost of 1,200*l.*, which was met by the church and congregation, aided by the Christian public.

Mr. Silvester's labours were not confined to Sandbach, but he preached in surrounding villages, particularly at Brereton, Haslington, and Wheelock. Independent Chapels have been erected in these places; those at *Haslington* and *Wheelock* by public liberality, and the one at *Brereton* by a former owner of property there, the late

Thomas Hulme, Esq. But this success was not obtained without opposition and many trials. "Mr. Silvester had to endure a great fight of affliction." He suffered from the propagation of malicious falsehoods, private ridicule, and personal insult. He was "the song of the drunkard," the object of hatred to the profane, and evil spoken of by nominal Christians. Public worship was sometimes interrupted by ignorant mobs. In no place was this opposition more exhibited than at the village of HASLINGTON. He had preached in the open air three times to large congregations without interruption, but on the occasion of his fourth visit he found that a combination had been formed to prevent his preaching. The valet from Crewe Hall, which was in the neighbourhood, collected all the servants and workpeople of the establishment, plied them with drink, and marched to Haslington with dogs and game cocks, with the determination to put down "the preacher of sedition." The valet asked the preacher by what authority he dared to come to that neighbourhood. Mr. Silvester with dignity replied, "I stand here with the authority of the King of Heaven. Here, sir, is earthly authority"—holding up his licence from the magistrate—"and here is spiritual authority"—presenting him with the Bible. "This book says, *Go and preach the gospel to every creature.*" By this time a crowd had assembled, and for two hours the contest was carried on. Dogs were set on the people to disperse them. At length they drove Mr. Silvester out of the village by pelting him with rotten eggs, mud, and stones. Next day he returned, and found to his unutterable joy that the proceedings of the previous evening had produced for him universal sympathy. A multitude immediately assembled, to whom he preached the word of God with power. A number of souls were turned to God. And now a subscription was set on foot, a chapel built, a Christian church formed, and a Sunday-school instituted. The families connected with this congregation still hold the name of Silvester in veneration, recognising him as their spiritual father and the founder of Congregationalism in Haslington. They have erected a neat marble tablet to his memory. Honoured members of this church have gone forth to other churches, where we have reason to believe that they are useful, and some of them doing a most important work. HASLINGTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH is now connected with the church of the same order at Crewe, both being under one pastorate, that of the Rev. T. DAVISON.

WHEELOCK now claims our attention. There an admirable Sunday-school was raised, and a church formed, through Mr. Silvester's instrumentality; in which he was ably seconded by his friends Mr. and Mrs. Holbrook, and some good men in that village. Much good has been done here, and although through the failure of trade and other causes some of its valued members have had to leave the village, yet their influence is not lost to the Church of Christ. Others have gone to their heavenly home, and their works do follow them. Mr. Holbrook departed to his rest in July 1853; and another name would we mention, that of Joseph Gibson, who from being one of the chief of sinners, a drunkard, a fighter, the terror of the neighbourhood, became, through the grace of God, the meekest of saints. He attributed his conversion to a sermon preached by the Rev. John Marshall of Over, in Wheelock Chapel. He died, rejoicing in the hope of the gospel, in July 1860. Gladly would we linger over these fragrant memorials of the dead, whose character and usefulness we, in the years that we witnessed them, truly prized. But we must proceed with our narrative, and must now leave Wheelock, with the remark that the church there is under the same pastorate as that at Sandbach.

The honoured Silvester died at Sandbach on the 1st of September 1846, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, having completed a ministry of thirty-nine years. Five days after, a number of ministerial brethren and Christian friends "carried him to his burial and made "great lamentation over him." The tradesmen of the town testified their respect to his memory by closing their shops on the day of his funeral. Within the gate leading to the Independent Chapel at Sandbach may be seen a tomb memorial erected by his people to his memory, with the inscription CHRIST IS ALL IN ALL. This was the grand motto of his ministry, and the only memento which he wished to be placed on his tomb. But "his record is on high," along with that of Cope and the worthies of the Nonconformist age, men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, who with the faithful of past generations have now entered "into the joy of their Lord."

The Rev. JOHN MOSS succeeded Mr. Silvester at the invitation of the church at Sandbach. But differences arising, Mr. Moss resigned the pastorate on August 21st, 1848.

The writer of this sketch succeeded the Rev. J. Moss at the unanimous invitation of the churches at Sandbach and Wheelock, and commenced his pastoral labours on the first Sabbath in July

1849. By the grace of God he continues here to this day, and prays that he may at last finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he has received to testify the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

GOOSTREY.

HENRY NEWCOME was settled about Michaelmas 1648 at Goostrey, "where it pleased God," says he, "I had the unanimous consent of the whole chapelry testified under their hands, and there I preached a year and a half." He signed the Cheshire *Attestation* as *minister at Goostree* in 1648. "I came to Goosetree with my family November 23rd, 1648, and lived in some rooms of Francis Hobson's near the chapel half a year, and thence we removed to Kermencham [near Swettenham, about four miles from Goostrey], whence I went every Lord's Day in the morning, and my good old father-in-law Mr. Peter Manwareing, on foot to Goosetree, and got thither in time, and preached twice a day, and was well able to do it, being then in my youth and strength."* After a journey to Cambridge in 1649 he says, "I attempted to set up the sacrament of the Lord's Supper [at Goostrey], and though I was raw and ignorant in those affairs, yet the Lord did wonderfully direct me and overrule that whole affair, that I administered the sacrament to none that were not competently knowing, or that was known to be scandalous. Nay, at very first we kept off Captain Baskervyle for his frequent drinking, and Mr. Kinsey we excepted against on the same account. . . . This sacrament was October 18th, 1649."†

In the beginning of 1650 Newcome left Goostrey. He says, "I parted with the people at Goosetree lovingly on March 17th. They were loath to part with me, and yet would not detain me, since the place was not a competence, and no house for me, &c. We had a sacrament together the last day, and I preached (and took leave) on that text Acts, xx. 7."

In 1653-4 Mr. EDGE was ordained minister of Goostrey, and continued there until his removal to Gawsorth in 1657. He was succeeded by EDWARD MANWARING (son of Colonel Manwareing

* Autobiography, page 12.

† Page 16.

Newcome's cousin) who had entered S. John's College Cambridge, as a fellow-commoner in 1649.*

The next minister at Goostrey was the Rev. JOHN BUCKLEY. He graduated his B.A. at Pembroke Hall Cambridge in 1653. He was at Goostrey certainly in 1660, as the following register of his marriage in Swettenham church shows:—"Mr. J. Buckley minister of Goostrey, " and Mary Boyer were married 3rd October 1660." Calamy names him as ejected from Goostrey in 1662. He was known to Newcome, Martindale, and Samuel Eaton, and met them for conference (doubtless regarding their Nonconformity) at Stockport in April 1662. He with Martindale was a hearer at the Collegiate Church Manchester the Sunday after Bartholomew Day, August 31, 1662, when Newcome preached his last sermon there.†

HOLMES CHAPEL.

ANDREW BARNET, son of the Rev. Humphrey Barnet of Uppington, Shropshire, and brother of the Rev. Joshua Barnet, a Nonconforming minister in the same county, was minister of Holmes Chapel during the Civil wars, and was ejected thence in 1649 for not taking the *Engagement*. He afterwards was appointed minister of Roddington, in Shropshire, and became a Nonconformist upon the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity in 1662.‡ This is probably the Mr. Barnet whom Newcome names§ as the conveyer of a donation of 10*l.* from Mr. Hildersham of Felton, in Shropshire, as a present to him. In the year 1695 he was still living and "minister of the gospel at Daventry." Mrs. Savage notes in her diary, "April 3rd, 1692. This day we had " no preaching at Wrenbury; in the afternoon we went to Baddiley, " where we heard Mr. Barnet on Mark i. 3."||

Mr. Barnet was followed at Holmes Chapel by the Rev. JOHN RAVENSHAW, of whom Calamy gives the following account:—"He " was a hard student, a good scholar, a useful preacher, and an " excellent Christian. He had a turn for poetry, but greater skill in " preaching. Besides a good judgment, he was remarkable for his " diligence and piety. He gave himself to reading, meditation, and

* Newcome's Autobiography, pages 15, 77; Martindale, page 114.

† Newcome's Diary, page 117. ‡ Nonconformists' Memorial, iii., 151.

§ Autobiography, page 61. || Life of Mrs. Savage, by Sir J. B. Williams, page 152.

“ prayer. He died in London of the *Miserere*, or Iliac passion, which “ he endured to the last with admirable patience.” Mr. Ravenshaw was turned out of Holmes Chapel in 1662, on account of his Nonconformity, and the following entry which occurs in the chapel register for 1664 would lead one to suppose that he did not long survive his ejection :—“ John, the son of Catherine Ravenshaw, widow, was “ born December 14th, about ten or eleven o'clock at night.” This was probably a posthumous son of Mr. Ravenshaw.

Henry Newcome preached at Holmes Chapel on Tuesday February 18th, and Sunday March 16th, 1650-1.

Close by Holmes Chapel is a place called the Hermitage, where the Rev. THOMAS LEADBEATER, a Nonconformist, resided for several years. He was baptized at Holmes Chapel in 1628, entered Christ's College Cambridge as pupil of Mr. Samuel Langley in 1647, and became chaplain to Lady Wimbleton, and minister of Hinckley in Leicestershire; where his labours were very acceptable and useful. He was a very dear friend of Henry Newcome, who calls him “ my brother “ Leadbeater,” and speaks of his kind comfort and advice. In 1656 Newcome visited him : “ I came,” says he, “ the next day to Hinckley “ to the house of my friend Mr. Leadbeater. I was persuaded by him to rest with him the next day.” In 1662 he was ejected from Hinckley and came to reside at Nantwich, where he was kindly treated by Mr. Jackson the Conformist, while some others who came thither for shelter were denied. He with other ministers was imprisoned in 1665 for violation of the Five-mile Act. He preached privately in his own house—the Hermitage—and elsewhere as he had opportunity till the Indulgence in 1672, when he took out a licence for his own house, though (that he might give the less offence) he went to church first and preached at home afterwards. The following is the application for a licence which he sent to London :—

“ To the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

“ The humble petition of some of your Majesty's most loyal “ subjects within the county of Chester in behalf of themselves and “ others. Humbly acknowledging with a most grateful sense of heart “ your Majesty's singular grace and indulgence towards us in your “ gracious declaration of the 15th of March 1671-2, wherein your “ Majesty declareth that you shall from time to time allow a sufficient “ number of places, as they shall be desired, in all parts of this your

“ kingdom, for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of
“ England, to meet and assemble in order to public worship and
“ devotion; which favour if we should in anywise abuse to disloyal
“ reflexions on your Majesty’s person and authority, or disturbance
“ of the public peace, we should account ourselves the most unworthy
“ persons under the Sun; we do therefore declare our resolution
“ through the grace of God to improve the liberty granted us by the
“ said gracious declaration, to the everlasting welfare of immortal
“ soules, the furtherance of your Majesty’s interest and government
“ so far as in us lieth, and the peace of these nations; that your
“ Majesty may never have cause to repent of this your signal kind-
“ ness and indulgence towards us. And we do humbly pray that the
“ house of Mr. T. L. (one of ourselves here subscribed) commonly
“ called the Hermitage, alias *Armitage*, within the said county, may
“ be the place allowed for ourselves and others to meet and assemble
“ in for the public worship of God. And that your Majesty’s licence
“ may be granted forth (as to others in the like case) to the said
“ Mr. L., who is of the Presbyterian persuasion (and the congregation
“ who are also of the same persuasion who shall be there assembled),
“ and that we may from time to time enjoy your Majesty’s protection
“ against all disturbances of our several meetings and assemblies
“ there.”*

Having preached to this congregation in his own house for some years Mr. Leadbeater removed into Wirrall, where he had a congregation, and where he died suddenly November 4th, 1679, aged fifty-two years. He was buried at Holmes Chapel November 7th. Newcome thus refers to his death :—“ My dear brother Leadbeater had been over here a little before, and had engaged me to come among some good people in Cheshire (whom Mr. Edge had kept together) once a quarter, to keep them from scattering or closing with some unfit man that might mislead them, and I went to them this first time on November 1st (Saturday); was with them November 2nd, where I met with some of the people that were of my charge at Goosetree, and was glad to have opportunity to see them and to do them service this way. I came back on the Monday to Dunham and stayed there all night, where Dr. Banne met me. On the Tuesday, as we were taking horse to return, a

* T. W. Barlow’s Cheshire Collector, page 4.

“special messenger came for the doctor to go to Mr. Leadbeater, “who was dangerously sick in Worrall. And, alas! he died that “night, before the doctor reached him; the news whereof reached “us two or three days after, to my great surprise and real grief, he “being almost the only one that was left of my first friends.”*

DR. NATHANAEL BANNE, who is named in the above extract, was a native of Cheshire, and minister of Caldecot in Rutlandshire. Newcome mentions him as a sojourner with Mr. Machin, at Seabridge, in 1650. He was ejected for his Nonconformity from Caldecot, in 1662, and settled in Manchester as a physician.† Martindale calls him *his dear friend*, and Newcome frequently mentions him. On April 4th, 1681, Easter Monday, he was chosen a feoffee of the hospital at Manchester. He attended Newcome in his last illness, 1695.‡ He had a large practice in Cheshire, and was the friend of several Nonconformists.

The Protestant and Puritan element was strong among the people of Holmes Chapel after the removal of their minister. They shut up the chapel doors on Sunday February 6th, 1687, the anniversary of the king's inauguration; an act which Bishop Cartwright severely rebuked.§

SWETTENHAM.

UPON the death of Randal Catharall, rector of this parish on February 4th, 1642, his son Samuel Catharall was appointed, but seems not to have continued here more than four years, for on April 4th, 1647, “Mr. Nehemiah Pott, aged twenty-four years, brought certificate of “his ability and holy life from divers ministers in Cheshire, took the “National Covenant, brought in his recommendation from Mr. “Langley, was desired and elected by the people of Swettenham, “Cheshire,” and was thereupon ordained.|| He seems not to have settled at Swettenham, because in 1648 the name occurs among the signatures to the Cheshire Attestation—*Nehemia Potte, minister at Wincle*; and at Candlemas 1647 Mr. SAMUEL LANGLEY had “just

* Autobiography, page 229.

† Nonconformists' Memorial, iii., 133.

‡ Autobiography, pages 286, 305.

§ Cartwright's Diary, page 23.

|| Manchester Classis Minute Book.

“accepted the parsonage of Swettenham.”* The probability is that Mr. Potte was recommended by Mr. Langley to the congregation at Swettenham, and that he ministered there for some months; but the people were not satisfied with any substitute for Mr. Langley, and ultimately succeeded in obtaining him as their pastor. Samuel Langley did not come to live at Swettenham till after his marriage, in the latter end of the summer of 1649. He was son of the eminent Thomas Langley of Middlewich, and Fellow of Christ's College Cambridge. Martindale names him as triumphantly managing a dispute with the Quakers in 1654.† A son of his, *Thomas*, was baptized at Swettenham 19th September 1651, and on March 5th, 1653, *Alicia filia Sam. Langley ecclesie hujus de Swettenham Rectoris, et Sarae uxoris ejus baptizata*.‡ He continued here till 1660, when he was turned out to make room for *Thomas Addenbrook*, Conformist, who held the living till his death in 1677. Mr. Langley, soon after his ejection, seems to have removed to Tamworth. Newcome says, June 13th, 1660, “I had the sweet society of my old friend Mr. Langley, who met me here from Tamworth.” Again; “We called at Tamworth, February 14th, 1676-7. I had there the company of my old friend Mr. Langley. . . . October 16th, 1695, I heard of the ill state of religion in Tamworth, upon the death of Mr. Langley.”§

In the parish of Swettenham is Kirmincham, a manor which belonged to the Mainwarings—a branch of the Mainwarings of Peover—for three centuries, since 1430. Into this family Henry Newcome married, and in this place he resided during his ministry at Goostrey, and afterwards he was a frequent visitor here. He therefore used often to see Mr. S. Langley, the minister of the parish, and formed a strong friendship with him. Yet he says, “I sometimes had his society, but when I was further from him my heart was more united to him, and I could then have seen what use I could have made of his society and neighbourhood. I thought he was of another spirit than I was, and his company was a check and reproof to me; yet his conversation was provoking, and did stir me up to study and emulation of him.”|| Newcome often visited Mr. Langley of Swettenham afterwards. “May 15th, 1651. I went out of a

* Newcome's Autobiography, page 9. † Martindale's Autobiography, page 116.

‡ Registers in Swettenham Church. § Autobiography, pages 121, 219, 283.

|| *Ibid*, page 14.

“ desire of spiritual communion to Swettenham, to see Mr. Langley, and had some sweet converse with him.” “ December 13th, 1656. I had writ to Mr. Langley, . . . and entreated him if he could spare me an hour or two next morning, I would come to Swettenham to him. He freely granted it; and I this Monday morning, December 15th, went to him, and had his hearty counsel upon perusal of all my letters from both places”—Manchester and Shrewsbury—whither Newcome was invited as minister. “ And whereas I must of necessity go to Shrewsbury, he very lovingly offered to go with me the very next day; an extraordinary kindness it was, and a great comfort at that very troublesome juncture it was.”* These extracts may suffice to show how strong was the friendship that subsisted for many years between Newcome and Samuel Langley, the ejected minister of Swettenham.

Bishop Gastrell notes in his time three families of Dissenters in Swettenham, and four families Presbyterian in Warmingham parish.

* Autobiography, page 65.

DEANERY OF MACCLESFIELD.



OF the seven Deaneries into which Cheshire is divided, that of Macclesfield is by far the most populous. It is nearly co-extensive with the Hundred of the same name, and includes the important manufacturing towns, Macclesfield and Stockport. Ten ministers were ejected from their livings in this Deanery in 1660 and 1662, viz.—Thomas Edge of Gawsworth, James Bradshaw of Macclesfield, Hugh Henshaw of Chelford, Nicholas Stephenson of Alderley, John Brereton of Wilmslow, Robert Barlow of Mobberley, Samuel Eaton of Dukinfield and Stockport, John Jollie of Norbury, John Jones of Marple, and Francis Shelmerdine of Mottram.

GAWSWORTH.

(*By the Rev. S. W. Mc. ALL, M.A.*)

AMONGST the names of the Rectors of Gawsworth given by Ormerod, occurs that of WILLIAM HUTCHINS. This gentleman's predecessor (Mr. Brownall) died in September 1630. Mr. Hutchins, therefore, was most likely presented to the living not long afterwards. He died in 1647; but it would appear that some time previous to his death his living was sequestered. Nor was this all; for we learn from Walker* that in addition to the sequestration of his living, the temporal estate of Mr. Hutchins was declared to be forfeited for treason. Mr. Hutchins was a person of good family, and, as might be expected, an adherent to the house of Stuart.

We have not the means of forming a correct opinion upon the merits of this case; but it may very well be—it most probably was so—that Hutchins suffered wrongfully for conscience sake. The

* Sufferings of the Clergy, *in loc.*

measures under which he and others were expelled from their homes for refusing to take the Covenant, when tendered in 1646, were suggested, confessedly, by a care for the state rather than the church; and were the natural result of perverted and inadequate views of the first principles of religious liberty.

The same authority that informs us of the death of Mr. Hutchins in 1647,* informs us that in 1649 one Mr. BROOKES was the parson of Gawsworth for the time being; and when steps were taken to secure the living for Mr. Newcome "The great care was how to make "a fair end with him" [Brookes]; for, "though it was apparent he "had no title after the death of the incumbent," yet he was "a man "impetuous and clamorous where he was unsatisfied; and (says "Newcome) I looked upon it as *impar congressus* for me to grapple "with him." We further read, under date May 19th, 1650, "Brookes "had spent six years amongst them [the people at Gawsworth], and "had no doubt preached precious things to them, and more ably "than I could do; but by his great passions and contests with the "people, he had lost the authority of his preaching, and he had "little success with them."† Out of dislike to the place and people, however, Mr. Brookes was resolved to leave, and so a way was the more readily made for the man whose name, for several years to come, was familiar as a "household word" in the homes of the Nonconformist families of the north of Cheshire.

In tracing the history of Gawsworth during the next twelve years, it happens that we have much interesting information preserved in the Autobiography of the Rev. HENRY NEWCOME, M.A., who was Rector of the parish from 1650 to 1657. And as his diary throws much light upon the state of religion—both in its political and also social and personal aspects—in the times of the Puritans, and is almost the only source of information open to us respecting Macclesfield as well as Gawsworth, it will not be unnatural to follow rather closely the narrative in question. Many opinions he held as to questions of church polity, we cannot but repudiate. We believe that our forefathers weakened their cause by their tenacious adherence to the principle of an alliance (in some form or other) between the civil power and the church. Here lay their greatest hindrance to spiritual prosperity; and they would have been far stronger had they cast themselves

* Autobiography of Henry Newcome, page 16. † Autobiography, *in loc.*

boldly upon the principle that the church is subject to none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, in many things pertaining to the public service of the sanctuary, and to the duties of personal and social religion, they have left us an example we might with advantage follow.

Henry Newcome was born at Calcot, in Huntingdonshire, in November 1627, and entered the University of Cambridge in May 1644. He took the degree of Master of Arts; and in 1647 was appointed to a mastership at Congleton School. While resident in this town, "he fell to preaching, when only twenty years old." He was appointed reader [curate] to Mr. Ley at Astbury; and preached sometimes at Congleton, and sometimes at Astbury. At first he *read* his sermons; and "put too much history" into them, whilst "the people came with Bibles, and expected quotations of Scripture." At length he learnt to dispense with the aid of notes, and preached *memoriter*. He went for many weeks to Frodsham, on the Saturday, to preach there on the following day; but settled at Goosetree in 1648; having been ordained at Sandbach in August of that year.

Though in after days he suffered for his Nonconformity, yet he was ever attached to the cause of monarchy; and when Charles I. was beheaded he tells us how he was affected by the fate that had befallen the king. Under date January 30th, 1649, he writes:—"This news came to us when I lived at Goosetree, and a general sadness it put upon us all. It dejected me much (I remember) the horridness of the fact; and much indisposed me for the service of the Sabbath next after the news came."

About this time (1649 or 1650) Mr. Newcome's name was mentioned in connection with the now vacant rectory of Gawsworth; and as he consented to be put in nomination, an attempt was at once made to secure his induction under the Broad Seal. After much trouble the seal was obtained; and the form of institution came down from London. Its opening sentence runs thus:—"Whercas the rectory of the Parish Church of Gawsworth, in the county of Chester, is become void by the death of the last incumbent, and the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal of England have presented Henry Newcome, a godly and orthodox divine, thereunto; It is therefore ordered," &c.*

This instrument bears date November 28th, 1650. Newcome

* Newcome's Autobiography, vol. ii. App.

notes in his diary the day when the Broad Seal came. He found, however, that he was not to enter peaceably into possession. First, Brookes made some demur; and no sooner was he satisfied than a new difficulty arose. The people had locked the doors of the church against their new minister. Why this was done we do not hear; but we read:—"Though they had none to preach unto them that day, we went to Maxefield; and that afternoon I preached there." Having the Broad Seal, Newcome might have insisted on being admitted into the church; yet, he says, "I was resolved to let all go rather than to come in by force." But "it pleased God to move upon the people when I thought not of it; and they came (some of the chief of them) over to Carincham on February 12th and sent for me, and told me they were desirous to have me before another; and so were unanimously consenting to me, and subscribed the petition, not knowing that the Seal had come."

All these hindrances having been removed, Newcome went to Gawsorth with his family in April 1650; and on the 14th and 21st of that month preached from these words—*For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel.*—EZEKIEL iii. 5.

So far, however, the rector's induction to his living appears only to have been provisional; and he could not be considered in full possession till he had taken the Engagement. The Covenant he must probably have subscribed at the University in 1644. By this he had pledged himself (*inter alia*) to the extirpation of Episcopacy. Adhering still to his subscription to the Covenant, he was most reluctant to take the Engagement. At length, he says, "I went to Chester, and on Christmas Day 1650 I did subscribe, before Mr. Duckenfield and Mr. Birkenhead, before it was generally tendered to the county. I subscribed on a paper, and they certified under it; and it was sent away to London, no record remaining of it in the country; which I after saw as a providence, in that no notice was hereby taken of my doing it."* He afterwards procured a duplicate, and kept it. Himself a royalist, he had no sympathy with the republican party, whose practices he always abhorred. Hence his subscription became to him in after days a source of great uneasiness. "I found this sin met me after my great comforts at Seabridge (January 2nd),

* Autobiography, page 24.

“being in great trouble about it as I came home; and it was long on my heart as one of my great transgressions.” He says he never owned it upon his own score; and only once, with great reluctance, showed the certificate, “to recover some moneys from the sequestrators upon another’s interest.” Newcome was not now the man he was when, in 1662, he “chose rather to suffer affliction” than “to enjoy (what would have become *to him*) the pleasures of sin;” and, indeed, there is much in the memorials of his early days that shows him to have been, at that period, greatly ignorant of the power of true religion. Many years of severe trial and discipline wrought a change in him; and he who, upon his own confession, signed the Engagement in 1650 with an eye to his outward settlement, in 1662 refused to subscribe to the Book of Common Prayer under the Act of Uniformity, though he knew that the only alternative was destitution and suffering of every kind. Yet, inasmuch as we find him as heartily rejoicing in the restoration of Charles II. as once he had commiserated the unhappy fate of Charles I., we are evidently to ascribe the difference in his conduct upon the two occasions referred to, not to a change in his political sentiments, but to something higher and nobler—a renewing of his spiritual life. And no man mourned more bitterly than he over his want of fidelity and conscientiousness in the transaction of 1650.

The month of April 1650, as we have just seen, found Newcome and his family tenants of their new home. What the population of the parish was at this time we have no means of knowing; but Bishop Gastrell informs us that about the year 1720, there were one hundred families residing at Gawsworth. Indeed we might infer that the place was but scantily populated, from a fact recorded by Newcome: * “In this whole year of 1652, there died never a one in the parish of Gawsworth; which I observed to the people.” And no wonder he “observed it to the people,” for of not many parishes of a like extent could such a record be made concerning 1862!

Of the moral and spiritual condition of the neighbourhood we do not know much; but it would appear that drinking and swearing were very prevalent vices. Against these Newcome set himself most determinedly; and he records how, one Sabbath evening, at the house of Lady Fytton, a Mr. Constable, “a known famous epicure,” “told the

* Autobiography, page 42.

“ lady there was excellent ale at Broadh : [heath—what this place
 “ was does not appear,] and moved he might send for a dozen ;
 “ some gentlemen of his gang being with him. I made bold to tell
 “ him that my lady had ale good enough in her house for any of
 “ them: especially I hoped on a Sabbath Day she would not let them
 “ send for ale to the alehouse. The lady took with it, and in her
 “ courteous way told him that her ale might serve him. But notwith-
 “ standing, after duties, he did send ; but durst not let it come in
 “ whilst I staid. . . . At last I took leave ; and then he said,
 “ ‘ Now he is gone ! fetch in the ale.’ ”*

There are many intimations that the living was worth but little, in a pecuniary point of view at this time, and often the rector and his family were reduced to extreme destitution. In 1656 the necessities of his family led him to entertain the question of a removal; for the place was not likely to support him. Upon this the people offered to try and secure him 100*l.* a year from all sources; but it is clear that nothing like this sum was raised. When he suggested a removal, some of the people were angry, and judged his poverty to be his own fault, through want of prudence. Speaking of his destitute condition, he says, May 1651: “When I had got up in a morning, the cares about it would
 “ have unfitted me for any business ; and usually I sought the Lord
 “ to help and direct me.” “And I do remember that when my heart
 “ had been bitterest about any wants and troubles (as sometimes it
 “ was very sad indeed with me), the thoughts of being an instrument
 “ of winning a soul did so rejoice me, that I forgot my poverty, and
 “ could remember my sorrow no more. It would have hugely lightened
 “ me at any time. This contributes to Dr. Harris’s observation that
 “ ‘ oft preachers humbled by afflictions convert most souls ; not the
 “ ‘ choicest scholars, while unbroken.’ ”

The first sacrament the new rector administered was celebrated on May 19th, 1650. He spent several days in examining the communicants before the service; taking account of their state so as to help him to preach to them. He seems sometimes to have made good use of the information thus obtained; for on February 16th, 1651, he says of another communion service, “We, very indiscreetly
 “ enlarging ourselves to particular states, kept the sacrament mighty
 “ long. It was the height of our zeal, though afterwards I was

* Autobiography, page 21.

“troubled for, and sensible of the imprudence of so doing.” On this occasion he was assisted by a neighbouring minister.

Nothing of very great importance seems to have characterised the year 1651; but at the commencement of 1652 Mr. Newcome met with some trouble from the Independents, who were in considerable numbers at Macclesfield, Dukinfield, and Stockport. Under date February 16th, 1652, we learn that great success was, about this time, granted to his preaching; and there were many affected with the word who began to make a hopeful profession, both in his own parish and in the neighbourhood around. But, he says, “Satan envied and “assaulted.” The first assault came from the Independents. These people had formed, at Stockport, a “gathered church.” To explain this term, it may be stated that when the five “Dissenting brethren” (Nye, Goodwin, Bridge, Simpson, and Borroughs) found they could make but very little impression upon the Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly, they turned to the country at large; and many people adopting their views as “Independents” in church polity, seceded from their parish churches, and met to form separate churches—each with its own pastor and deacons. These societies were called “gathered churches.”* Such a community existed at Stockport in 1652. Of this church one William Barrett was an elder. He was, we learn, “a busy, pragmatical man.” Coming over in the month of February to a “private day” at Gawsworth, he wanted to introduce his peculiar views, and to start a discussion about church membership. Newcome was not versed in the controversy; but getting wind of Barrett’s design he anticipated him, and began a conversation upon “holiness,” which “they could not for shame decline; “so the thing was hindered.” This same William Barrett, as we shall see presently, occasioned some trouble at Macclesfield, as well as Gawsworth, about this time. He does not, however, appear to have thrown himself in Newcome’s way again.

The year 1653 was signalised by one of the first missionary efforts—distinctly so called—that was ever made in England. John Eliott “the apostle of the Indians” was at this time labouring with much success amongst the North American Indians. A sufferer for conscience sake, he emigrated (along with many others) to New England, and arrived at Boston in 1631. Shortly afterwards he devoted his

* See Hunter’s *Life of Oliver Heywood*, pages 59, 60.

life to missionary labours ; seeking to make himself useful to the Red Indians. In 1674 he records the fact that there were seven Indian praying towns settled in Massachusetts under his care. These towns contained nearly 500 persons. John Eliott translated into the Indian language the whole Bible, besides other religious works. In 1650 a colleague was appointed to assist him. In 1690 Eliott died ; having attained to the age of eighty-six years.

This enterprise excited much interest at home, and under the Commonwealth a collection was made by order of government, in every parish in England, to assist Eliott and his colleagues. We learn that the contributions were laid out, partly in stock and partly in land, to the amount of 700*l.* or 800*l.* a year ; and were vested in a corporate body, to be employed in behalf of the Indians.*

Gawsworth bore its share in this effort. " 1653. There came an order for a collection for the Indians. A large narrative came with it ; and letters, well penned, from both the Universities. I was taken with the design : and receiving but the papers on Saturday morning, turned off my ordinary subject, and preached two sermons purposely, about February 27th, on 1 Chronicles, xxix. 3. And the Lord did humble me mightily after evening sermon, when I called up the people to subscribe, and they did it so slenderly, and acted in it as if I had not said one word about it. But afterwards the Lord moved upon some of them to help me : and I went up and down from house to house, and making every servant and child that had anything, to give, I raised it to a pretty sum for that little place—seven pounds, odd money." Such is the record left us of this interesting transaction.

Mr. Newcome by no means confined his labours to Gawsworth. On the contrary, he spent much of his time in attending meetings of ministers in the neighbourhood. We often find him recording his observance of "private days." Thus : " 1651, May 20th. Agreed with Mr. Machin (of Seabridge), what private days we were to keep, whether together or asunder. We did by promise faithfully endeavour to remember each other." 1651, August 26th. Private day at Clough House. Next day at Audley. "I thought it a great mercy at this time when on a Lord's Day after sermon, we all betook

* See Orme's *Life of Baxter*, i. 206. That corporation gave rise to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

“ourselves in ordinary into secret ; and I could think that we four, my wife, sister, Mr. Smethwicke, and I, were all praying for one another.” 1651, September 27th. “Private day at Newcastle; next day, public, at Newcastle; next day, Seabridge, in public.” Mr. Newcome and others preached. They kept the day till noon; some having sat up in prayer all night.” “And I remember Mr. Taylor prayed that our people might feel our hearts so raised the next Sabbath, that they might say: ‘Where hath our minister been this week?’” “And truly we found it, for our parts, at Gawsworth; the Lord beginning the Sabbath with the greatest enlargement in our family that we had ever till then met with; and the whole day was near heaven with us. Oh what days were these! what glorious days of the Son of Man! Are we wiser or worse? or what is it, that we desire not after the same comforts now? And what a sadness is it that the door of such opportunities is so sadly shut against us as at this [time] it is.” (He wrote these words after the passing of the Conventicle Act.)

At these “private days,” it seems to have been the custom for every person who was present to name the subjects he wished to have mentioned in prayer; after which each person “prayed over the particulars thus cast in.” Here we may just mention what the particulars “cast in” were, upon one occasion of which we have a fuller record than usual. Under date Thursday February 27th, 1662, we find as “matters at a private day” (we give the spelling as in the original):—

- I. Mr. Harison’s iourney.
- II. Mr. Tilsley’s affliction.
- III. Abigail’s lingringe sicknes.
- IV. Mrs. Hough.
- V. Old Aunt Pot.
- VI. Frances Corker y^t hath his eys failinge.

Earnest prayers were put to God for our settlem^t here at Manchester; for mercy to y^e nation, and prevention of y^e feared evill.

Departing still further from our narrative for a moment, and in order to throw light upon the state of *social* religion in Newcome’s time, we may transcribe from his autobiography the following curious recital:—“1659, June 13th: I received a letter from Mr. Hough, which gave an account of a poor maid’s sad condition at Cambridge, that had by promise given her soul to the Devil; and, such a day, was to meet him. Desired prayers. The next day was Classical Day [*i.e.*

“ the day for the meeting of the Manchester Classis of Presbyterian
 “ and Independent ministers]; and I got a few together in the morn-
 “ ing by six ; and we kept to prayer till after nine on her behalf. We
 “ kept a private day on purpose for her, and still remembered her
 “ upon occasion. I understood that July 25th was the day. We kept
 “ July 25th chiefly on her account at Mr. Wollen’s. In the evening
 “ Mrs. Haworth sent me Mr. Kenion’s letter, who wished her to tell
 “ me that he feared they should want prayers this night. The sad
 “ time is between 9 and 10 ; he knows what I mean. I asked the
 “ man what o’clock it was. He told me it had just struck nine ;
 “ whereupon I called my cousin Davenport, and with our wives, we
 “ spent that part of an hour in prayer. We had much help in prayer
 “ this little while, and had hopes of a gracious return. Mr. Kenion
 “ writ word they were resolved to sit up with her, and to keep in
 “ prayer all this night ; which they did. She would have gone, very fain,
 “ from them, but they would not suffer her ; and they were not dis-
 “ turbed by anything but her. She after was free from this fear ; but
 “ yet it proved in the end a kind of drawn battle. Satan did not
 “ prevail in this gross contrivance upon her ; but she proved melan-
 “ choly, idle ; would follow no business ; and whether she inclined
 “ to the Quakers or not, I know not ; but the servants of God that
 “ strove for her had not that joy in her which they desired ; though
 “ she seemed delivered in this thing according to their prayers. It
 “ was a University then when so many Masters of Arts, Fellows of
 “ Colleges, could be found to keep a night to such a purpose.” *

How strange a blending of credulity and faith ! Evidently New-
 come thought it possible the Devil *might* succeed in his “ gross
 “ contrivance” upon her, or he would not have kept a “ private day” at
 Manchester for a young woman at Cambridge, of whom he knew nothing
 more than he read in the accounts he received. And yet, though we
 may smile at the man’s weakness in entertaining for a moment so
 absurd an apprehension, the account throws light upon that concord of
 social prayer which prevailed in the Puritan families of England.
 Touch a single string of the harp and all the other strings vibrate in
 harmony with it ; and so here, one man at Cambridge gives the key
 note to his friends all through the country (for doubtless letters were
 sent, in such an emergency, elsewhere than to Manchester) ; and by

* Autobiography, page 107.

common consent these all meet and join their supplications at the throne of grace.

Doubtless these "private days" were very commonly observed. "Soule fatning days" they were called; and the description of one such season serves equally for others.

To return from this digression. In 1653 the Cheshire Classis of Presbyterian and Independent ministers was formed at Knutsford. For a fuller account of this the reader is referred to the Introduction to this volume. We may, however, note Newcome's remark on the occasion of his joining the association:—

"1653, October 20th. Preached at Knutsford. Met about a classical association. It pleased God, out of conscience of duty and sense of need, we set it on foot in the darkest time; for even now were they about to vote down the national ministry; and many derided our design as unfeasible and unseasonable: but it pleased God to own it to our great advantage; and it was not long but Oliver was set up Protector; and it was his interest to give us fair quarter amongst the rest." He further says that since they began at such a time when there was least encouragement for them, people saw that their resolve was not a mere political expedient, but the result of conscientious conviction. Of course Newcome joined the association as a Presbyterian, and not an Independent. We find, accordingly, that soon after the Classis was formed they kept a fast at Gawsorth, and elected elders for the congregation.

In 1654 the "Act for Ejecting Scandalous Ministers and School-masters" came out. Newcome was named as one of the commissioners, but he never appears to have taken part in any proceedings under the Act. So far as this commission is concerned, it certainly did relieve the church of the presence of many who were no credit to the ministry; whilst at the same time it no doubt occasioned a great deal of unmerited suffering and hardship. Like all other enactments of the kind, it was of questionable expediency.

In following the course of Mr. Newcome's life there are growing evidences that, in abstaining from political affairs and in devoting himself more entirely to the work of the ministry, this good man was acting according to the impulses of a heart increasingly under the power of divine grace. He lived much in the duties of religion, and in the cultivation of the spiritual life. One meets such entries as these:—"Was affected with the consideration of the excellencies of

“some men I know; and how they were examples for me. How I desired to attain to their graces—Mr. Angier’s solemnness; Mr. Hollingworth’s humility; Mr. Gee’s mortifiedness; Mr. Machin’s heavenliness; Mr. Langley’s discretion; Mr. Hough’s spiritual diligence; Mr. Steele’s kindness.”

We may further notice here that Newcome was not only the pastor but the student. He kept diligently to his books; of which, however, he had very few. The word of God was his chief study. Thus he records how, one day, he read over the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the course of a day, and “noted it;” but adds that he was so tired he had better have made two days of it. Now and then he would send to London for some books, as he could afford it. His sister there acted as his agent in purchasing them; but she seems not to have been very particular how she sent the volumes to him sometimes. On one occasion she entrusted the parcel to the tender mercies of the carter; but the good woman “having unwarily put a deal of sugar in the other end of the bag with the books, the carter let wet come to them, and the sugar melted and spoiled the books sadly.” Such mishaps were of frequent occurrence; so that the poor man is forced to remark that his books came “either almost lost, or spoiled, or by halves home to me. These books I longed for hugely, and oft had bickerings with my foolish heart about it.”

Passing on to the year 1656, we find the question of a removal from Gawsorth re-opened at the rectory. Still the people could not meet the wants of the minister’s family, who were subject to many privations. Some time previously, Mr. Newcome was invited to Shrewsbury; but his present congregation was very unwilling to lose him. They, therefore, made an effort to maintain him where he was. Some were angry at the thought of his removal, and some were grieved “upon a pious account,” as he quaintly says. Now, however, circumstances compelled him seriously to entertain the question again. On November 3rd, 1656, Mr. Hollinworth, chaplain of the Collegiate Church in Manchester, died. At a meeting of the Manchester Classis on the seventh of the same month, three persons were nominated for the vacancy—Mr. Meeke of Salford, Mr. Bradshaw of Macclesfield, and Mr. Newcome of Gawsorth. The people at Manchester sent to know if Newcome could go if elected. He replied that he was free on March 25th, 1657, if released from Gawsorth by the Classis. For several reasons Mr. Meeke and Mr. Bradshaw did not find many

supporters; and the choice of the congregation fell on Mr. Newcome. Many weeks of negotiations followed; but at length, on December 24th, 1656, Newcome accepted the invitation to Manchester. No sooner was this known at Gawsorth than "new work" began about it. The Cheshire Association appointed delegates to go over to learn the mind of the people. It was feared that serious disturbances would arise, but "the Lord made the matter smooth. No harsh or "grieving words passed."

The following Thursday the people met about a new minister. Mr. Newcome was very anxious that Mr. THOMAS EDGE of Goostree should be invited. But Mr. Jeynson (vicar of Prestbury) "put in "furiously for his son," and caused some excitement. However, this name and some others suggested were withdrawn, and Mr. Edge was chosen. On April 12th Newcome administered the sacrament, and preached his farewell sermon. When the time came for his leaving the rectory, he says, "I was sadly affected, and broken all to pieces "at leaving the house. I never was so broken in duty as I was in "that which I went unto just when we were ready to go out of the "house." "I prayed the Lord the sin of the seven years might be "forgiven us, and that we might take a pardon with us." On April 23rd, he and his family entered their new home at Manchester. There, strictly speaking, he passes beyond the province of this narrative; but, as it may be of interest to know more of his career, an outline of his subsequent history is appended to this paper.

Very soon their former pastor was recalled to Gawsorth to arbitrate between conflicting parties. In September 1657, Newcome says he had many weary thoughts about the place. He had previously been to London to lodge a caveat against any person's being instituted into this living without his knowledge. Several persons were in view before the people chose Mr. Edge. Mr. Hugh Henshaw of Chelford, Mr. Hayhurst (then resident at Macclesfield), Mr. Orme, and others were in competition. Newcome always favoured Mr. Edge; so, setting his claims strongly before "the honest party," they at length became satisfied that he was the fittest person for them. Soon the Broad Seal was obtained, and Mr. Edge came in six months after Mr. Newcome left. For a little time the people were very unruly; but, ere long, things became quieter, and the responsibilities of the charge passed away from Mr. Newcome, and devolved fully upon his successor.

Mr. Edge found that hard work awaited him. In December 1657

he writes to his friend at Manchester to say that things went "a little cross" at Gawsworth, "through the implacable baseness of some." But, we learn, "the Lord carried him on; and soon changed matters there. Things became very prosperous."

After this date there are hardly any allusions to Gawsworth in Newcome's autobiography. On May 5th, 1658, he was there and found all comfortable. On March 13th, 1659, he says, "I preached at Gawsworth, and was greatly refreshed and rejoiced to see that people so well provided for and satisfied in Mr. Edge; and I felt myself much refreshed with them. I longed to see them all." And again, October 4th, 1662, "Mr. Edge, who stayed with me two or three hours, told me of the sad condition of poor Gawsworth."

On the passing of the Act of Uniformity, Mr. Edge withdrew from Gawsworth. Calamy's account of him is as follows:—"After his ejection he lived at Chelford. In 1672 he preached at a meeting house, which was fitted up for him at Withington. He had a very numerous auditory. No meeting in the country was more crowded. Even such as showed little love to seriousness esteemed him an excellent preacher. He afterwards preached more privately in the neighbourhood of Chelford, and other parts of Cheshire and Staffordshire. The times and places of his meeting were ordered with great prudence; for which, indeed, he was eminent. He commonly gathered his people together before their neighbours were out of their beds, and broke up a little before the public worship began. In the afternoon he usually heard the parish minister at Chelford. This course he continued till 1678, in which year he died. He preached to the very last Lord's Day of his life, and rose on the day of his decease as usual; but, finding himself ill, he lay down on his bed and called for his will, which was ready drawn. He sealed it, and died soon after. He had for a good while been preaching his own funeral sermon from 2 Corinthians v. 1—3. He was an excellent preacher, a kind and faithful friend, well qualified to give advice either for soul or body, and very affable to younger ministers. His sermons were close and methodical; full of sound argument and apt similitudes, and delivered with much zeal. He was a good textuary and a good expositor. His prayers were fervent, and his expressions pleasing, copious, and fluent. He was useful to many, and his loss was much lamented."*

* Nonconformist Memorials, *in loc.*

On June 23rd, 1678, Mr. Newcome says, "I heard of the sudden death of Mr. Thomas Edge, minister. [He died June 22nd, 1678.] He had been with me in my sickness, and was much concerned about it; and is now gone."

Here our notices of Gawsorth and its Puritan rectors end. On the restoration of Charles II. things reverted to their previous order; and the Nonconformists who had followed Mr. Edge after his dis-possession seem to have been gradually dispersed, or to have become incorporated with neighbouring churches. We have not so much as the record of their names. These have perished with themselves, save only as they are treasured up with Him who will not permit the humblest of all His suffering people to fail of entering into the promised reward.

NOTE.

THE REV. HENRY NEWCOME.

In the previous pages we have given an outline of Mr. Newcome's life up to the time of his removal to Manchester.

He was instituted into the chaplaincy of the Collegiate Church on April 23rd, 1657. Almost the only remark he makes when entering upon his new duties is this,—that it was strange to him to visit so many sick people as he did when he came to Manchester. A burial a month was as much as happened in the country; and here he visited three or four sick persons a day, and had several burials in a week.

When, in 1660, the Restoration was contemplated, Newcome was one of the very first to hail the probability of the king's return. On May 6th, he tells us he "prayed for the king by periphrasis" in the public service of the church. On May 12th it was resolved to proclaim the king at Manchester; and Mr. Newcome gives us some account of the ceremonial. They went first into the church and sung a psalm. After this, Newcome prayed for about half an hour, "wherein the Lord did affect all the people; and the change was great." The good man tells us he was "put upon" to ask that there might not be one case of open *intemperance* as a blemish upon the day. He adds, "I could not hear but the people carried very carefully; and mentioned the word often to one another when they were together that day."*

On the 18th of August, 1660, he first began to be in trouble about his settlement at Manchester. Upon the Restoration, all the Fellowships at the Collegiate Church were filled up; but, in the disposition of them, Mr. Newcome was passed over. On September 2nd, he celebrated the communion in the church for the last

* Autobiography, page 130.

time; and soon records the fact that he found himself as a minister without a people; having nothing to do in the congregation. His people were most unwilling to lose his services; and on September 21st "the town" desired him to preach. He took it kindly from them; but says, "I thought I had now preached my last sermon to them; and hugely they were affected. [They] had like to have spoiled me, when I went into the pulpit, by the passion they showed at the sight of it. "The Lord helped me besides my passion, and enabled me to preach on that subject (Psalm cxliv. 15—*Happy is that people, that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.*)"

Two days afterwards he was a hearer in the church, "and out of employment." An arrangement, however, was proposed, by which he was to preach for a time in the afternoon; and it appears as though he had availed himself of it, as far as the jealousy and ill-will of the Fellows would allow. He seems to have been preaching in this manner at intervals up to the 24th August 1662. But he tells us, "The Fellows oft in this time expressed their disgust to me behind my back; and professedly said I should not preach unless I would conform. Yet the Lord kept me on in his work for this year and a quarter. As long as I could have preached anywhere, he protected me to preach to my own people."

In March, 1661, however, new troubles began; and this in respect to provision for his family. He was much distressed for his wife and children, lest he should fall into reproach after his death, for not providing for them; and people should say, "this is his strictness; and this is Puritanism; see what it gets them; what it leaves to wife and children." The remuneration he received for the services he still performed was very scanty, and irregularly paid; but friends often came to his assistance—and this very unexpectedly. We always find in the "Diary" special notice of such seasonable aid; Mr. Newcome himself loving to recognise herein the good hand of the Lord, who has never suffered the righteous to be forsaken, nor his seed to beg bread.

Friday May 23rd, 1662, brought important tidings. The Act of Uniformity was passed; having been signed by the king on the previous Monday. All were eager to learn the provisions of this enactment; yet intimation was given long beforehand of what it was designed to accomplish. In the month of December previously, Newcome had seen a draft of the Act. He remarks on this occasion: "That it is brought down to be seen, it shows (1), How eagerly these men are set upon it; the great thing they boast of in their session is this product: (2) It may be to terrify these that are bated, if they can do no more: (3) It may be to see what they can gather further; if a man shall think himself free by it, his particular case may be further considered, and he may be fetched in. But God hath not yet put his hand to it, nor set his fiat on it; and it may yet be prevented."* On May 31st, 1662, he saw the Act, as finally settled in its terms; and he says, "It answers expectation to the full. The Lord show his poor servants what He would have them to do." On the Sabbath after, the news came that the Act was passed. Mr. Newcome attended church, and "Mr. Johnson read the Common Prayer at large, and preached on 1 Corinthians vi. 19, 20; and in the afternoon "expounded the second lesson very notably. He baptized; and of eight or nine

* Diary, page 39.

“ children, crossed all but three, which he spared with much ado. One child he “ baptized with the cross, without the words of institution, ‘I baptize’ in the name “ ‘of the Father,’ &c.” Previously to this, “ choir service ” had been recommenced at the church ; and candles were lighted upon the table. But even yet Mr. Newcome seems to have been allowed to preach ; for we read that on July 20th, he “ preached both ends of the day on Romans ii. 7, to a great congregation,” and he adds, “ The Lord did abundantly help me in the service.”

We have now brought our narrative up to August 17th, 1662—the Sabbath when so many good and faithful ministers of Jesus Christ proclaimed to their flocks, for the last time, the glad tidings of salvation. Many sad and heavy hearts were there that day, both amongst preachers and hearers. “ ’Tis not against the law “ *yet* (said one of these good men as he bid farewell to his people) to call them *our* “ congregations. But *this*, I confess, I can rather weep than speak to ; my heart “ is too big for my head here. . . . Oh, beloved, I have a few blessings for “ you ; I have a few words of exhortation for you, and for God’s sake take them as if “ they dropped from my lips when dying. ’Tis very probable we shall never meet “ more while the day of judgment. Whatever others think, I am utterly against “ all irregular ways. I have (I bless the Lord) never had a hand in any change of “ government in all my life. I am for prayers, tears, quietness, submission, and “ meekness ; and let God do his work, and that will be best done when he doth it. “ Therefore, be exhorted to stand fast in the Lord ; my own people hear me now, “ though you should never hear me more,—be exhorted to stand fast in the Lord.” Or if any further illustration of the spirit which actuated these Nonconformist ministers in their secession from the church in which they had been brought up be required, take these sentences from the prayer that preceded the sermon from which we have just quoted : — “ Though we have lost the duty of children, Thou “ hast not lost the goodness of a Father. Let us be held forth as patterns of “ mercy ; so shall we sound forth Thy praise to all eternity. Whatever afflictions “ Thou layest upon our bodies, let not our sins be unpardoned. Let not sin and “ affliction be together upon us. Let there be peace in heaven, and peace in the “ court of conscience. O, let peace and holiness go together. Make us new “ creatures, that we may be glorious creatures. Let us have a spirit of courage “ and resolution. Keep us from the fallacies of our own hearts. Keep us from “ the defilements of the times. Make us pure in heart that we may see God ; that “ we may have gospel spirits, humble spirits, meek spirits ; and as Christ did take “ our flesh, let us partake of his spirit.” Thus did these men of God commend themselves and their people to the care of the Great Head of the Church, now that they themselves could no longer watch for souls. Nor is it beside the mark to quote these sentences—though they fell from the lips of another [Mr. Lye of London] than the man whose history we are tracing, for they serve to show “ what manner of “ spirit ” those men were of amongst whom Mr. Newcome rejoiced to cast in his lot. His account of the 17th of August is as follows. Having attended church in the morning as a hearer, “ In the afternoon I preached on Ephesians v. 16 “ (*Redeeming the time, because the days are evil*) ; and the Lord did wonderfully “ help me in the duty, and it was sweet to me. I was long at it. I was affected “ with the people that are dear to me, to whom I know not when I shall preach

“ again; but I thought as I came out of the pulpit on 1 Samuel xv. 25.—Well, this “ day three years was a sadder day, and looked more desperately on us [he refers “ to the day when news of the battle and rout at Northwich reached Manchester “ (August 19th, 1659); a day when the people went about ‘crying in the streets’]; “ and all that fire singed us not, nor left so much as the smell of fire upon us. All “ is past away like waters that are gone—and soon, too.”*

Saturday, August 23rd, was an anxious day to him. He set himself to study, in case he might have liberty to speak on the following day. For himself he was willing to run the risk; but the Warden of the college, who was ever his true friend, was unsatisfied about his venturing to preach. In the evening, however, he received a letter from Mr. Ashurst, “ which gave an account that, past all expectation, there “ was some indulgence to be hoped for in some cases;” and after having passed the day in anxious deliberation, “ just this night to receive some notice, any glim- “ mering at all of any the least indulgence! Blessed be God.” Availing himself joyfully of this opportunity, the following morning—the morning of the memorable twenty-fourth—“ I got up about seven (he writes), and got ready for the public “ [service]; and to the great joy of my heart, and the poor people’s, had liberty to “ preach this forenoon. I preached on Exodus xx. 24.”

For some years now he was prohibited from taking part in any religious services, excepting only as he could associate with friends in observing “ private days.” In such exercises, however, we often find him engaged, both on the Sabbath and on other days of the week. On May 21st, 1644, news came of the passing of the Act against conventicles; and in October 1665 the royal assent was given to the Five Mile Act; but it was some time before the provisions of this Act could be distinctly ascertained in the country. The parliament that enacted it met at Oxford, being driven from London by the plague that there raged so fearfully. On August 17th, when Mr. Newcome went to hear the news from London, he found no news had come, so terrible was the panic occasioned by the plague. People in the metropolis had no time to think of anything, save only their own distress. And even if news had come that night, the people assembled would not—we are told—have dared to read it, for fear that infection should be conveyed by the very paper on which the intelligence was printed. On the 15th of November he got a copy of the Act, and considered its provisions in these particulars:—(1) In the extent of the trial; (2) the sins that had occasioned this evil; (3) the right course to pursue in regard to it; (4) what there was “to stay the heart in it.” Many ministers were by the provisions of this Act driven out from their homes, literally to starve; but Newcome does not appear to have suffered much molestation. Though for some time he did not dare to be seen in the town, yet he appears to have continued to reside in the neighbourhood of Manchester, choosing a house whose garden adjoined the open fields, so that he might go in and out without interruption.

On March 15th, 1672, the celebrated “ Declaration of Indulgence ” was published by Charles II., just on the eve of his war with Holland. By an arbitrary exercise of the royal prerogative, all penal laws against Nonconformists of every class were suspended. In reality this was, as Neal says, “ an advance towards “ Popery and absolute power;” and as such it caused great excitement within the

* *Diary*, page 112.

Establishment; whilst it was looked upon with much jealousy by many of the Nonconformists in whose behalf it was professedly published. These saw in it the first approach to the re-establishment of Popery; and against their own manifest interest, sided with the Church of England in opposition to the King. Others thankfully accepted this indulgence, and availed themselves of the permission it gave. Newcome was one of those who took out a licence to preach, not only for his own house but (on May 13th) for a barn as well. The justices getting to hear of it, supposed he was preaching in the barn upon the strength of the licence for the house; and so they sent for him, hoping to have got him within their power. But showing both licences he made good his defence. This liberty, however, was not long enjoyed. In putting forth the declaration, the King had arrayed against him both Houses of Parliament—and especially the House of Commons. This House refused to vote money for the public service until the Declaration was withdrawn. After some resistance, the King called for the Declaration and broke its seal with his own hand; thus revoking every Nonconformist's licence to preach. The news of the cancelling of the Declaration was received in Manchester with great joy; and the meetings in the barn and at Newcome's house were stopped. But it seems, after all, that liberty was obtained soon again; or at least there was a reluctance to put the penal laws in force; for from April 30th, 1673, Mr. Newcome had liberty to preach for above half a year without molestation.

In the beginning of 1674 we find these reflections in the autobiography upon the state of the country:—"The condition of the nation and church very sad. The "pitiful uncertain foot that things stand upon. Religion on tiptoes. Division and "enmity at a prodigious height. God's hand remarkably out against us, so as it "hath rarely been, in such continuance of so many things:—(1) a destruction of "corn and hay in the time of it; (2) great loss of cattle; (3) great dearth; (4) "great want of money; (5) inveterate deadness of trade; (6) the late storm, with "the dreadful effects of it; (7) a threat in the present great rain to prevent the "fruiting of the earth; (8) a miserable security and senselessness amongst people "notwithstanding all this."*

During the next few years, Mr. Newcome seems to have kept up the private meetings at his own house, and at the houses of his friends; nor does it appear that he was entirely silenced from preaching. Whenever he could run the risk he did; and we several times find him preaching at private houses in different parts of Cheshire. In the year 1683, however, the "Rye House Plot" (as it was called) was discovered; and all the odium of it was thrown upon the Nonconformists. Neal, writing in 1737, expresses the firm conviction that there was, really, no conspiracy at all; but that the Court "set on foot three plots; one to assassinate the "King and Duke [of York] as they came from Newmarket; another to seize the "Guards," &c. This Newmarket scheme was called the "Rye House Plot;" and upon pretence of it, the most rigorous measures were enforced against the Nonconformists. Accordingly about this time we find Newcome writing—"The management of public justice is a great trouble. . . . They have singled us to "persecute us; and it is made an offence to the government to relieve us." On August 11th, 1684, he further writes, in reference to a private meeting held in his

* *Autobiography*, page 207.

own house, "The officers came to my house and broke us up. Had the names of " eleven, besides our own family. I kept silence, and said only, 'It is well it is " 'no worse, and that it is for no worse.' If we had been better prepared, it is " possible we had not been disturbed. I was advised to go out of the way, lest I " should be ensnared." On this occasion the fine imposed was 40*l.*, of which 15*l.* fell to Mr. Newcome; the rest being paid by his friends. Shortly after this he removed from the house he had lived in, "for prudential reasons." "The privacy " of the house we went to, and the ready passage into the fields out of the garden " was, within the year, a great advantage to me (he writes) when I could not well " be seen within the town; and could not from the other house have gone to my " garden."

But liberty dawned at length. In April, 1686, King James published his "Declaration of Indulgence"—though by a stretch of the powers of the crown. Nevertheless, however unconstitutional the procedure might be, it was overruled for good; and all this cruel and heartless persecution ceased. Directly Newcome and his Manchester friends took an empty house; and on April 20th, 1686, the good man preached there with open doors, to his "great satisfaction and rejoicing." He continued to preach on the Wednesday, and "after evening sermon on the " Lord's Day, for a great while." On June 12th in the same year a barn was hired; and a congregation assembled there in large numbers. Soon they began to hold service at the hours of service in the churches.

The year 1688 saw the Toleration Act passed; and, though subject to many annoyances, the congregation at Manchester continued to meet from time to time, without any *serious* interruption. About 1690, the people built Mr. Newcome a chapel in Cross-street, Manchester; and there he continued to preach until his death in 1695. He was buried, according to his own wish, in his chapel, "in the " west aisle, not far from the pulpit." Mr. Chorlton preached at the funeral. In reference to his death, Mr. Tong* says, "Before that year (1695) was finished, " Lancashire lost one of the greatest blessings that ever the providence of God " favoured it with in the last age; when I say this, every one will conclude I mean " that reverend, holy, and most evangelical minister, Mr. Henry Newcome, who " died September 17th. He did not live quite half a year after the death of his " beloved grandson. Mr. Henry expresses himself on this occasion with an " uncommon concern, as a very great loss to the church of God; and puts up an " earnest prayer for his dear friend and brother Mr. Chorlton, who was fellow- " labourer with Mr. Newcome, that the mantle of Elijah might rest upon Elisha." Mr. Newcome's eldest son took Orders in the Church of England; and showed himself to be of a very different spirit from his father, for he cherished much animosity towards all who dissented from the church. But one of Newcome's grandsons—referred to in the extract just given—cast in his lot with the Nonconformists; and was being educated for the ministry by Mr. Timothy Jollie of Sheffield, when God was pleased to call him to a nobler service on high.

* Life of Matthew Henry, page 273.

MACCLESFIELD.

(By the Rev. S. W. McALL, M.A.)

ALTHOUGH Macclesfield receives a lengthened notice in Domesday, and was made "a free burgh" as far back as the year 1200, yet it would seem that very few traces of the ancient town remain. Once the place was fortified; but our only connecting link with these early days is, apparently, to be found in the remains of an old castle, standing almost in the centre of the town. Probably S. Michael's Chapel—"the old church"—is not the original church of Macclesfield, but stands as the successor to some more ancient edifice which perished beneath the rude hand of the invader, perhaps before the Conquest. The present structure dates from the reign of Edward I. A.D. 1278, and is, strictly speaking, a chapel of ease to Prestbury—the Parish Church. We learn that in 1585 the tower was surmounted by a "large steeple spire," which "was demolished (says Mr. Osborne, in "his *Parish of Prestbury*) by the pious hands of the Puritans about "1640." Ill fared a "steeple house" that was within reach of these "pious hands." And no wonder that a building so conspicuous as the old church must then have been—commanding, from the crest of the hill upon which it stands, the neighbourhood for many miles around—should have attracted the unfriendly notice of men whose rigorous affectation of superiority to the mere externals of religious worship, steeled them as well against all principles of refinement and good taste, as against the hoary memories of days gone by; and led them to court, in their own houses of prayer, a simplicity that was little else than unsightliness itself.

What the population of Macclesfield may have been in the days of the Puritans does not appear; but we may obtain an approximate notion from the fact recorded by Bishop Gastrell, that in 1705 there were in the town itself 925 families; and "at least 2,000 in the town "and precinct." Very likely the population had not much increased during the previous half century; and therefore the estimate for 1700 will serve almost as well for 1660.

In the year 1648 the *Rev. Edmund Hardie* was the incumbent of S. Michael's Church. This we learn upon the authority of Ormerod, quoting from the parish records. But it would appear that Mr.

Hardie's tenure of office was not of long continuance. Nor was his case in this respect a solitary one, in a day when all was confusion—as well in the church as in the state. It must be acknowledged, however, that some discrepancy occurs here as between the various sources of information open to us; and possibly the precise facts of the case may never be known. Ormerod gives the name of Mr. Hardie as incumbent of S. Michael's in 1648. But in the registers belonging to the church, occurs the name of RALPH STRINGER, "curate" (and sometimes "minister") of Macclesfield. Mr. Stringer's name first occurs in 1627 or 1628; and it continues till about 1654 or 1655. Further, in the diary of Newcome, we have several references to Mr. Stringer of Macclesfield, extending over the years 1650 to about 1652. Still more to the point is the occurrence amongst the signatures of the Cheshire ministers to the "Attestation to the Solemn League and Covenant," of the name of "Robert Stringer, minister at Macclesfield." The discrepancy in the christian name (Ralph and Robert) is most probably an error in the printing of the document just referred to; for in the same list of signatures several other well ascertained errors occur. Now this attestation was signed in 1648—the year which Ormerod assigns to the incumbency of Mr. Hardie. How the case stands, must be left to conjecture. Perhaps Ormerod may be in error.

Passing on to the year 1657, we find the living in the hands of Mr. JAMES BRADSHAW, a Presbyterian, and a member of an old Presbyterian family of Darcy Lever, near Bolton. He was the second of three sons, who were educated by their father—Mr. John Bradshaw—at Oxford, and were designed for the professions of divinity, law, and physic. Mr. Bradshaw, senior, is named as a member of the Bolton Classis, and his family is honourably mentioned as of standing in the county. Of the early life of James, we know nothing further than that he was born at Darcy Lever in 1610, and was educated at Oxford. Entering the ministry, he was (as we learn from Calamy) "for some time minister at Wigan in Lancashire, and lived in the parsonage; but Mr. Hotham obtaining it, he was called to Macclesfield, where the Act of Uniformity silenced him."

Referring again to Mr. Stringer's ministry here, Mr. Newcome of Gawsorth seems to have exercised a kind of supervision over the congregation at Macclesfield for some time previously to 1657; and his references to the state of things imply that there had been for

long much irregularity and confusion. On February 3rd, 1650—the day when this good man went to Gawsorth, and found the doors of the church locked against him—he tells us he went over to Maxefield, and that afternoon preached there. And again, on December 16th, 1650, he records in his diary:—"I had this summer a heart, in some measure, to the Lord's work; and it carried me out to endeavour to do work at Maxefield, where I preached not only at the exercise. upon vacancies of supply, but also frequently on those days to a great and attentive congregation—to my great satisfaction and to the advantage of some souls." From this it would seem as though there were but an uncertain provision for the ministry of the word. At this moment, too, we first find the Independents making their appearance at Macclesfield. Already there were many here who were "Congregational" in their sentiments. Mr. Newcome mentions this party first in connection with the army. In May 1651, some soldiers were quartered at Sutton; and the minister of Gawsorth came to see them; but at some risk to himself. "The truth is (he says), they are so spiritual and inward, and such taking company to me, that it was a mercy I was not ensnared by them; for they were high Independents, and were, I remember, talking of embodying the saints." The Thursday after, the next exercise at Maxefield, "Mr. Hollinworth (who had preached) did notably balance my conceit of the army, speaking freely of their desperate designs. . . . This was exceeding seasonable, and stopped me betimes that I never came nearer to them. But by their zeal I might easily have been drawn aside."* This is a very interesting testimony to the character of the Independents in the army of Cromwell; the more valuable as it comes from a man who was, at the time he gave it, a strong Presbyterian. However, it appears that some who belonged to this party were not so "spiritual and inward" as the soldiers quartered at Sutton. For a time, their conduct occasioned much uneasiness. Some of those who inclined to Independency, persuaded Mr. Stringer to invite Mr. Eaton of Stockport to come over and preach at an "exercise;" and to bring some one with him, to supply both parts of the day. Mr. Eaton was privately asked to bring William Barrett—that "busy pragmatical man" who had already tried to stir up ill feeling at Gawsorth; and "great boasting there was of it by the unsettled hankering party,"

* Autobiography, page 26.

and "great expectation of some acquiescence by it." Newcome, having only the previous month (this was in March 165½) had experience of Barrett, wrote to Mr. Stringer to protest against the ruling elder being suffered to come. But Mr. Stringer, not daring to disoblige his own people, "weakly consents," and William Barrett is invited to preach. But, says Newcome,* "the Lord was pleased to defeat their design, " for his preaching was nothing taking. Some bluntly told him his "sermon would have done well if there had been a curtain before him; " and some others of the aldermen of the town took it so ill that a "sequestrator should preach in their pulpit, that none would own his "invitation; and some of the forwardest for his coming did after say "they hoped it would appear they had no hand in bringing him "thither." Whatever Barrett may have been, Mr. Eaton was a man of very different spirit—gentle, earnest, faithful. But neither the pastor nor his "ruling elder" ever troubled the congregation at Macclesfield again.

Our next reference to the town occurs on June 3rd, 1652, when an exercise was held at the Old Church. The preachers were Mr. Hollinworth of Manchester, and Mr. Angier of Denton. Newcome, as his custom was on such occasions, was present. He gives us this account of the service:—"It was mighty taking to me, and I found this "the wish of my heart—that I could be content to have none but old "men to preach. At my first conversion, I thought very few to be of "my spirit, few right; and was wont sinfully and simply to tax ancient "ministers with formality. But now, I bless God, I do exceedingly "honour them and prefer them; and count myself least of all." It appears that these "exercises" were generally held upon market day; indeed we read that "it was a thing pretty ordinary to have a sermon "on market day." To such occasions we have constantly recurring references in the autobiography already often quoted; but none are of sufficient importance to require notice here.

We are now brought to the year 1657, when Mr. Bradshaw entered upon his pastoral labours at Macclesfield. It may be mentioned, however, that previously to his coming here, he was a candidate, along with Mr. Newcome and another, for the chaplaincy of the Collegiate Church at Manchester. To this, allusion has already been made in the paper upon Gawsorth. It appears to have been through no lack

* Autobiography, page 36.

of qualifications for the appointment that Mr. Bradshaw lost it; for Calamy tells us that "he was a man of incomparable abilities, ready elocution, solid learning, a very good preacher, a ready disputant, and every way well accomplished for the ministry." Yet he had not many supporters; for the people were, generally, prejudiced against him—on what account does not appear.

To Mr. Bradshaw's personal or family history during the five years of his pastorate here we have hardly any allusion; excepting only that he buried two children within a few months of his coming into residence. Nor have we any references to his success in the ministry. We are carried forward, therefore, at once to the memorable year 1662. On Sunday July 20th, 1662, Newcome (then settled in Manchester) tells us that he heard that Mr. Bradshaw was not permitted to preach in the church at Maxefield on that day; and so he and many of his friends went over to Manchester, and spent the day there. The living of S. Michael's, now void, was filled, as we learn from Ormerod, by the *Rev. R. Barlow*; and here our concern with this church ends.

At a time when there was but one place of worship in the whole town, one can well imagine the interest which would centre itself in and around such a person as Mr. Bradshaw is reported to have been. To many, doubtless, then, as now, his abstract right to the living he enjoyed would appear a very questionable thing. But in the day of which we speak, it was held beyond all challenge that the care of religion, as of other things, pertained to the State; and surely it must be confessed that if the State is to have any jurisdiction at all in the appointment of ministers, that jurisdiction is vested in the government of the day—monarchy or republicanism, whichever it may be. Therefore, upon the principle of an alliance between church and state, the Commonwealth had just as much right to appoint ministers, and to govern the church, whilst it was in power, as Charles had to regulate ecclesiastical matters according to his own opinions, when he was restored to his rightful throne. If the one stepped out of its province so did the other. *We* say—both interfered with things they had nothing at all to do with; but we also say that the Protector and his council had far nearer at heart the true spiritual prosperity of the church of Christ than had Charles and his irreligious court. Granted, however, that there is to be any alliance at all between the civil powers and the church, Cromwell only did what he might

reasonably be expected to do, when he made provision for the induction of suitable persons into vacant benefices. Here the challenge lies—not against the Committee of Triers, for upon the principle in question that follows almost as matter of course—but against the very Commonwealth itself. Upon that subject it would be foreign to our purpose to enter.

Reverting to the case of Mr. Bradshaw, one cannot but believe that he would be followed by the sincere regret, and would carry with him the loving confidence, of many of his former flock, to whom he had preached the words of everlasting life. Whether he ever returned to visit the scene of his labours we are not informed. He may have done so; but the operation of the “Five Mile Act,” which was in force for many years onwards from 1664, would prevent his coming within the prescribed limits. In that day, however, it was a very trifling matter to walk eight or ten miles—or more—to some secluded spot, where it was known that the pastor would be in readiness to meet such of his former flock as could find their way to him; and we are not without some hints that the early friends of Nonconformity in Macclesfield, like their brethren in other parts of the country, observed these “private days” at a distance from their homes; and often under the cover of night held their solemn assemblies, protected by those dreary solitudes amongst hill and vale, upon which even “the informer” did not dare to intrude.

When Bradshaw left Macclesfield, he seems to have been permitted to preach, for some time, at Houghton Chapel, in Dean parish, and afterwards (as we learn from the *Life of Martindale*) at Bradshaw Chapel, “by the connivance of Mr. Bradshaw of Bradshaw Hall.” To this statement Calamy adds that he read some of the prayers at Bradshaw Chapel, though he did not subscribe. Martindale says,* “When the former act against conventicles was out, and no new one made, Adam Fearnside, a good friend of mine, desired me to join with a worthy neighbour of his, Mr. James Bradshaw, late of Macclesfield, to keep a day of preaching and prayer at his son-in-law’s house, in a dark corner of Bury parish.” The same writer, speaking of three ministers, of whom Bradshaw was one, calls them “learned men, and very profitable preachers.” That he merited this commendation we learn from Calamy, whose testimony to the

* *Life*, page 194.

excellence of his character, and to his power and acceptance as a preacher, we have cited already. He died in 1683, aged seventy-three years.

Of the friends whom Mr. Bradshaw left at Macclesfield we have now hardly any mention for many years. As to their number, and the places and times of their worship, we are quite in the dark; save only as Newcome gives us now and then occasional intimations that there were some Christian people here whom he used to visit. During the many years that the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act were in force, the Nonconformists, doubtless, met by stealth and under cover of night, in dark and unfrequented parts of the town; never more than four or five persons above the age of sixteen being present, in addition to the members of the family. Many a time at early morning these sufferers for conscience sake left their homes, and threaded their way quickly through the silent streets; trembling at the echo of their own footfall, lest the sound should catch the ear of the informer, ever keenly on the watch for his opportunity to surprise the "conventicle," and claim the reward of his odious employ. Nor was it in cheerful and well lighted rooms that these good people found themselves, even when they had assembled together. They met often in cellars hewn out of the solid rock; where by the dim light of the solitary candle, held so as to throw its feeble rays upon the Bible in the hand of the reader, yet so as to hide its faint glimmerings from the eye of any chance passer by who might suspect what was going on within, they spent the best part of the night in reading, and prayer, and mutual exhortation. They did not dare to sing; and the preacher's voice was toned down to the veriest whisper, lest its slow and solemn cadence should attract the attention of the listener outside, and reveal the secret otherwise so admirably kept. As these little meetings commenced, so they closed before anyone was stirring abroad in the morning—or even before people were awaked from their sleep; and when men came out to their daily employ they found the streets as solitary and as silent as they had left them the night before. In such assemblies as these, most probably, the first Nonconformists of our town strengthened their mutual faith, and comforted one another with the hope of a better and a brighter day.

The earliest mention we have of any such congregation in this neighbourhood occurs in Newcome's autobiography, under date June 15th, 1681. "I set out towards Maxefield. I came to the

“ house of Lawrence Downes, who was one that received good from my ministry many years since ; and the next day I preached to a great many of my first acquaintance in this way. . . . After dinner I went to Maxefield on foot to see Mr. Heyhurst, and some few others I was acquainted with.” This Mr. Heyhurst, it may be observed, was a candidate for Gawsworth at the time that Mr. Edge obtained the living. On the authority of Oliver Heywood we learn that he was vicar of Leigh; but was turned out upon the Act of Uniformity, and came to reside in Macclesfield. On December 1st, 1683, Newcome again set out towards Cheshire, and stopped at the house of Lawrence Downes, preaching there, and being much refreshed to see many he had comfort in when at Gawsworth. He passed by Gawsworth on his journey; and we may therefore infer that he passed through Macclesfield too. No further reference to the town occurs until 1693; but before that time the Toleration Act had given their rightful liberty to the Nonconformists; and here, as elsewhere, a chapel had been erected and opened for the worship of God.

Of this event, however, no records remain. We find the chapel built—how, or at what cost, and by whom originated, we do not know. Yet we are not without some information as to the state of the Nonconformist interest rather earlier than 1693. The chapel dates from 1692; but in March 1692 the first meeting of Presbyterian and Independent ministers of Cheshire was held at Macclesfield: the association being organised in June following. Amongst the ministers who subscribed the terms of agreement there appears this signature, “J. EATON, at *Macclesfield*.” This Mr. Eaton was, in all probability, the first Dissenting minister in this town. He had studied medicine, and graduated his M.D. In principle, he was a Congregationalist; and had entered Mr. Frankland’s academy in 1678.

From the fact of the meeting above referred to having been held in Macclesfield, it may be inferred that the interest must have been comparatively strong, or there was no reason why the ministers should have assembled here, rather than in a more central part of the county. And we doubt not the proposal to build a place of worship received a welcome impulse, from the association of the town with the interests of Nonconformity in the county at large. In point of actual numbers, Bishop Gastrell tells us that in his time (1715) there were in Macclesfield 126 Dissenting families; which families furnished to the Presbyterian Meeting House one hundred members, and to the

Quakers' Meeting House about eighty members. So here is a congregation of about one hundred persons in 1715. Very probably there would be the same in 1692—or thereabouts.

Referring for a moment to Dr. Eaton, we have several notices of him. He was, as appears from his diploma, a physician; and towards the close of his life attained to a high eminence in his profession. From a MS. in Dr. Williams' library in London, we learn that Dr. Grosvenor's *Essay on Health*, London, 1748, is dedicated with sentiments of great respect and gratitude to "Dr. Joseph Eaton, of the "College of Physicians." That this is the same person who ministered to the church in Macclesfield appears from the MS. in question. He appears to have moved in good society in London. From one who knew him well we have this testimony to his character:—At an ordination "about Midsummer 1696, Dr. Eaton of Macclesfield was "present, and prayed at the imposition of hands upon Mr. W. Bagshaw. "Dr. Eaton left Macclesfield some time after this, and removed to "Nottingham, and then into the South—I think to, or near, Colchester; "and thence to London, applying himself wholly to the practice of "physic, in which he did good service. There I met, and had a good "deal of agreeable conversation with him, in October 1724. He "delighted much to hear of, and talk of his brethren, and the good "old Christians of his acquaintance in Cheshire and Derbyshire. "He was Congregational in his judgment; but moderate and candid "to those of different sentiments. He had a genteel spirit, and a "cheerful temper, and arrived at a good old age."

During Dr. Eaton's pastorate, a "Reformation Sermon" was preached in this town before the ministers of Cheshire, by Matthew Henry. His subject was—the Sanctification of the Sabbath—from Nehemiah xiii. 21. These sermons were delivered from time to time by various ministers, in different parts of the county. Mr. Henry preached here on May 9th, 1699. The first of the "movable lectures" then set on foot was to be delivered at Stockport, and the second at Congleton.

Dr. Eaton's connection with the newly formed church is rendered still more interesting, however, from the fact that a question arose amongst the members as to the proper mode of receiving the Lord's Supper. It would appear that the matter was very earnestly in debate;

* Dr. Clegg's Life of Rev. John Ashe, page 60.

and as the best means of settling it, the whole question was referred to several ministers in London, of whom John Howe was one. Upon this occasion, Mr. Howe wrote a letter to Dr. Eaton, expressing his opinion of the points in dispute. The Cheshire Minute Book contains a copy of this letter, which we give in full :—“ Mr. Howe’s letter “ in y^e name of y^e London ministers relating to that affair [the gesture “ to be used by the minister in the administration of the Lord’s Supper] “ read and approved of, and recommended to y^e congregation at “ Macclesfield, as an expedient to settle that matter: a copy of “ which letter here followeth :—

“ Sir,—A case was propounded this day among divers ministers “ which I was (privately) told was yours, viz., that some of your Society “ scrupled to receive y^e Lord’s Supper otherwise than as having y^e “ elements delivered immediately to them by your own hand. Two “ things were in reference hereto agreed unanimously; i. That they “ might very lawfully and fittly passe from hand to hand, which y^e “ rule forbids not and (if we may judge by parity of reason) seems “ rather to favour. And herein, y^e constant practise of y^e Church of “ Scotland hath long concurred, and still doth. ii. However, that it “ being a matter of indifferency, you ought to offend none herein, “ nor impose a thing not determined expressly by rule as a Condition “ of Church Communion. And therefore to let such as desire it from “ your own hand be placed near you (successively if not altogether, “ as ’tis the manner in Holland to fill y^e tables successively: this may “ [be] done with you, if one table will not receive at once all that are “ unsatisfy’d to receive otherwise) that so none may be deprived of “ so needfull a priviledge needlessly, either through your own weak- “ ness, or y^e want of your indulgence thereto, which their case may “ require. And in this advice y^e brethren that were consulted for- “ merly of both persuasions, Presbyterial and Congregational (though “ now there is no such distinction with us), were most unanimous. “ And it was left to be communicated to you by your affectionate
JOHN HOWE.

“ Lond., Ap. 6th, ’91.”

How far this very reasonable suggestion met the views of those who had propounded this “ case of conscience ” we are not informed. The question, however, was evidently regarded as of great moment at the time. Nor, as matter of history, is it less instructive to us than it was of consequence to our forefathers, as affecting the peace and harmony of the church.

Upon the occasion of Dr. Eaton's leaving Macclesfield, he seems to have had much to do to justify himself to his brethren in Cheshire. A good deal of correspondence passed between him and the association; and in one of his letters he says, "I find the work and labour of the ministry in that constancy this place requires, above my strength; being under a necessity to continue and keep up a practice in medicine." However, he at length resigned his pastorate; and his place here was, ere long, filled by the Rev. NATHANAEL SCHOLES, who, like Dr. Eaton, was a pupil of Mr. Frankland. Mr. Scholes was not long spared to preach the gospel, for he died when only thirty-seven years of age. He was entered at Mr. Frankland's academy in April 1682. He was much beloved by his ministerial brethren; and though so young, seems to have occupied a prominent position amongst them, as we infer from the frequency with which he took part in the numerous ordinations held in Macclesfield, Knutsford, and the immediate neighbourhood. He was the son of a "learned and godly minister in Manchester," who was ejected from Norton in Derbyshire, in 1662. Concerning him—Mr. Jeremy Scholes—Newcome has this entry in his diary:—April 27th, 1685, "Precious, learned, modest, pious Mr. Scholes died." His learning and modesty, however, do not appear to have made him very acceptable in his public duties; for in another place, Mr. Newcome, speaking of a "private day," says he was "distracted at last by good Mr. Scholes; who was tedious, and oft unintelligible." "I grieve for him," he adds. The son does not seem to have shared his father's unfortunate peculiarities; for Matthew Henry, lamenting his death on October 10th, 1702, says, "I hear that my worthy friend and dear brother Mr. Scoles [the name is spelt indifferently Scoles and Scholes] died last Friday. He was almost three years younger than I; a very ingenious man, a florid preacher, and very serious and affectionate in all his performances. He met with affliction in his marriage, which occasioned some unevenness in his temper; but he was a man of true piety and integrity. He died of a palsy, in complication with other distempers. His afflictions had broken his spirits very much. The Lord prepare me to go after."* We may append to this notice the following extract from the Minute Book of the Cheshire Association of Presbyterian and Independent ministers:—"October 2nd,

* Tong's Life of Henry, page 279.

“ 1702, it pleased God to remove by death Mr. Nat. Scholes of Macclesfield; a very acute and judicious man; of good learning, moderate principles, and excellent ministerial abilities; of great readiness and fervency in prayer and preaching; who had laboured in the work of the ministry several years at Newton Heath near Manchester, and at Macclesfield, with good acceptance and success.”

During the time of this good man's ministry, an ordination was held at his chapel, of which we have the following account in Matthew Henry's diary:—“ June 17th, 1700. This day I went to Macclesfield to join with my brethren the ministers of Cheshire and Lancashire in an ordination. I have formerly declined that work; but now I see it is a service that must be done. I am satisfied in the validity of ordinations by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; and though we want a national establishment, yet that cannot be essential. I went with a true desire to honour God, and promote the interests of Christ's kingdom. The next day was the day appointed for that work. I engaged with fear and trembling. Mr. Scholes prayed, and read a psalm and chapter. Mr. Lawrence prayed. Mr. Chorlton preached from Ephesians iii. 21, *Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.* Mr. Jones prayed. Then Mr. Angier, who was moderator, demanded of the candidates, in order, a confession of their faith, and a distinct answer to the questions; which was done fully. The candidates were [here follow seven names]; the ordainers were Mr. Angier, Mr. Chorlton, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Jones, Mr. Scholes, Mr. Aldred, and myself. After the ordination I gave the exhortation. I desire to give glory to God for any assistance therein. We had a very great assembly; and I trust God was in the midst of us of a truth. We gave them certificates. Mr. Billingsley of Hull was providentially with us. It was a very comfortable day, blessed be God.”

The pulpit at Macclesfield being now vacant, Mr. ADAM HOLLAND, M.D., who was first settled at Middlewich, had an invitation to become pastor of the congregation in this town. By the advice of various brethren in the ministry, he accepted the invitation shortly afterwards; and entered upon his stated ministry probably about 1703. He had been ordained at Knutsford, as we learn from the Life of Matthew Henry, on September 27th, 1692. The day previous to the ordination was spent in examining the candidates (six in number) in the languages; on which occasion they read and defended their theses.

The following day—that of the public service—was kept as a solemn fast; and Henry has recorded a good day. “The candidates (he says) gave good satisfaction. Blessed be God for the rising generation. The Lord double his spirit upon them.”

Dr. Holland seems to have had good success in his new sphere; for, from the MS. in Dr. Williams’ library (to which we are also indebted for some part of our information about Dr. Eaton), we learn that Dr. Holland had, in 1715, “five hundred hearers at Macclesfield; of whom twenty were gentlemen.”* In August of the same year, he preached the sermon before the associated ministers, from Acts xx. 28. He died in 1716.

The Rev. THOMAS CULCHETH succeeded him in May 1717, and continued pastor of the church till 1751. His successor was the Rev. B. STREET, a native of Wilmslow, who was educated at Dr. Rotherham’s academy at Kendal. He died in 1764, aged forty-seven years. After him occurs the name of the Rev. JOHN BOLT, who removed to Bradwell in 1772. His place, again, was occupied by the Rev. JOHN PALMER, who came to Macclesfield in 1772, and resigned his pastorate in 1779. Of these ministers we have no further record than their names; nor have we any information as to the state of the congregation under their care.

Whilst Mr. Palmer was here, however, that secession occurred which led to the erection of Townley-street Chapel. Mr. Palmer was in sentiment an Arian; having imbibed his opinions at the academy at Warrington, where he was educated. That institution became, ere long, avowedly Unitarian; and Mr. Palmer had not long been here before he gave evidence that his tendencies were all in the same direction. Hence arose contention and strife, which ultimately led to a secession on the part of the Evangelical section of the congregation; leaving the chapel in the hands of the Unitarians, who have continued to occupy it to this day.

Here, therefore, our immediate notice of this place of worship ends. We follow the seceders; who, when they had retired from King Edward-street Chapel, joined the Wesleyans, and worshipped with them for some years; but this arrangement was not of long continuance, for we soon find meetings held by these friends in private houses, for the purpose of religious worship.

* MS. in Red Cross-street Library.

TOWNLEY-STREET INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.

In the original church-book belonging to Townley-street Chapel, we have the following account of the circumstances that led to the erection of this place of worship—the “New Meeting,” as it seems to have been called. The writer does not give his name; but he was evidently identified with the movement from the very first. The entry bears date January 1st, 1790.

“About the year 1777 it pleased the Lord to open the understanding of a few in this place to see more clearly into the doctrines of grace, agreeable to the Assembly’s catechism as collected from God’s holy word; who also were desirous to follow the discipline and order of a church of Christ according to what is called ‘Independent’ or ‘Congregational,’ as being most agreeable to the apostolic worship and discipline. It pleased the Lord to incline our hearts to meet together for prayer for His direction, assistance, and blessing. We agreed to invite neighbouring ministers of the Independent denomination to come and preach to us as frequent as opportunities would permit of their coming, and we could raise money to bear their expenses. Some time after this took place, the Lord was pleased to remove one of the principal supporters to our small congregation, and preaching was not carried on till the year 1783. In the long interval, from ministers not coming, and from want of money to bear the necessary expenses, we continued our private meetings for prayer, singing and reading God’s word. The number which attended these meetings still increased. We made another attempt to get ministers to come, as we could bear their expenses—once in a month, once in three weeks, at last, once in a fortnight. In this second attempt the sum of sevenpence was raised the first evening it was mentioned to a few then in company together; and increased from that time forwards. The ministers were from Newcastle, Leek, Congleton, and Gatley. This continued till the year 1785, when Mr. GATES, from London, was invited to preach amongst us, as he was recommended to us by one of the neighbouring ministers. We then could raise about twelve shillings or fourteen shillings per week. Mr. Gates came amongst us, and the word was profitable to many. The preaching then was in one of our friends’ houses. The house being too small to contain the

“ hearers, we hired a room; prejudice in the town rose high against
“ us, and we were removed to several different places, one of which
“ was a barn in Mill-street. After being at some expense to put it in
“ repair, and make it a little convenient, we were only permitted to
“ worship in the said barn for three Sabbaths, and turned into the
“ streets. After that we got an old silk shop [at the bottom of
“ Cuckstoolpit Hill], and were soon turned out of that place, and
“ three or four others afterwards.

“ Mr. Gates removed from us after staying near eighteen months,
“ and not without some uneasiness from unhappy tempers which got
“ amongst us. Near the same time was recommended to us a minister
“ from Wolverhampton. In his first coming, a proposal was made
“ to build a place for public worship; and he was instrumental in
“ collecting money for the same. The ground was purchased, the
“ foundation laid, and carried up some feet in height, when some
“ things were observed in the minister from Wolverhampton that were
“ not pleasing, but much to his prejudice; and he removed from us,
“ not without much trouble and uneasiness.

“ Having no minister, and we unable to carry on the building
“ ourselves, we petitioned some of the gentlemen belonging to the
“ new chapel in Mosley-street, Manchester, to help us; [promising]
“ that if they would carry on the building, we would resign our right
“ to them, and they should be trustees for the same. The said gen-
“ tlemen accepted the proposal, carried on the building, and it was
“ opened March 16th, 1788, by the Rev. Mr. Morris [Maurice] of
“ Stockport. Here it may be necessary to observe that Mr. Whit-
“ tenbury of Manchester advanced the money for the building, from
“ the time the gentlemen took it into their hands as trustees. We
“ were afterwards supplied with ministers from different places, till
“ the Lord sent, to our great assistance, the Rev. Mr. Scott of Dray-
“ ton, in Shropshire [better known as Captain Scott]. In May, the
“ same year above mentioned, Mr. Scott ordered, at his own expense,
“ the communion pew to be made, and twelve pews next to the same;
“ the chapel being only finished with forms or benches by the Man-
“ chester friends. In July the same year a Mr. KINGSTON, who had
“ not finished his studies at Homerton, was invited to supply for a
“ few weeks. He staid till the Lord removed him by death in January
“ 1789; and is buried in the chapel. Mr. Scott preached his funeral
“ sermon to a crowded congregation. Mr. Kingston was esteemed a

“worthy young man, and was likely (if spared) to have been useful. “The congregation was supplied with neighbouring ministers till May following; when Mr. Scott recommended Mr. WILDBORE, who then was on his return from Dublin, going into Cornwall. Agreeable to Mr. Scott’s request, Mr. W. preached three Sabbaths, and was invited by Mr. Scott and the members to return to Macclesfield from Cornwall; which invitation he accepted. In the summer (1789) the trustees at Manchester added four yards in length to the chapel for a vestry; and made galleries quite round the chapel. Mr. Scott then gave 100*l.* towards the expenses; and afterwards made the congregation a present of all the branches for lighting the chapel, and also made a purchase of some ground, intended if wanted in future for the benefit of the chapel, as Mr. Scott shall think most proper. The Lord’s kindness in raising this congregation such a kind friend in the Rev. Mr. Scott, we hope will be gratefully remembered by us and by our posterity.”

This unvarnished and unpretending story we have extracted at length from the minute book of the church. For some it will have more interest than for others; though possibly the real value of such details is yet to be proved. In years to come they may be invested with an interest far surpassing that which they now possess. These things were written in troublous times; and are read in times of peacefulness and prosperity of which our forefathers did not dream. That day may be called—perhaps scornfully—“the day of small things.” So it was; but it was a day that God did not despise, and one that we will not despise;—a day that He was not ashamed to bless, and one that we will not be slow to record as the first beginning of His work in our midst.

But little can be added, from other sources, to the account just given. However, from one who was himself a sharer in the transactions in question, we learn that the first meeting numbered but about five or six persons;—people in humble circumstances, and not able to support a stated ministry; even though the preachers came only for their horse-hire. It does not appear that their earliest services were held on the Sabbath Day; for we read in a letter from Mr. David Whitmore to the church and congregation at Mosley-street, Manchester, that when the preaching was re-commenced (after some cessation) in July 1784, they met “in a dwelling-house, which was “set apart once a month on a Thursday evening for about six months.”

An arrangement soon being made for the fortnightly visits of ministers for about twenty weeks, the Rev. David Simpson, minister of Christ Church (the author of the well-known *Plea for Religion*) “was so kind (says Mr. Whitmore) as to offer us his schoolroom for the cause at that time; which we accepted of;—the dwelling-house not being sufficient to contain all the people. At the end of this time we were obliged to return to the dwelling-house, winter then coming on; and but very few of those ministers could with any convenience come.”

It appears that the chapel was projected in 1784 at an expense of 200*l.*; but 60*l.* only was received. The resources of the people were then but about four shillings and sixpence per week, for all purposes of worship; and to this sum twenty-four people subscribed. When Mr. Gates came, there were about sixty subscribers; and (as above stated) the weekly subscriptions averaged twelve shillings for the minister, besides other expenses. But in Mr. Gates' day, no fixed place could be had for the services; and the congregation was driven from place to place. The barn, to which reference has been made above, belonged to a clergyman who lived some distance away. As soon as he knew the purpose for which the building had been taken, he gave instant notice to quit, or he would enter a suit at law. The congregation were therefore turned adrift again, after incurring considerable expenses in repairing the place, and fitting it up for worship. “We cannot (says Mr. Whitmore in the letter referred to above) as yet hear of any other place; therefore, at this time [April 1st, 1786], we expect to be under the necessity of returning to the dwelling-house again.” The appeal made to the Manchester friends for assistance was kindly and cheerfully responded to; and three gentlemen—Messrs. Clegg, Dunwiddie, and Whittenbury—came over and helped to build the chapel. The building was resumed—for it had been commenced—and was completed in the following year. It must at that time have measured about forty-five feet by thirty-seven, in its interior dimensions. It had no gallery; nor was there any vestry attached to it. The cost was about 400*l.* The ordinance of the Lord's Supper was administered for the first time on June 29th, 1788; Captain Scott presiding on the occasion.

Mr. KINGSTON—named in the extract given above—appears to have commenced his ministerial career at the early age of sixteen years; and he died when only twenty-one. He came from Congleton;

and on his interment, which took place at the foot of the pulpit stairs, the Rev. John Ralph of Congleton officiated—as appears from the Register of Burials. He was the first person interred within the walls (there being at that time no burial ground); and only three years ago his grave was discovered, in making alterations in the chapel. During his short ministry his name occurs but three times, as administering the ordinance of baptism. He died beloved and lamented by the people amongst whom he was called to labour; and was committed to his last resting place “amidst much weeping on the part of “the church and congregation.”

The circumstances under which Mr. WILDBORE was chosen as Mr. Kingston's successor have been abundantly detailed in the extract from the church book, given above. We learn that Mr. Wildbore's labours were not by any means confined to Macclesfield—though even here he so increased the congregation, that the chapel had to be enlarged, and to have a gallery built, in addition to other improvements—but embraced the villages round about; and in Gawsworth, especially, his services were blest. For the purpose of defraying the cost of the alterations in the chapel, Mr. Wildbore undertook to go and solicit subscriptions from neighbouring churches; but, before he set out, there arose a misunderstanding on his part as to the feeling of his people towards him; and, imagining that his services were no longer acceptable, he accepted an invitation to a distant part of the country. Returning home, he made known his decision to the people. Their grief at finding that they were to lose him knew no bounds. His farewell sermon was preached from the words, *Finally, my brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.* Amidst the emotions of minister and people, the service could with difficulty be concluded; and Mr. Wildbore declared that had he known of such a strong feeling of attachment towards himself he would not have entertained the invitation he had received.

The notices we have of Mr. Wildbore's immediate successors are very scanty. For the twelve years that followed (1792—1804), the people passed through many and heavy trials; in part arising from themselves, and in part from the extreme odium that attached to them at a time when “Church and King” was the rallying cry of the Tories, who then carried everything before them. The members of the church and congregation at Townley-street were often in peril of

life and property; for, as Dissenters, it was taken for granted that they were *revolutionists* too; and to no purpose did they openly avow their attachment to the throne and person of the king. They were outrageously insulted as they passed through the streets on their lawful business; they were a byword of derision as “Calvinists” and “Jacobins;” and their meetings for religious worship were liable to perpetual interruption; as when (for example) on one occasion, having assembled for a prayer meeting, they were compelled to extinguish the lights, and to return home, lest damage should be done to the chapel, and violence be offered to themselves.

During the interval of this lengthened persecution—for such, in fact, it was—four ministers accepted and relinquished the pastorate of the church. The first of these was a Mr. WHITEFOOT; who appears (from the entries in the Baptismal Register) to have remained here from June 1793 to May 1794. His successor was the Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS of Ashburn, whose connection with the church was as unfortunate for the church as for himself. It appears, however, that many very frivolous and vexatious charges were laid against him, which were nothing but the invention of a malicious spirit.

Three years after Mr. Williams left Macclesfield, the vacant pulpit at Townley-street was filled by the Rev. DANIEL DUNKERLEY, who was ordained to the work of the ministry on August 15th, 1798. Mr. Dunkerley was the first person thus publicly ordained in Townley-street Chapel. On this occasion Mr. Roby, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Anlezark of Stockport, Mr. Job Wilson and others took part in the service. During the interval 1794—97, however, the pulpit had been occupied much by the Rev. Job Wilson; and also by Captain Scott, whose interest in the church was most unremitting. It was very largely through his exertions that the pulpit was supplied with ministers; and Mr. Scott's care of the church was that of a true-hearted and faithful “overseer” of the fold of Christ. In financial matters he was the chief supporter of the chapel, and in all circumstances of difficulty his advice was the first to be obtained. At the same time he did not scruple to reprove—and that very sharply—wherever he deemed it needful; and it must be confessed that now and then he ruled with a rod of iron. So much was this the case that we are told by an aged friend, at whose house at Matlock Mr. Scott used to be a constant visitor, that on one occasion when the captain was expected to visit the church at Drayton, one of the brethren

prayed that it might please God to bring their brother safely to them, *but that he might leave the rod behind him.* Still, Mr. Scott could be gentle if he could be severe, and it may be interesting to quote a passage from one of his letters to the church at Townley-street, not only as showing the kind of oversight the captain exercised over the churches he was instrumental in forming, but as being otherwise to the purpose of this narrative.

Referring to the anticipated settlement of Mr. Dunkerley, he writes:—"I am glad Mr. Dunkerley is so well liked. I have not the pleasure of knowing [him]; having never, that I recollect, seen him. "I hear nothing but good of him; therefore 'twill be well to engage "him to supply you for some time. Perhaps it may be better for him "to go and return as he does at present, than to quite leave his "business. I think preachers should take such an important step "deliberately; and a people not be hasty in persuading to such a "measure; for if we draw any one out of certain bread, we are bound "to maintain those who leave it for our sakes—that is if they behave "well. . . . I should have been glad to have heard whether the "congregation is increased under him, or whether good appears to "have been done; and likewise how the outward people seem to "like him. This will appear from their attendance or absenting "themselves, and their increase or decrease. God bless you all!

"In haste—much haste,

"Your servant in the Lord,

"JONATHAN SCOTT.

"Matlock; very late. Saturday night, y^e 10th Dec., 1796."

Mr. Dunkerley removed from Macclesfield to Loxley. His name occurs last in the Register of Baptisms, on November 7th, 1801. The next entry is dated April 19th, 1802, and the name of the officiating minister is that of the Rev. JAMES RABAN, who remained in the town for about two years. In the *Congregational Magazine* for 1821 (Supplement), we read as follows concerning the circumstances under which Mr. Raban entered on his duties:—"From the influence of "Methodism on the one hand, and hyper-Calvinism on the other "hand, Mr. Raban found the cause at Townley-street Chapel at a "very low ebb. But, having been recommended to make a trial of "it by his friend the Rev. Melville Horne, he commenced, and con- "tinued a series of difficult and persevering labours; and a considerable "revival was the happy result. His general intercourse with the

“ respectable inhabitants of various persuasions, and his ready attention to the poor and afflicted contributed greatly to this. He projected and commenced the Sunday-school; but, as it was deemed a work of supererogation, he was actually obliged at first to procure books, and teach the children himself, in addition to his public labours on the Sabbath. Yet he persevered, and succeeded in establishing a large school, which his successor had the pleasure to see increase to the extent of between four hundred and five hundred children; and this led the way to the subsequent revival of the cause. Mr. Raban also preached in some of the adjacent villages, till the spirit of the dominant party contrived to frustrate his further efforts. He went to Macclesfield at the beginning of 1802, and left it towards the close of 1803.”

On Sunday August 26th, 1804, the second “Charity Sermon,” in behalf of the Sunday-schools connected with Townley-street, was preached by the “Rev. J. H. BROWNING, minister of Hope Chapel, Bristol-Hotwells” (as he is described in the circular announcing the services). This Mr. Browning almost immediately afterwards became the minister of the chapel; for on November 25th, 1804, we find his name in the Registers, and from thence onwards to the year 1816, he continued to exercise his ministry at this place of worship. The circular announcing his sermon in 1804, contains the following report of the state of the school from 1803-4:—“The managers of the above schools beg leave to solicit the assistance of a generous public in behalf of more than *one hundred and sixty poor children*, who are by means of this institution taught to read the Holy Scriptures and observe the Sabbath; and to the more deserving part of them are given *Religious Tracts* and other books calculated to improve their morals. The advantages arising from *Sunday-schools* have long been evident in this *commercial town*, and every succeeding year manifests their increasing utility; it is therefore hoped the liberal will consider them worthy of their patronage and support.” On this occasion the collection amounted to nearly 40*l.*

Soon after Mr. Browning commenced his ministry the congregations increased so much that alterations were required in the chapel, which was, in fact, enlarged considerably; and the school-room—a building of one story in height—was erected, but at what cost does not appear. Previously to the year 1805, or thereabouts, the children of the Sunday-school had been taught in the chapel. The third annual

sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Boden of Sheffield; and the circular announcing the sermon contains these intimations:—"During the service (which will begin at half an hour past two o'clock) the following selection of music will be performed." [Here follow two hymns and a long selection from "The Messiah," "Samson," "Joshua," &c.] Also at the foot of the circular we read:—"For the better accommodation of those who wish to contribute to the charity, the managers request that all persons will give *silver* as they come in. This is not meant as a substitute for the collection, which will be made as usual after the children's hymn." A few years afterwards, when two sermons were preached, a ticket of free admission was given in the morning to those who might desire to attend in the evening. This practice was maintained for many years.

The enlargement of the chapel referred to above, took place in the year 1810, and the building was re-opened for service on Sunday, 25th November, 1810; when a sermon was preached by the Rev. Joseph Smith of Manchester. The handbill announcing his service intimates that, "as is usual, it is expected that silver will be given at the door," and then proceeds to give a programme of the selection of music to be performed on the occasion. In the following year the school sermon was preached by the Rev. Thomas Spencer of Liverpool, and to this day many retain the most lively recollection of his services; his youthful appearance, his holy fervour, and the charm of his eloquence having produced an impression on many hearts that will never be effaced.

The school premises were, in 1818, settled on trust, at an expense of nearly 30*l.* In consequence of this heavy charge upon the funds, the committee appeal for additional contributions, in order that the school may be furnished with the necessary means of education. In the year following, there were on the class boards 142 boys and 159 girls; in all 301 scholars. As yet there was but one room available for instruction; and some of the classes met in the chapel. Ere this time, however, the ministry of Mr. Browning had ceased. It seems that misunderstandings and disputes of a personal kind arose; and Mr. Browning determined to withdraw. He was much respected as a man, and many of the fruits of his ministry remain to this day. He tendered his resignation in July 1816.

After his departure the pulpit was occupied by several ministers, as supplies; but in June 1819 the Rev. JOHN HARRIS accepted the

pastoral oversight of the church. He remained at Townley-street till December 1824. The Sabbath-school was still increasing; for in 1820 the committee report 408 scholars—an increase of 107 during the year. In 1821, 470 scholars are returned as receiving instruction in the school. The sermon was preached by the Rev. James Pridie of Manchester. During the ensuing twelve months, the number of scholars became so great as to necessitate the building of an additional room, over the room already in use. To meet the cost of this enlargement, the scholars and teachers contributed, weekly, for some months; and on the occasion of the opening of the room, a service was held on June 9th, 1822, when Dr. Clunie of Manchester preached. About 83*l.* seems to have been contributed to clear off the debt upon the building. In 1823, the number of scholars receiving instruction amounted to 527—a number far greater than can be expected in our day; for at that time there were probably not one-fourth the number of schools in the town that there are now, though with a population (in 1821) of nearly 21,000, including Macclesfield and Sutton.

We find in the minutes of the school a resolution, under date 1823, adopted by the trustees, the effect of which was to throw open the ground in front of the schoolroom as a burying ground. Hitherto burials had taken place within the precincts of the chapel, or in the small plot of ground conveyed in the deed of the chapel, along with the ground on which the building itself stands. In consequence of this resolution, the available space for interments was increased about fourfold. Now (1863) the ground is closed against burials, except only in existing vaults or graves, and under certain conditions imposed by the Privy Council in 1855. The average number of interments, however, for the fifty years last past, has been only a little over three per annum.

Reverting to the progress of the Sunday-school, it appears that in 1825 the number of scholars was 566; but the following year a decrease occurred, to which reference is thus made in the report:—
“When the present state of trade, with the convulsions that have occurred, is considered, through which many families have been obliged to flee from our once flourishing and inviting town, we cannot but rejoice that there are now 325 girls and 222 boys, making a total of 547 scholars, receiving instruction in this school.”

Previously to this date, however, the pulpit at Townley-street was occupied by the Rev. DAVID DUNKERLEY; who, like his predecessor

of the same name, came from the church at Loxley near Sheffield. Mr. Dunkerley commenced his stated duties on November 20th, 1825; and relinquished his charge on April 5th, 1829. Shortly after he left Macclesfield, he emigrated to Canada; and is now settled in the ministry at Durham, in Canada East. During his pastorate thirty-six persons were added to the fellowship of the church. The numbers attending the Sunday-school, also, were well sustained, for, in the annual report for 1828, we find it recorded that up to that time 4,262 young people had been trained in this institution; and respecting these it is added that 1,865 had been advanced to the Bible classes, and had, therefore, received instruction in writing as well as reading. From the same source we learn that six hundred children were in attendance in 1828; the highest number ever attained.

It may here be mentioned that in the same year, upon the occasion of the decease of the then superintendent, Mr. Thomas Batt, the teachers unanimously elected to the vacant office Mr. James Rathbone, who had been connected with the Macclesfield Sunday-school for twenty-seven years. Mr. Rathbone accepted the office; and continued to hold it, without any intermission, to the day of his death; winning for himself year by year the renewed confidence, and enjoying the affectionate regard both of the teachers and of the scholars too. He died August 31st, 1863. He had been a member of the church for fifty-seven years; and was chosen to the deacon's office in 1826. His course was that of a consistent and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In 1829, when the pulpit at Townley-street was still vacant, the annual sermons in behalf of the school were preached by the Rev. SAMUEL BOWEN, then classical tutor at Newtown College, North Wales. This service rendered by Mr. Bowen led ultimately to his receiving and accepting an invitation to the pastorate of the church; commencing his stated ministry on October 10th, 1830. There were at that time but sixty-one members in full communion with the church. Referring for a moment to the increase of the church in years past, it may be mentioned that there were in 1785 but six persons in membership; of whom the last died as recently as 1842. There were then no further accessions till 1789, when one person was admitted to membership. Forty-one were added to the church up to the year 1800. In 1828 there were, nominally, eighty members in fellowship; but in 1830, this number was reduced, through deaths

and removals, to sixty-one. During the thirty years of Mr. Bowen's ministry he admitted 373 persons to communion with the church,—the fruit, yet not the full reward, of his much-honoured labours in this part of "the church of the Living God." During this period, too, many improvements were made in the chapel and school premises; not the least of which was the introduction of an organ into the chapel, about the year 1838. This instrument was removed in 1846 or 1847, to make room for a new one, erected at a cost of 150*l.*

In April, 1860, Mr. Bowen retired from the ministry, carrying with him the sympathy and regard of all with whom he had been associated in the work of the Lord. He was almost immediately succeeded at Townley-street by the present minister of the chapel (the Rev. S. W. McALL, M.A.), who had just completed his course of study at Cheshunt College. His ordination took place in October 1860.

Here our review of the history of this place of worship naturally comes to a close. This only we will add; the very existence of this church is, like that of many other churches which have originated under similar circumstances, a protest—first of all for religious liberty and equality, as the great principles involved in the struggle of 1662—and then for soundness of faith and doctrine, as involved in the dissensions that led to the separation from the older church in King Edward-street in 1777. Looking only to the chapel itself as an edifice consecrated to the service of the King of Kings, the building may be deemed unworthy of the present day; unworthy, too, of the great and holy cause to which it is dedicated. But a reproach sadder yet will fall upon those who look up to this as their house of prayer, if they shall ever be found unfaithful to the great principle that the Church of Christ is to be held sacred from the intrusion of any authority there save only that of the Church's Redeemer and Lord; or unfaithful to the still more cherished principles of that "Gospel of the grace of God," which derives its virtue alone from the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; and which seeks, and finds, the assurance of its triumph at length over sin and death, not in the will of man, but in the power of the Holy Ghost dwelling in the hearts of "all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

ROE-STREET CHAPEL, MACCLESFIELD.*

The beginning of this place of worship will be best understood from the following extracts, from the *Evangelical Magazine* for the years 1828 and 1829. In the magazine for 1828, page 445, it is thus written:—

“New Independent Interest and Chapel at Macclesfield, Cheshire.

“The peculiar circumstances in which this new and hopeful interest has originated, have excited a powerful feeling on its behalf in the neighbouring churches. In 1814 a large and handsome building for a Sunday-school, on a general and liberal basis, was erected at Macclesfield, including a spacious room for occasional lectures and sermons. The lectures meeting with much encouragement, the stated labours of the Rev. R. S. Mc.ALL were obtained, who ministered at the school for nearly nine years.

“An elegant place of worship, called S. George’s Chapel, was then built, with the view of forming a church on the Congregational plan, under the pastoral care of Mr. Mc.All. The expense of the erection was mostly sustained by sums advanced by shareholders, in whom the appointment of the minister was vested, and who gave the pulpit to Mr. Mc.All for life.

“Since his removal, in January 1827, to Manchester, after labouring at S. George’s for three years, the place has been supplied by ministers and students connected with the Congregational Dissenters.

“In the spring of this year the church unanimously and most of the seatholders united in an invitation to the Rev. G. B. KIDD, student in the Independent College, Rotherham, to the pastoral office over them; but a majority of the shareholders refused to admit Mr. Kidd to the pulpit, and adopted measures for connecting the chapel with the Establishment.

“The shareholders favourable to Mr. K.’s appointment, having consulted with ministers in the county, and the adjacent neighbourhood, offered to purchase the shares of the other proprietors. This being declined, they then proposed to sell their own shares, which has been accepted.

“In consequence of this arrangement, the church and people of whom Mr. Kidd has affectionately accepted the pastoral care,

* Furnished by the Rev. George Barrow Kidd, minister of the place.

“ have seceded from S. George’s, and are, at present, kindly permitted by the Independent Church in Townley-street to worship in their chapel twice on the Lord’s Day; but the erection of a NEW CHAPEL, to seat eight hundred hearers, in a more central situation than S. George’s, has been commenced. This is expected to be ready for use early in the ensuing year; and it will be placed in trust in the way usual among Dissenters.

“ It is gratifying to state that unity and good feeling eminently prevail among the people. The shareholders who adhere to them have devoted the moneys returned to them to the new erection; and donations and weekly subscriptions, according to their ability, have been commenced by the church and congregation.

“ This case, so peculiar and interesting in its origin and history, and so important to the town of Macclesfield and to the cause of religious liberty in general, cannot, it is hoped, fail to obtain the liberal support and fervent prayers of friends throughout the kingdom.”

The following is the account of the opening of the chapel, given in the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1829, page 414:—

“ *Roe-street Independent Chapel, Macclesfield.* This new and elegant chapel was opened for the worship of Almighty God on Thursday the 14th, and Sunday the 17th of May. The dimensions are sixty-seven feet by forty-seven, and it will comfortably accommodate nine hundred persons. The front is of polished stone (and is the gift of the architect, Mr. Stringer), with a handsome portico of the same material; and the whole effect is extremely chaste and elegant. The expense of the whole (excepting the land which is leasehold), including the surrounding walls, gates, and palisades, it is hoped, will not exceed 2,400*l.*

“ The morning service on Thursday was introduced by the Rev. G. B. Kidd, the minister of the place; after which the Rev. Thomas Raffles, LL.D., prefaced with a most solemn and appropriate address, a truly excellent sermon on the 4th verse of the xliii. Psalm, *Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy.* In the evening, the Rev. James Turner of Knutsford commenced the service by reading and prayer; after which Dr. Raffles preached a most eloquent sermon from 1 Peter ii. 7, *Unto you, therefore, which believe, He is precious.* On Sunday morning, the Rev. R. S. Mc.All of Manchester (their former pastor) delivered a sermon from

“ those beautiful words of the cxxii. Psalm, *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sake I will now say, Peace be within thee.* And a more impressive discourse could not, we think, be conceived. In the evening, the parable of the sower, from the 13th chapter of the gospel by Matthew, was the subject of a very powerful sermon, which excited in a crowded audience the deepest attention.”

Perhaps the following account of the ordination of the minister may be regarded as completing the history of the establishment of the church and congregation in Roe-street Chapel :—

“ On Thursday evening, 20th August, 1829, the ordination of the Rev. G. B. Kidd took place in the Independent Chapel, Roe-street, Macclesfield, in the presence of many ministers from the neighbourhood, and a crowded audience. The Rev. Job Wilson of Northwich, having commenced the service with reading and prayer, an excellent discourse on the scriptural form of church government was delivered by the Rev. J. Gilbert of Nottingham; and, at his request, the church signified their acquiescence in the settlement then about to be confirmed.

“ Mr. Kidd answered the usual questions in a manner which, while indicating no common piety, gave high promise of his future devotedness to the service of the Redeemer. The ordination prayer was then offered up by the Rev. R. S. Mc.All of Manchester, and was characterized by the most affectionate desires for the prosperity of his former people and valued successor.

“ The remaining parts of the service were conducted by Mr. Kidd's tutors. The Rev. Dr. Bennett delivered to the new minister a most impressive and appropriate charge. The people were addressed by the Rev. T. Smith, classical tutor of Rotherham College; and in a strain so faithful and animated that the unusually lengthened service seemed not to have wearied the attentive and deeply interested congregation.”*

It remains now only to say what is the state of this place, and of the church and congregation meeting within it, after the passing away of thirty-four years.

As to the material interests of Roe-street Chapel, at no other period of its history have they been so flourishing as now they are.

* Evangelical Magazine for 1829, page 504.

For some years the debt incurred by the building has been entirely removed. Soon after the opening, the lower and upper schoolrooms were enlarged, so as to accommodate nearly twice the number of scholars; with whom, and their teachers, those rooms are, from Sabbath to Sabbath, filled. Several years ago a number of members belonging to the church withdrew, for the purpose of forming a Congregational church at BOLLINGTON (distant four miles), who have become more than thirty; and to whom, and the congregation worshipping with them in an upper room, the Lancashire Bicentenary Committee in Manchester have kindly and generously granted a sum of 500*l.* towards the erection of a Congregational chapel at Bollington. An equal sum has also been promised by the friends in Macclesfield; and a suitable site will be obtained, and the building of the chapel proceeded with, as soon as there is some improvement in the circumstances of the times.

But, as regards the main interest—the spiritual—Roe-street Chapel has already accomplished largely the purpose for which it and all such places are ordained. The Truth of the Gospel has been preached in it, without intermission, from the day that it was opened and publicly dedicated to God. During many years, in which, in many parts of our country, errors of all kinds have been prevailing, the truths held forth here have been, especially, the depravity of human nature; the personality of the Holy Ghost; the atonement and Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His death for all men, especially for them that believe in Him; with the necessity of exhibiting the effects of this believing in holiness of life.

The results of this proclamation of the truth as it is in Jesus, have been such as the Scriptures awaken the expectation of. In the course of thirty-four years hundreds of persons have been honourably dismissed from the church; some to larger places on earth, such as Manchester, Liverpool, and London; where, besides such temporal advantages as might be the occasion of their removal, they have found also at least equal opportunities of religious improvement and usefulness; while numbers more have gone away from the church on earth to join the church in heaven; and, although their departure has been encompassed with every variety of circumstance, and every phase of religious experience, yet all, to the great joy and comfort of their survivors here, have died in the exercise of one faith upon the one Lord that redeemed them; and have bequeathed, in dying, a

great hope to them that remain until now, that they will again meet them in a world of indissoluble joy.

The language, then, which it becomes us to use in this sketch of the history of Roe-street Chapel, is largely the language of gratitude and high expectation. Having obtained help of God, we have continued until this day. The things which occurred, apparently so adverse, at the beginning, have turned out to the furtherance of the Gospel. Instead of this having been lessened, it has been largely increased in the town during the last thirty years.

Besides many religious interests which are quite new, such as the Primitive Methodist Chapel, and a large new chapel for the denomination known by the name of the Associated Churches, and a flourishing General Baptist interest, together with a chapel erected by the Methodists of the New Connexion very much larger than they possessed before, there are now many places of worship belonging to the Established Church—including the S. George's Chapel, now joined to the Establishment—in every one of which, it is believed, the gospel of our Lord and Saviour is faithfully preached.

Now, therein, we do rejoice; yea and we will rejoice; and we would pray earnestly for that day soon to come when the only strife between one denomination of Christians and another shall be—not who can lay claim to the largest amount of the patronage of this world, nor who can make the fairest show in the flesh; but, on the other hand, who can best succeed in bringing the apostate family of man back to God; in leavening human nature with the grace of the Gospel; in awakening the moral death of the world into spiritual and everlasting life; in rescuing mankind from the deathless and yet deadly grasp of their spiritual enemies; in accomplishing, in the persons of all men, the great purpose for which Christ tasted death for all men—the salvation of all men from sin here, and from the bitter pains of eternal death hereafter.

The means of grace which are regularly employed in connexion with Roe-street Chapel are these:—In the morning and evening of every Lord's Day is the preaching of the gospel; the Sabbath-school being taught before service in the morning, and in the afternoon, when there is also a public service held at Bollington. On the first Sabbath in every month, after the morning's service, is the Lord's Supper, which is administered at Bollington on the last Sabbath in every month. After the evening service in Roe-street Chapel, is held in the

vestry a monthly prayer meeting. On Monday evening is the weekly prayer meeting, with an address. On Wednesday evening, weekly, the male and female Congregational Bible-class meeting. Preaching on Thursday evening. Special weekly meeting on Saturday evening, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At this meeting, likewise, a short address is given.

Concerning the attendance at all these means of grace, it may be enough to say that it is such as to encourage all who have to do with them, and as to evince the wisdom of God in the simple institutions of Christianity, which are evidently so well adapted to meet and to supply all the spiritual and most pressing necessities of man. At no point of our religious affairs do we feel the need of anything from the government or from the state, to supplement that which God has, in the New Testament, provided for us, and which we, through His goodness and His grace, enjoy—means of grace sufficient to fit us for the duties and circumstances of time and earth, as well as for the higher duties, rewards, enjoyments of the everlasting world to come.

THE GENERAL BAPTIST CHAPEL, MACCLESFIELD.*

The Baptists in this town are not able to refer to any very illustrious founder, nor can they point to any ancient date as the period of their formation into a Christian church.

The chapel now held by them was formerly occupied by the congregation gathered together and presided over by the Rev. W. MARSHALL, late of Wigan. Mr. Marshall being anxious to leave the town, desired to make a satisfactory disposal of the chapel property, and with a view to this, he entered into correspondence with the Rev. J. G. Pike of Derby, stating as his firm conviction that there was a very providential opening for the establishing of a Baptist church in this prosperous and populous town. Mr. Pike visited the town, and was favourably impressed with the people and the place, and after conferring with his brethren upon the subject, the chapel was purchased for the sum of 750*l.*, of which 300*l.* was paid immediately, and the place was opened for the use of the General Baptists in September, 1822. Macclesfield was then adopted by the Home Missionary Society as one of its stations, and was happily blest with

* Furnished by the Rev. James Maden, minister of the place.

the services of many able and successful ministers of the Word. The divine blessing attended the preaching of the gospel, and on January 9th, 1823, a church was formed after the baptism of eleven believers.

In October of the same year the Rev. JOHN PRESTON of Melbourne, near Derby, accepted the pastorate of the infant church. He laboured with considerable success, and many made a profession of faith; but the internal prosperity of the church was not equal to its numerical increase. The peace of the church was disturbed; and the pastor resigned his office, and removed to London in May, 1826. The state of things becoming very unsatisfactory, the circumstances were laid before the Association, at its meeting in London, and it was resolved—"That Brother Binns, of Bourn, be recommended to visit Macclesfield; to spend six Sundays with the people, and set in order the things that are wanting." After much prayer and careful inquiry, it was thought that the peace and prosperity of the church would be best promoted by dissolving the existing church and forming a new one. This step was taken, and a church was formed of six individuals in July, 1826. The Home Mission continued to send supplies, and many members were added to fellowship.

In 1828 the Rev. R. KENNEY received an invitation to become the pastor. He accepted the call, and was ordained June 27th, 1830. During many years Mr. Kenney laboured with acceptance and gratifying success. The number of members increased, and land was bought in front of the chapel for a burial ground; the chapel and school premises being also much improved. The pastor, however, after fourteen years faithful service here, accepted a call from the Baptist church at Wirksworth in Derbyshire, in the spring of 1842.

In the autumn of the same year the Rev. JOHN LINDLEY of Loughborough, came to supply the pulpit, and after six weeks' labour he received and accepted an invitation, and was set apart to his work on Lord's Day February 26th, 1843; but his ministerial efforts did not meet with success; the seeds of discord sprang up, and the cause of Christ was much injured. The pastor, who was very uncomfortable, resigned his office on October 27th, 1844.

The attention of the church was next directed to the Rev. G. MADDEYS as a suitable preacher. He first visited the church on March 22nd, 1846, and accepted a call to the pastorate in September of the same year. He laboured faithfully and with considerable success till September, 1850, when he resigned his office and settled

over a Baptist church in Norfolk. The brethren at Macclesfield continued steadfast however, in word and doctrine, praying that the Chief Shepherd would direct them to one who should rightly guide and feed his people.

The church shortly afterwards entered into correspondence with the Rev. R. STOCKS, who received an invitation to become minister of the chapel, and began his labours in January, 1851. Mr. Stocks retired from the ministry in April, 1857.

About this time the friends made a special effort to purchase the school-rooms attached to the chapel. This was accomplished for about 150*l.*, and at the same time the chapel itself was considerably improved. In June, 1857, the church gave an invitation to the present pastor, who was then a student in the Baptist College near Nottingham. The invitation was accepted, but it was not till the first Sabbath in July, 1858, that Mr. MADEN entered upon the duties of his office.

Little more need now be added, save only that the church has been blest with peace and prosperity, and that there are now about 150 persons in membership and 300 scholars receiving instruction in the Sabbath-school. There is still reason to hope and believe that the Giver of all good will still cause His face to shine upon us, and reveal unto us yet greater and more glorious things.

PRESTBURY.*

THE name Prestbury—*Priest-burg*—points to the early associations of this village: and we find, accordingly, that in 1160 the manor and church of Prestbury were granted to the abbey of S. Werburgh in Chester; remaining in the enjoyment of that monastic house till the Dissolution. Prestbury is one of the oldest and the most extensive parishes in Cheshire; being about forty miles in circumference, and including thirty-two townships. Amongst these may be mentioned Macclesfield, Bollington, Bosley, and Chelford.

We have not much information as to this place in the days of the Puritans; save only that there was a Puritan vicar of Prestbury. Nor

* The notices of Prestbury, Bosley, Chelford and Wincle have been furnished by the Rev. S. W. McAll, M.A.

does Gastrell say much that is to our purpose. He merely mentions that in 1717 there were eighty-three Papists at Prestbury.

We have already alluded to Mr. JEINSON [or Jeynson] who "put in furiously for his son" at the time that Gawsworth was destitute of a minister, on the removal of Mr. Newcome to Manchester. This Mr. Jeinson was vicar of Prestbury. His name occurs (though with a mis-print, corrected, however, in some copies) in the list of vicars of Prestbury given by Ormerod. There he is stated to have received the living in 1627, and he held it till 1667; for on May 25th Mr. Newcome records that he happened (on a journey) to be passing through the village as his "old neighbour Mr. Jeynson, vicar of Prestbury, was going to his grave." Newcome uses the expression "going to his grave" literally, because the Register of *Burials* at Prestbury church contains the following entry: *Thomas Jeynson, Vicar, 25th May, 1667*; the day named by Newcome. He also refers to him on other occasions in terms of affectionate regard. That this good man was a Puritan, and in some respects a Presbyterian in his sympathies, we know from the fact that in 1648 he signed the "Attestation," along with the other Presbyterian ministers of Cheshire. His signature appears thus: *Tho: Jeinson, Pastor of Prestbury*. He must have been a Conformist, as he obtained the living under Charles I., and was undisturbed in 1662; but, like Mr. K. Turner of Knutsford, he seems to have been closely allied in sentiment with his Puritan brethren.

BOSLEY.

AMONGST those places to which we have occasional reference in our local Puritan literature, occurs Bosley. This village seems to have had in Bishop Gastrell's day (1715) ninety families, as composing its population. The *Notitia* records also a Dissenting meeting-house belonging to the Quakers.

In 1650 Mr. Newcome mentions Mr. CARTWRIGHT, "then minister at Bosley;" and again, June 20th, 1652, "Mr. Cartwright being gone to Cambridge to take his degree of Master of Arts, in the afternoon I supplied for him at Bosley, and it was the saddest time of thunder and lightning that ever almost I had observed. And it was this day and this time that the Lord struck so many at Lawton that eleven or thirteen were buried together the next day."

From the pulpit in Bosley church it was that Mr. John Garside was forcibly removed by Sir G. Shakerley, in 1669; to which circumstance allusion is made in the notice of Nether Peover, in this volume. Mr. Garside was for some time resident at Peover.

CHELFORD.

“FAMILIES, seventy; made parochial 1674; chapelry contains three “hamlets, making a numerous congregation.” Such are Bishop Gastrell’s notes upon Chelford, so far as they are to our purpose; we may, however, go further back than the year 1674; for in the Minute Book of the Manchester Classis of Presbyterian ministers we have notices of Chelford as far back as 1651. And, previously to this, in 1648, when the Cheshire ministers subscribed their “Attestation,” *Nehemia Worthington, minister at Chelford*, was one of those who appended his signature to this document. Beyond the name of Mr. Worthington, we know nothing of him. Nor does he appear to have remained long at Chelford; for, from the Minute Book just named, we learn that on December 9th, 1651, Mr. JOSEPH OTTIWELL presents himself to the Classis for ordination over the congregation at Chelford. He was accordingly examined in logic, physics, ethics, and metaphysics, and was approved. He was directed to preach before the Association at their next meeting. This he did on January 13th, 165½. He then receives a thesis to defend, and also an “Instrument” to be affixed to the church door at Chelford, and then to be returned, signed (as we suppose) by the “elders” of the congregation. On February 10th he brings back the “Instrument,” affixed and signed; maintains his thesis to the satisfaction of the Classe, and receives intimation that he will be ordained at Manchester on the 25th inst. Accordingly, on Wednesday February 25th, 165½, Mr. Ottiwell was set apart to the ministry. Mr. Hollinworth opened the service with prayer, Mr. Walker preached; Mr. Walton prayed; Mr. Heyricke proposed the questions, prayed at the laying-on of hands, and gave the exhortation. The newly-ordained pastor received a certificate in due form, signed by ten ministers, testifying to his ordination over the church at Chelford.

Passing on to the year 1653, it would seem that Mr. Ottiwell had resigned his pastorate, and the people at Chelford were without a minister. On April 28th, however, Mr. RALPH WORSLEY, B.A., of

Cambridge, sought ordination from the Classis over the church Mr. Ottiwell had left. Mr. Worsley brought in a testimonial of his fair call to Chelford, and had an instrument given him to be affixed as before; also a question was given him to argue at the next meeting of the Association. He was examined in classics, history, metaphysics, logic, and divinity, and approved. On June 14th, 1653, we learn from the minute book named above, Mr. Worsley appeared and maintained a dispute on the question given, bringing back with him his instrument duly subscribed. He was ordained on the following day, at the parish church of Manchester, along with two other candidates. In the certificate subsequently given to him, he is said to have been about twenty-two years old.

Our contemporary notices of these ministers are very scanty. Mr. Newcome merely says that he was present at the ordination of Mr. Ottiwell, then minister at Chelford; but does not give any information as to the service itself. Respecting Mr. Worsley, however, we have a somewhat unfavourable notice. Under date January 17th, 165 $\frac{3}{4}$, we read—"Mr. Edge his ordination was concluded at Knutsford to be at Goosetree, such a day. Mr. Ra. Worsley was then at Chelford, and was of very light carriage, and to keep him from imposing hands at the ordination, they proposed to have some three or four of such as were nominated to impose hands. I was left out, and the baseness of my heart was such that I had great tugging with myself."

Mr. Worsley did not remain long at Chelford. He was succeeded by Mr. HUGH HENSHAW, whom Calamy merely names as ejected from this place in 1662. We learn from the autobiography just quoted, that when Gawsworth was vacant in 1657, Mr. Henshaw was amongst the candidates for the appointment in question. It appears that the people at Gawsworth would have chosen him, had he not been "motioned" to Chelford; though there were some who thought that he trifled with the invitation to Gawsworth. We have no further notices of Mr. Henshaw.

Chelford now only appears in connection with the labours of Mr. Edge, who resided in the vicinity of this place on his ejection from Gawsworth in 1662. Though prevented from carrying on his public ministrations, Mr. Edge appears to have done what he could in private to serve his Master's cause. Thus, in the diary of Newcome [1678], we read, "My dear brother Leadbeater had been over here a little

“before [on October 28th, 1678], and had engaged me to come amongst some good people in Cheshire (whom Mr. Edge had kept together) once a quarter, to keep them from scattering, or closing with some unfit man that might mislead them. And I went to them this first time on November 1st; and was with them on November 2nd (Tuesday); where I met with some of the people that were of my charge at Goosetree; and was glad to have opportunity to see them, and do them service this way.” Most probably it was at Holmes Chapel that these people met together.

We have already quoted Calamy's account of Mr. Edge's labours at Chelford;* it only remains to reproduce Mr. Tong's testimony to the character of those of whom Newcome was requested to take the oversight on Mr. Edge's death. Speaking of some persons then living near Knutsford, Tong says,† “Most of them had been hearers of the Rev. Mr. Edge at Withington, and were some of the most eminent persons for religious knowledge and wisdom, for a spirit of prayer, for a true Christian temper and regular conversation, that ever I had the happiness to be acquainted with. Mr. Edge was a minister of extraordinary gravity, wisdom, and seriousness; a judicious, spiritual preacher.”

WINCLE.

AMONGST the names of those who subscribed the Cheshire Attestation in 1648, occurs this signature—*Nehemia Potte, minister at Wincle*. When to this statement we have added another as brief, viz., that Mr. Potte died on January 24th, 1649, and was buried at the Old Church, Macclesfield, we have recorded perhaps all that is now known of the Puritan minister of Wincle. In the entry of his death in the Register at Macclesfield, he is simply described as “minister of the gospel.”

The chapel at Wincle seems to have been erected in 1642; though the building also bears the date 1647. From this circumstance it may be inferred that Mr. Potte was the first minister at Wincle; and on his decease it is possible that no successor may have been appointed

* See the Paper on Gawsworth, in this Volume, page 216.

† Life of Henry, page 255.

for some time; for Bishop Gastrell records, May 16th, 1717, "No settled maintenance for a minister; but the inhabitants pay what they please for preaching once a fortnight, when there is any; but there has been none for half a year past." The same authority tells us that the Registers at Wincle date from 1630; and that the chapel, in his day, had no pulpit nor communion table, but a desk at the east end of the building. There was no font; but the curate had baptized, though he had not administered the Lord's Supper.

We have no contemporaneous references to Wincle or to Mr. Potte in our Puritan literature.

WILMSLOW.

(By the Rev. S. ELLIS.)

THERE is sufficient evidence that the religious life which prevailed in England during the stormy reign of Charles the First, and the Protectorate, obtained extensively in Cheshire. There was obviously a strong infusion of the Puritanic element in its population. The fact of what is called the "Cheshire Rising" is no proof to the contrary; for that abortive movement in favour of the second Charles, headed by Sir George Booth, himself a Presbyterian, had the sympathies of most of the Presbyterian party. The leaders of that party, disappointed in their expectations from the existing government, and tempted by the flattering promises of the exiled monarch, were eager for a change. Besides, the liberty of prophesying, as it was then sometimes exercised, had produced disorders which they greatly deplored, and they were desirous of a government which would repress these irregularities. They wished for a settlement in church affairs, but it was a settlement on a Presbyterian basis; or, if that were too much to expect, they were willing to accept a comprehension which, while it secured to them a place in the national church, would allow them to act on their conscientious scruples with respect to its rites and ceremonies. If any trust were to be put in the word of a prince, this, at least, they might confidently expect; hence, they longed for the return of the king. If they had known him as well then as they knew him afterwards, it may be doubted whether they would have been solicitous for his restoration; for no sooner was he securely seated on

his throne than he forgot his engagements to them, and abandoned them to the tender mercies of the Episcopal party; and the members of that party, with some honourable exceptions, proved that instead of learning, during the period of their humiliation, the lesson of toleration, they had learned only the lessons of intolerance and revenge.

But the Presbyterians were not the only sufferers from the restoration; there were also the Independents. The prevalence of their principles had been fatal to the unity of the Puritanical body. Those principles were in active existence in England long before the time of the Commonwealth; as early as the reign of Elizabeth there were computed to be twenty thousand persons who entertained them. In a lecture delivered October 17th, 1609, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, by Arthur Hildersham, he says that the Brownists had separated from them and made "a fearful schism and rent in the church."* It is true that in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, the Presbyterians were largely in the majority, and the Independents, called then for the first time "the dissenting brethren," numbered only five; but their principles possessed imperishable vitality and spread rapidly under the fostering protection of Cromwell. In Cheshire the views of the Congregationalists had considerable influence, as the autobiography of Adam Martindale shews.†

In these stirring times WILMSLOW did not remain unvisited by the general religious excitement. At the restoration of Charles the Second the Rev. JOHN BRERETON was the incumbent of the church in that village. Very little is known about him; nothing beyond his name appears to have been reported to Calamy. Palmer, in the Nonconformists' Memorial, makes no addition to what Dr. Calamy had said. He dismisses Wilmslow and its ejected minister in these few words:—"Wilmslow (probably near Knutsford), Mr. John Brereton." His name suggests the idea of relationship to the Brereton family, then residing in the neighbourhood. In the churchwardens' accounts for that period, which are still preserved, there occurs the payment by him of eight shillings received from Sir William Brereton for the use of five pounds, left for the poor of Wilmslow, in the will of

* Lectures on the Fourth of John, page 129.

† See Martindale's Autobiography, page 61, quoted in the Introduction to this volume.

Mr. Reddish.* Sir William Brereton was an active Parliamentary general, and on the supposition that the minister of Wilmslow was related to him, we might not unreasonably conjecture that it was through his influence that he had obtained the living.† But his name does not appear in the pedigree of that family; indeed the Breretons seem to have been numerous and widely spread. They may be traced to Brereton in Cheshire, where a little before the close of the twelfth century a family of that name had fixed their residence.‡ The second wife of the Rev. Oliver Heywood, was a Margaret Brereton, but as that excellent man observes when referring to his own ancestry,—“Kinship grows out in process of time, and 'tis not much material what family we are of, so that we be of the household of faith, and have God for our father, Christ for our elder brother, and the Spirit of Grace running in our best veins, and acting us for God.”§

We have not been able to discover when Mr. Brereton commenced his ministry at Wilmslow. In the list of incumbents, in Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, it is simply stated that he was the minister previously to December 12th, 1654.

“1654, December 12th, *ante*, Mr. Brereton.” To this Ormerod appends the note, “Most probably the Puritan who ejected Wright.”

* This money was distributed to twenty-four of the poor of the parish, at the rate of fourpence each. Their names are mentioned on this as on other similar occasions, and it is observable how the family names which existed in the neighbourhood then, are still found, belonging to persons in the same condition of life. They are the wealthier families which remove or become extinct; the poor remain as long as they can, transmitting their names from generation to generation, and clinging with fond tenacity to the locality to which their forefathers belonged.

† Sir William Brereton was born at Handforth Hall. He was created baronet in 1626, and represented the county in the parliaments of the 3rd, 15th, and 16th years of the reign of Charles I. At an early period of his life his aversion to the Established Church was notorious, which was no doubt increased from the circumstance of his being the friend and neighbour of Judge Bradshaw and Colonel Duckenfield, and the son-in-law of Sir George Booth, who was the chief corner stone of the Presbyterian cause in Cheshire. He was particularly honoured by the Parliament on the termination of the war, being appointed Chief Forester of Macclesfield and Seneschal of the Hundred. He had also a large share of the property confiscated from the Papists, and on the death of Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, he obtained a grant of the palace of Croydon. He died April 7th, 1661. He was described by no friendly pen as a notable man at a thanksgiving dinner, having long teeth and a prodigious stomach, to turn the archbishop's chapel into a kitchen, and to swallow up the palace and lands at a morsel.—*Bugshaw's History of Cheshire*, page 171.

‡ Lyson's *Magna Britannia*, vol. ii., 821.

§ Hunter's *Life of O. Heywood*, page 4.

It would have been nearer the truth if he had said, that he was appointed to occupy his place after his ejection.

By the help of the churchwardens' accounts we are enabled to trace his settlement in the rectory to an earlier date. In a memorandum, signed by himself, under the date September 21st, 1653, he is styled "John Brereton, clerk, rector of Wilmslow." Under the date April 27th, in the same year, the following entries occur:—

"Paid, when we did meet Mr. Brereton, at Wm. Warburton's, concerning Margaret Redish, 1s. *od.*"

"Paid to Mr. Lowndes for examining Mr. Brereton and the four churchwardens concerning Margaret Redish, and writing out examination, 1s. *od.*"

"Spent when we went to Mr. Brereton's at Alderley, 1s. *od.*"

"Spent when we went to desire Colonel Bradshaw to give Mr. Brereton meeting at Wilmslow concerning Margaret Redish, &c."

"Paid to Mr. Brereton, clerk, of Alderley, for all the writing, when we did meet at Wilmslow concerning Margaret Redish, &c."

If these entries refer to the same Mr. Brereton, he appears, when they were written, to have had his residence, in all likelihood, temporarily, at Alderley, while he officiated at Wilmslow. For, long before, Newcome mentions him in connexion with the latter place. He says, in his *Autobiography*, A.D. 1650,* "I was by Mr. Brereton engaged to preach at the running exercise, and to analyse and preach the sermon. It was a work that usually they had put upon the gravest minister, and I would have declined it, but it was returned again upon me. I had oft experience of some things that I could have preached of, but durst not because unsuitable to the people, being insensible that any of my people were adequate to such discourses, and oft I turned off from such discourses upon this account, as Hebrews v. 11, 12, but afterwards reflecting on these passages, I had occasion to insert this; Blessed be God that hath since given way, that I have had auditors to preach the utmost that I could preach about holiness." This is the earliest date at which we have seen Mr. Brereton's name connected with Wilmslow. We may, however, safely conclude that his ministry here continued at least ten years.

In September 1653, there was a meeting of ministers in the village, which led to the formation of what has been called, the

“*First Associated Classis of Cheshire,*” to distinguish it from another association which originated in 1690-1. Martindale, in his life, thus speaks of it:—

“In September 1653, at a meeting of ministers at Wilmslow, the 14th day of that month, a motion was made, and a letter drawne to invite many other ministers to give them the meeting at Knutsford on the 20th of October, being the exercise day, as accordingly many did; and there they agreed upon a voluntary association of themselves and their churches, if it could be done, for mutuall advice and strengthening one another. Into this society I quickly after fell, and met with much comfort and assistance; but by this means our work was increased by meeting frequently about classically business and preaching in our turns a lecture when we so met.”

The association which originated in the meeting of ministers at Wilmslow, resembled those formed in other places, and at that meeting Mr. Brereton was no doubt present. He was then fulfilling his course as the minister of the place, and it was most likely on account of his appointment to the rectory that the meeting was held there. Very few recorded notices of the years of his ministry are to be found; but, from the few that do exist, it may be inferred that he was a Presbyterian of the liberal or moderate school, not unwilling to hold communion with those who differed from him in their views of church government. At the same time he was thoroughly puritanical in his idea of the mode in which divine worship ought to be conducted in public. On this subject the majority of his congregation must have been in accord with him; for everything that savoured of Popery was abolished. The rites and ceremonies which Laud had encouraged were laid aside, and the service was performed with a high degree of primitive simplicity. “In the time of Charles I.,” observes a writer in *The Cheshire and Lancashire Historical Collector*, “there was an organ over the baptismal font, both which were afterwards pulled down and sold by the Puritans, who provided a simple pewter basin for the use of the pastor, Mr. Brereton, in baptizing. The Puritans degraded the altar, by making it a common table, around which the congregation sate down in the middle of the chancel to eat and drink in commemoration of the Lord’s Supper.” This proves nothing more than that in baptism and the Lord’s Supper they endeavoured to conform as closely as possible to the practice of the church in the times of its greatest purity.

Of the spiritual condition of the congregation under his ministry nothing positive is said ; although, as it will appear in the sequel, there were certain permanent results which proved that the gospel from his lips had not been preached in vain. God, who has promised that the labours of his faithful servants shall not be in vain, did not withhold the fulfilment of that promise from him. But the church documents to which we have had access refer only to the temporalities of the parish, without shedding any light on the inner spiritual life of the people. They record the payment in 1655 of 1s. 4*d.*, when the churchwardens met Mr. Brereton on some business not named ; and also another payment in the following words:—"Spent when Mr. Brereton and we did go to Macclesfield to enquire after a legacie left to the poor of Wilmslow by the will of William Davie." There is also an acknowledgment that there had been received from (the family at the) Hawthorn, the sum of twenty-four shillings, which was distributed by Mr. Brereton.

Before leaving these accounts, there is one paper inserted among them which is too interesting to be overlooked.

"June 19th, 1655. By virtue of His Highness's declaration and instructions thereunto annexed, appointing the next justices of the peace to receive the several contributions of all parishes in the several counties of this nation, made for the persecuted Protestants in the dominions of the Duke of Savoy ; received of John Brereton, minister of Wilmslow, the sum of 2*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* Signed,

"THOMAS STANLEY."

This was Mr. Stanley of Alderley, who, at the restoration of Charles II., was made a baronet. The collection on this occasion at Wilmslow was probably as large as that obtained in most country churches, and was not to be despised at a time when money was so valuable that, as we have already seen, Sir William Brereton was content to hold five pounds of trust money on interest at the rate of eight per cent per annum. The object for which the contributions were received was one in which Cromwell's heart was deeply interested. The cruel persecution to which the Vaudois had been subjected awoke the muse of Milton in the celebrated sonnet,

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, &c.

It also awoke the indignation of the Protector. He instructed his ambassador to protest against it in strong language. He also sanctioned

a collection for them by brief in this country, and contributed from his own purse 2,000*l.* The whole amounted to 38,241*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.**

Mr. Brereton evidently performed an active part in the business of the Cheshire Association. Mr. Newcome, on his determination to remove from Gawsworth to Manchester, experienced some trouble from the people. Mr. Brereton, therefore, with others, was appointed to go to Gawsworth to examine into the state of affairs.†

Mr. Newcome speaks of him again, after he had himself been appointed a minister of the Collegiate Church, Manchester, and had taken an interest in the Cheshire rising, which he had not been able effectually to conceal.

“September 29th, 1659. Mr. Brereton of Wilmslow called of me, “and in discourse he said that he believed that those should have no means allowed them by way of augmentation that had any hand in the late rise, which put me into fear about my maintenance. But, on the breaking up of the Parliament, they had made an order that all augmentations should be paid as they had been, and so I lost not one penny by this businesse, no not for the very present.”‡

Mr. Brereton ceased to be the minister of Wilmslow Parish Church in 1660. After that year he is only mentioned thrice, so far as our search has extended. Bishop Gastrell, in his *Notitia Cestriensis*, states that he was the minister of Ringway Chapel in 1662. On November 7th, in the same year, Newcome writes in his Diary, “I rose after eight. Read 2 Corinthians vii. Before well ready, Mr. Brereton came to me, and I had some talk with him. After, Mr. Hough came. Then Mr. Edge. Then Mr. Illingworth. We were together a while, and then went to church, where we heard the Chancellor’s charge (Dr. Burwell of York) at a visitation. He inveighed against the old Puritans, and spoke against conceived prayer and singing of Psalms.”§ He says again, “February 2nd, 1663. I was with Dorothy Williamson a while, and after went to Mr. Chorlton’s, where I sate till after eight. Mr. Brereton came in to us.”||

We have no account of the circumstances connected with his removal. He probably submitted without protest to the law which

* See the compendious History of the Vaudois, by Hugh Dyke Acland, prefixed to “The Glorious Recovery by the Vaudois of their Valleys.” By Henri Arnaud. 1827.

† See Newcome’s Autobiography, page 68. ‡ Autobiography, page 115.

§ Diary, page 138. || Page 157.

demanded his resignation. An Act was passed by the Convention Parliament in 1660, "for the confirming and restoring of ministers;" which enacted that every sequestered minister who had not justified the late king's murder, or declared against infant baptism, should be restored to his living before the 25th of December next ensuing, and that the present incumbent should peaceably quit it, and be accountable for delapidations and all arrears of fifths not paid. By this act Mr. Brereton was ejected, and Mr. Thomas Wright returned to the place where he had spent so many years of his life.

Mr. WRIGHT had succeeded to the rectory in 1610, on the presentation of William Massey. He was a younger son of a Nantwich family. His living and estate were both sequestered, and from this fact it may be assumed that he had taken an active part against the government. Walker says that he sustained a formal siege in the Rectory House from Colonel Duckenfield, a Parliamentary officer. One of his maid servants, or, as some accounts say two, were killed. He states further, on the authority of the writer of *Mercurius Rusticus*, that he was eighty years old at that time, and "continued afterwards in exile until the return of his majesty."* He must, therefore, have been at a very advanced age at the Restoration. That he did actually return is certain, although it seems to have been regarded by some who have referred to it as a somewhat doubtful tradition. But, according to Ormerod, tradition which asserts him to have survived the Restoration, and to have been reinstated in his living at a great age, is confirmed by the Parish Register as follows:—

"October 1661. The twentieth day, about nyne of the clock in the night, Mr. Thomas Wright, gentleman and parsoner of Wilmeslow, ended his lyfe, and was buried in the tombe on the northe syde of the chancell, the 23rd day of the same month of October 1661."†

In the same year Peter Ledsham was instituted in the rectory, then void by the decease of the last incumbent. And, on the 24th of August in the following year, the Act of Uniformity completed the work which had been begun immediately after the Restoration, and banished some two thousand faithful ministers of Christ from their pulpits and their flocks.

It would be interesting, if it were possible, to lift the veil which

* *Sufferings of the Clergy*, page 391.

† See Ormerod's *History of Cheshire*, vol. iii., page 312.

shrouds the past, and thoroughly to examine the moral and religious state of the parish during the period which we have had under our review.

The enemies of the Puritans have been accustomed to say that, when their principles and doctrines had predominant power, the condition of the country with respect to morals and religion was very bad. In proof of this they have adduced the testimony of the Puritans themselves, who often speak strongly against the iniquity of the times. But it must be borne in mind that those eminently holy men were intolerant of evil. Its very appearance excited their alarm, and caused them to lift up their voices against it. Hence their testimony, instead of proving that there was more wickedness then among them than there was before, only proves that it was more closely watched and more promptly and publicly denounced.

That there were some pious people who sympathized with Mr. Brereton in his religious sentiments, and who had derived benefit from his labours, is evident from the fact that within a few years, after the Restoration of Charles II., a numerous congregation of Nonconformists was formed in the parish. And there can be no doubt that that congregation had its origin in his zealous exertions.

The Nonconforming ministers, when they were ejected from their livings, did not cease to cherish a deep interest in the welfare of their flocks. They continued among them, preaching to them in private, and in various ways ministering to their spiritual edification, until the infamous Conventicle and Five Mile Acts rendered it illegal. And, even then, many of them risked everything in the service of those whom they sincerely loved, and from whom they had been cruelly separated. When, by the former of these unrighteous enactments, it became unlawful for five persons above the age of sixteen, besides the family, to assemble in any house for religious worship according to their own views of what was right, they preached to congregations of four; and preached frequently during the day. And when, by the latter, it was made a crime for them to be found within five miles of the places where they had been the appointed ministers, they either removed to the required distance, and fixed their residence close to its boundary, so that they might be still within reach of their attached friends, or they braved fine and imprisonment by remaining among them.

At Ringway Chapel, which remained in the hands of the Nonconformists, Mr. Brereton was not far from the scene of his former labours.

He would therefore often be among the people whom he had served so long in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We do not know how long he continued at Ringway, but, on the reasonable assumption that he was of the same spirit as the rest of his brethren, we may presume that, while he remained in the neighbourhood, he occasionally met the people of his former charge in private houses, and preached to them the word of life. When the assembling of large numbers in the houses of the parishioners was forbidden, he met them in smaller congregations. And when there was danger in daylight assemblies, he met them under the shadows of midnight.

It is evident from all the diaries of the Nonconformist ministers which have come to light, that, though they were silenced, they were not forsaken. They were held in high esteem by many of the best families in the land, who welcomed them to their houses, listened to their instructions, and ministered to their temporal necessities. The Stanley family at Alderley, among others, showed them great kindness. When Oliver Heywood was driven from home by the Five Mile Act, in March 1666, he remarks in his diary, "On Wednesday, my father and I travelled to Sir John Stanley's of Auderley, where I, being called on to go to prayer in that large family, the first night we came, was tempted to study and speak handsome words, from respect to the company; but reflecting to whom I prayed, and that it was no trifling matter, I set myself to the exercise in serious earnestness, and God helped me to speak to Him devoutly, with respect to the state of their souls and the good of their family. Mr. Heywood on that occasion spent several days in various respectable families in different parts of Cheshire and Lancashire, and was entertained by them with the greatest hospitality."* Thus did the Great Head of the Church raise up friends for His faithful servants when they became sufferers for His sake. In many instances the loss of their livings was not permitted to fall heavily upon them. The Christian liberality of those who esteemed them highly in love for their work's sake cheerfully met the necessities of the case. Voluntary contributions were supplied. Wherever they went hospitable doors were thrown open to receive them, and those who entertained them seldom sent them empty away. And some of them found, to their surprise, that their small worldly substance had actually increased

* Slate's Memoirs of the Rev. O. Heywood, page 122.

during the season of persecution. In such circumstances Nonconformity continued to live in the face of the most cruel opposition, and the more it was persecuted the more it multiplied and grew.

DEAN ROW CHAPEL.

It was at this place that the fruits of the Nonconformist ministry in Wilmslow during so many years of self-denying effort were garnered. The chapel was erected in 1693, at the distance of about a mile and a half from the church in the parish of Wilmslow. It is a plain, substantial building, very much like many which have been demolished within the last fifty years to give place to more modern structures. It has an air of the Dissenting past. For the time and the place it was a large and commodious chapel, and it proved that the precious seed, which had been sown with tears by the Nonconformist minister of Wilmslow and his successors, had been productive of a gratifying harvest. From the assessment papers kept in the Parish Church, it appears that in 1666 there were 231 householders in the parish, and the estimated number of inhabitants were 1,287. In the interval between that date and 1693 the population could not have greatly increased. Yet the new meeting-house, with its ample galleries, was computed to hold several hundred persons. Nonconformity, therefore, must have made great progress in the neighbourhood, to warrant the erection of a chapel of such dimensions in the midst of so scanty a population. It is, however, to be remembered that this was the religious home of persons residing in other parishes, as, to them, the nearest place in which they could worship God, as their consciences told them they ought to worship Him, and as their fathers had worshipped Him before them.

The first minister at Dean Row of whom we have any account was the Rev. ELIEZER BIRCH. He was the pastor of the congregation in 1687. From this circumstance we may safely infer that the congregation had been gathered long before the chapel was erected; and though a link in the chain of evidence is wanting, we may with small danger of mistake refer its origination, as we have done already, to the ministrations of the ejected pastor of Wilmslow Parish Church, the Rev. John Brereton. Mr. Birch studied for the ministry under Mr. Richard Frankland. He entered the academy for educating Dissenting ministers kept by that excellent man, February 9th, 1676.

Of his parentage we have no certain information. There were two ejected ministers of the name of Birch—Mr. Robert Birch, who was ejected from Birch Chapel, near Manchester, and Mr. Samuel Birch, who was ejected from Bampton, in Oxfordshire. The latter was a native of Lancashire, and in the absence of all evidence we may not unreasonably conjecture that Mr. Eliezer Birch was a relation, probably the son, of one of these ministers. From the account given of Mr. George Moxon in the Nonconformists' Memorial, we learn that Mr. Birch preached the funeral sermon of that aged minister of Christ in the new chapel at Congleton. This took place in September 1687, and he had probably at that time removed to Dean Row. It was in all likelihood there, for it was at "Mr. Birch's" that the Cheshire Association of the United Ministers met in 1691, after two preliminary meetings held elsewhere, and it was there that the heads of agreement, to which the ministers in and about London had given their adhesion, were adopted as the basis of their union. The name of Mr. Birch appears among the signatures. He seems to have been an active and devoted minister of the gospel, and to have taken a prominent part in the religious movements of the day. There is little room to doubt that even at that early period, the people over whom he had the oversight were numerous and respectable, and that his connexion with them gave him considerable influence among the rising Nonconformist congregations of the county. During his pastorate at Dean Row he filled, at different times, most of the offices of the Cheshire Association. He continued at that place about twenty years, and in 1707 he removed to Yarmouth, where he became co-pastor to Mr. Adam Smith. Mr. Birch did not long retain his connexion with Yarmouth; the congregation there was large, but a quarrel arose which threatened to divide it. The two ministers appear to have been in some sort the cause or occasion of the quarrel; it has been conjectured that they differed in their religious opinions, one of them departing from the ancient creed, the other adhering to it.* If this were really the case, it was an early instance of that divergence from the orthodox faith, which a few years after became so common among the Nonconformists. However, to maintain the unity of the congregation, the pastors were both dismissed. The event was fatal to Mr. Smith. He died of a broken heart, on his journey homeward. Mr. Birch went into Lancashire,

* See *Christian Reformer*, Vol. I. New Series, page 378.

and, in 1712, on the removal of Mr. Coningham from Cross-street, Manchester, he succeeded him. But his work then was nearly done. After a brief ministry in that place, he died there, May 12th, 1717.

At the time when Mr. Birch received the invitation to Yarmouth, he had not been regularly ordained to the ministry. From this circumstance we infer that some in the congregation at Dean Row disapproved of ministerial ordination by the imposition of hands. Many of the Nonconformists of that day thought that it was unnecessary, and that the ordination of a minister by his own congregation was sufficient. Some of their ministers were of this opinion. Others, who were not so thoroughly imbued with "the dissidence of Dissent" as their people, did not consider it a matter of so much importance as to lead them to refuse compliance with their wishes. To the latter of these classes the pastor of Dean Row probably belonged. In Tong's life of Matthew Henry there is the following reference to Mr. Birch:—

"Mr. Henry found that some ministers, who, in compliance with "the sentiments of the people, had dispensed with that solemnity (ministerial ordination) were not very easy in their own minds about it afterwards; and he does very particularly observe that, after Mr. E. Birch had been pastor near twenty years without ministerial ordination, yet, when invited to a new congregation of the same persuasion, he procured three or four ministers privately to ordain him with imposition of hands."*

Mr. Henry remarks in his diary, "the moderate of that congregation are contriving to gain that point, ordination, from the other party."† The moderate party obtained the ascendancy, for the successor of Mr. Birch was regularly ordained by the laying on of the hands of his fellow ministers. Mr. Hugh Worthington was chosen to be the pastor of the congregation at Dean Row in the room of Mr. Birch. Mr. Henry was desired by that congregation to join with the reverend and worthy Mr. Timothy Jollie, to ordain Mr. HUGH WORTHINGTON, which was done on the 2nd of September 1707, at Dean Row, on which he thus expresses himself:—"I am going by appointment to Wilmslow, willing to become all things to all men. I preached from 2 Corinthians v. 18, *Hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.* Mr. Angier prayed over him. Mr. Jolly gave the

* Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, page 265.

† Williams' Life of Matthew Henry, page 148.

“ exhortation from Matthew xxviii. 20. He spoke many things very affecting. We lay at Wilmslow, and were much refreshed with mutual love, which is as the holy anointing oil. The Honourable Mr. Cecil Booth was with us in the evening. Mr. Jolly is of a very loving and healing spirit.”*

From what Mr. Henry says about his “willingness to become all things to all men,” in assisting at this ordination, and from the place where the service was held, from the fact that Mr. Jollie was pastor of an Independent church, as well as from what had taken place during the ministry of Mr. Birch, it would appear that the people at Dean Row were at that time Independents in their views of church government, or at the least strongly inclined to Independency.

Mr. Hugh Worthington had been a pupil of Mr. Timothy Jollie of Attercliffe, near Sheffield. He continued at Dean Row until his death, which took place in October 1735. During his ministry the congregation was in a very flourishing condition. In 1715 it is said to have consisted of 809 persons, forty of whom were gentlemen, and one hundred and forty-two of them had votes for the county. These numbers probably referred to those who were recognized members of the congregation, and who regarded Dean Row as their religious home. The persons in actual attendance at the Sabbath services were often very numerous. There can be no doubt that the influence of Dean Row Chapel, like that of Ringway Chapel, operated within a widely extended sphere. The two meeting-houses divided between them a considerable tract of country. There had been, during the Protectorate, a decidedly Puritanical ministry at Alderley and Moberley, and at both places the incumbents had been ejected at the Restoration or at Bartholomew's Day. The fruits of their ministry remained after they were removed; and, to the congregation at Dean Row, we may reasonably suppose that some of them were gathered. Distance from the sanctuary then was not thought so much of as it is now. Sabbath worshippers were content to travel a few miles that they might enjoy the ordinances of God's house. “The word of the Lord was precious in those days.” This circumstance will account for the largeness of the congregation when viewed in relation to the smallness of the neighbouring population. From a letter which is still extant, written by Mr. Worthington a short time before his death,

* Tong's Life of Matthew Henry, page 266

the number of county voters connected with his congregation appears to have slightly diminished, but it was still large.*

For some time during his residence at Dean Row, Mr. Worthington kept an academy, in which were educated Samuel Eaton, afterwards of Allostock, the Rev. Hugh Worthington of Leicester, the Rev. Mr. Hankinson of Wirksworth, and his own son Hugh Worthington. There is a brief memoir of the Rev. Hugh Worthington of Leicester, in the *Monthly Magazine* for November 1797, which was written by his son Mr. Hugh Worthington, then of Salter's Hall, London. In that short narrative the writer makes honourable mention of his great-uncle of Dean Row, "as distinguished, both as a scholar and a "preacher, and who in succession trained many persons for the duties "of the pulpit."† A note appended to it contains the following interesting testimony to the character of Mr. Worthington of Dean Row:—"As this gentleman was not only (the Leicester) Mr. "Worthington's relation, but his tutor, and seems to have been a "principal instrument in forming him for all his future usefulness, "a few particulars respecting him may not be unacceptable. He "was trained to the ministry partly under Mr. Jollie of Sheffield, "and partly under the still more celebrated Mr. Matthew Henry "of Chester. His first settlement was at Ormskirk, in Lancashire, "from whence he removed to Dean Row, and continued there

* This letter, for the copy of an extract from which I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. John Colston, minister of Dean Row Chapel, appeared in the *Industrious Bee*, a paper published at Chester in 1734. It was written in reply "to the author of a malicious reflection on the minister of Dean Row," published in *Adams' Courant*, March 27th, 1734. It is as follows:—"In the late King "George's reign, of blessed memory, I took the number of the voters in my con- "gregation, and then had above one hundred and forty. Since that time several "are dead, but few estates are sold for want of heirs; and amongst the very many "that, through mercy are left, I have not (according as I now best remember) "heard of any but one that is inclined to vote for Mr. C—y, and Mr. C—w. And "till the next election be over, I cannot tell but he may be misrepresented; but "still he is not, nor ever was, a communicant with us. We are all (as far as I "know) very zealous the other way—I mean for the good old cause—are all cheer- "ful volunteers in that service, and need not be pressed into it by death and "damnation. May God give you repentance and pardon. But let us pray again "before we part. God bless King George, and all his royal family; upon him let "the crown flourish; but clothe Thou his enemies with shame, O Lord. Let me "conclude with part of my litany. From High Church zeal, a lying tongue, a "Tory Parliament, and a Popish Pretender, *Libera nos, Domine*,—Good Lord, "deliver all honest men, and amongst them, HUGH WORTHINGTON."

"April 10th, 1734."

† Christian Reformer, Vol. I. New Series, page 379.

“ to the end of his life, preaching with great acceptance, and with
“ more popularity than any minister in that part of England. The
“ chapel, though large, was so crowded that numbers stood in the
“ aisles. He was fluent, tender, and pathetic in his address ;
“ often in tears, and numbers in his auditory were equally moved.
“ He had notes containing the heads of his discourses, and references
“ to various Scriptures, but delivered the major part of his discourses
“ extempore. In every sense he was an excellent preacher, moderate
“ in sentiment, fond of Mr. Baxter’s writings, of an amiable temper,
“ and highly respected by his people. Though he was very studious,
“ and assisted not a few in their preparations for the ministry, yet he
“ visited his charge much, and made his visits (especially among the
“ sick) devotional and edifying. Mr. Worthington of Leicester never
“ spoke of his uncle but with the deepest veneration, and has acknow-
“ ledged that, under his preaching, the impressions of religion received
“ by a pious education were strengthened in his heart.”

Mr. Worthington was present and assisted at the ordination of his son ; an interesting service, of which Mrs. Savage has left an affecting description in her diary. “ Tuesday, 1st September 1730. “ A solemn ordination at Knutsford of two young scholars to the “ work of the ministry, Mr. Nichols and Mr. Worthington ; a great “ appearance, supposed to be a thousand people. Lord, qualify them “ for this great work. Mr. Gardner of Chester preached from 1 Corin- “ thians xi. 2. Mr. Worthington’s father prayed over his son ; gave “ him a solemn charge ; said, ‘ Methinks it somewhat resembles the “ ‘ taking the holy garments off Aaron and putting them on Eleazer. “ ‘ Perhaps,’ said he, ‘ the time of my departure may be near.’ He “ exhorted them earnestly to visit their flock and pray with them, “ yea, though they were not desired to do it ; said much against “ covetousness and earthly mindedness in ministers, how directly “ opposite to a gospel minister.”* It is evident that Mr. Worthington was a noted man in his day, and that he occupied a prominent position among the Dissenters. He was not only a distinguished preacher, but a great worker. With a congregation so numerous and so scattered, he must have been a man of laborious habits to undertake the additional duties of keeping an academy.

At his death, in 1735, he was succeeded by his son, who bore his

* Congregational Magazine, 1831, page 71.

name, and who was trained for the ministry under his instructions.* As we have just seen, Mr. HUGH WORTHINGTON, JUNIOR, was ordained in 1730. He first undertook the charge of a congregation at Leek, and continued there until the decease of his father, when he was called to take his place. Mr. Hugh Worthington was the minister of Dean Row Chapel about thirteen years. He preached his last sermon there September 11th, 1748, and some time after, he became the minister of Hale Chapel. In the history of the last-mentioned place, where he closed his ministry, some further particulars respecting him will be found.

On November 22nd, 1748, the Rev. WILLIAM BROCKLEHURST preached at Dean Row, and was chosen to be the minister. During his ministry the chapel is said to have been well attended. He was earnest and animated in the pulpit, and out of it he was affable and kind in his intercourse with the people. To the poorer members of his flock he was especially condescending and attentive. He was a man of good property, and of a benevolent disposition, and was consequently both able and willing to help them in their necessities. In these circumstances he had great influence over his congregation, and was held in high and general esteem. Mr. Brocklehurst was an Arian, and probably he was the first Arian minister at Dean Row. The elder Mr. Worthington was certainly orthodox in his religious opinions. We have seen, from the testimony of one who knew him well, that he was "moderate in sentiment, and partial to the writings of Mr. Richard Baxter." It may, therefore, be inferred that he was a divine of the Baxterian school. The doctrinal views of his son were probably orthodox likewise. But Mr. Brocklehurst was undoubtedly a preacher of Arianism, and from the commencement of his ministry the doctrine of the Trinity ceased to be taught in the pulpit at Dean Row.

The Rev. GEORGE CHADWICK took the charge of the congregation on his decease, and after a ministry of nearly seventeen years, died suddenly in 1803, aged forty-one years. He was educated at Daventry, and is said to have been an upright and conscientious man; but

* It has been conjectured that he was educated under Dr. Latham, at Finderne, Derbyshire, where many of the ministers in these parts, at that time, received their education; some of whom were Arians. As this is only conjecture, we prefer following other authorities, which state positively that he was educated in his father's academy.

his preaching was unsuccessful, and the congregation visibly declined. He was followed by the Rev. W. TULLEDELPH PROCTER, who was educated at Northampton, and who left a congregation at Burton in Staffordshire to become the minister at Dean Row. He laboured there eleven years without witnessing any gratifying increase in the number of his hearers, and then removed to Prescot, where he died in 1826. The Rev. N. SHATTOCK succeeded him in 1814, and left in 1817. The next minister was the Rev. J. WILLIAMS MORRIS. His appointment was fatal to the already declining congregation. It gradually dwindled away after he became the minister until there was nothing of it left; the chapel, too, became almost a ruin. The windows were broken, the walls were cracked, the interior of the building presented an appearance of dilapidation and dishonour which it was painful to contemplate. Mr. Morris died in 1843, having previously refused overtures which had been made to him to induce him to relinquish his hold on the place. After his death a successful attempt was made by the trustees and friends in the neighbourhood to restore the chapel. Contributions were collected for this object, and the restoration was effected at a cost of about 300*l.* The interior of the chapel was adapted to the necessities of a smaller congregation; one end of the building was devoted to two convenient schoolrooms, of which the upper is now used as an organ gallery and the lower as a vestry, the use of them as schoolrooms having been rendered unnecessary by the recent erection of a handsome and commodious school in the immediate neighbourhood of the chapel. The Rev. JOHN COLSTON, the Unitarian minister of Styal, near Wilmslow, undertook the charge in addition to that which he already held. He is still the pastor. The congregation is now Unitarian in sentiment; like many other congregations which arose out of the labours of the ejected ministers, it gradually departed from the religious principles of its founders.

WILMSLOW INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.

The preceding history of Nonconformity in Wilmslow would not be complete without some notice of the Independent Chapel which was erected in 1846. It is situated in the township of Fulshaw. The site of the chapel was given by John Jenkins, Esq., of Fulshaw Hall, who was also the principal contributor to the expense of the building.

It is capable of holding about three hundred persons. The first minister was the Rev. WILLIAM CREASE. He preached for about two years in a room in the village, and when the chapel was erected the congregation removed to it, and a church was formed under his pastoral care. Mr. Crease left Wilmslow at the close of 1849, and settled at Hazel Grove, where he finished his course.

In December 1850, the Rev. SAMUEL ELLIS, formerly minister of Duke's Alley Chapel, Bolton, accepted an invitation from the people to become their pastor. At present there are more than seventy communicants, and a congregation for which more room is required, as well for its own accommodation as for its growth. The people have, therefore, determined to enlarge the chapel, and have subscribed liberally for the accomplishment of that object. There is a Sabbath-school of three hundred scholars, and there is also a Day-school in connexion with the chapel, with an average attendance of about one hundred. In 1859, new schoolrooms were erected on the ground belonging to the chapel trust, at a cost of upwards of five hundred pounds. These schoolrooms, together with the one under the chapel, afford ample accommodation both for the Sabbath and Day-schools. We may, therefore, on a review of what has been already done, indulge the hope that the distinctive doctrines which the early Nonconformists loved so well will long continue to be exhibited in this neighbourhood.

ALDERLEY.

(By the Rev. S. ELLIS.)

THERE was a minister of the Puritan school of divines at Alderley Parish Church during the Commonwealth, but he has left few footprints behind him by which he can be traced. Walker, in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, refers to him with his usual want of candour and catholicity of spirit. Speaking of the Rev. Samuel Shipton, B.D., who was formerly Sir Peter Leycester's tutor, and who had been sequestered from the living at Alderley, and afterwards restored, he says, "He had a temporal estate also, which was put under sequestration, but he was at last allowed to redeem it with 250*l.* He was not permitted by the intruder to have any lodging for himself or family in the Parsonage House, notwithstanding the then indulgence of a fifth of

“ their benefices, and house room to sequestered ministers. He lived to be restored, and repaid the intruder’s barbarity, by industriously applying himself to procure him another preferment, which by his interest he did, full as good as his own; I think it was S. Mary’s in Chester. He was much celebrated for his great learning, piety, and many excellent qualities.”*

The character of Walker’s statements, whether they are favourable to the Episcopal clergy or unfavourable to the Nonconformists, is, at the present day, well understood. In the former case he writes as a friend and partizan; in the latter as an uncompromising enemy. His prejudices were too strong for his judgment, and too often guided his pen. This, indeed, is not a recent discovery. His testimony was early weighed in the balances and found wanting. Perhaps all that we can safely gather from what he says about Alderley is, what we may learn from other sources, that the Rev. Samuel Shipton was sequestered from his living under the Long Parliament, that he was succeeded by a minister who was approved and appointed by the then existing authorities, and that he regained the benefice at the Restoration. The Christian temper which he is said to have displayed in assisting the preacher whom he had displaced to obtain the cure of a church in Chester, was worthy of all honour. But it was evidently a stretch of charity, in which the historian of his sufferings had little sympathy with him.

The Rev. NICHOLAS STEPHENSON is named by Ormerod as minister of S. Mary’s, Chester, and he was “the intruder” to whom Walker refers. Mr. Stephenson was minister at Alderley in 1648, for in that year he signed the “Attestation of Cheshire Ministers to the Solemn League and Covenant.” In 1650 he is mentioned by the Rev. Henry Newcome, in his *Autobiography*.† “Mr. Stephenson of Alderley, being gone to London upon the occasion of the marriage of Mr. Peter Stanley, had engaged me to preach at Alderley, April 28th, for that day, I had wrote to Mr. Machin, to come over to supply my place at Gawsworth. On the Saturday he came, and Nathaniel Banne with him (who then was a sojourner with Mr. Machin). I preached at Alderley on Genesis vi. 9; a more inward sermon than any I had almost preached before, about walking with God. I remember some of my neighbours of Gawsworth would

* Page 353.

† Page 19.

“needs keep me company to Alderley, and one of them sware an oath (I think I could go to the place where it was this day) and methought it sounded strangelier to me than ever before it had done. At night Mr. Machin repeated his sermon, and desired me to repeat mine, and I did.” Mr. Newcome says again, August 26th, 1651, “Mr. Machin and I preached at Auderley, and the next day we went to a private day at Clough House.” Mr. Stephenson is also mentioned in Adam Martindale’s life, as “Mr. Stephenson, the minister” at Alderley. It is evident, therefore, that he freely associated with the Presbyterian ministers, and probably at that time agreed with them in their views of church polity and Christian doctrine.

No Nonconformist congregation appears to have arisen out of Mr. Stephenson’s labours at Alderley, unless there exists an indirect connexion between his ministry there and the Baptist Church, which, at the beginning of the following century, found a home in a small chapel in Warford. The existence of this connexion is possible, and, for the sake of Mr. Stephenson, we should be glad to know that it is a fact. It would be pleasant to see before us any clearly defined results of his many years of ministerial effort in that place. But oral tradition traces the church at Warford to another origin. Mr. Stephenson’s speedy conformity prevented him from rallying around him those whose sentiments he had previously moulded according to a different form. If his attachment to the principles of the Nonconformists had been sufficiently strong to retain him in their ranks, it would no doubt have been otherwise. It is not likely, however, that in this view of his labours he had spent his strength for nought. Probably there were individuals in his old congregation who found modes of worship more congenial to their taste among the Dissenters who held fast their principles in the neighbourhood of Wilmslow.

BAPTIST CHAPEL, WARFORD.

In this village, which lies between Alderley and Mobberley, there is a Particular Baptist Church of great antiquity. If local tradition may be credited, it was originated by the Parliamentary troops who were stationed there during the Civil War. This is not improbable. We know, from Newcome’s Autobiography, that there were soldiers of the Parliament abiding in this part of the country for some time, and that there were intelligent and earnest Christians among them.

Besides, the plain, intelligible traditions which cling to a locality, are seldom without some foundation in fact. It is said that divine worship was conducted for years in a farmhouse, and that the members of the congregation buried their dead in the orchard. The family who furnished meeting-room for this church in their house removed to Pownall Brow farm, at no great distance from the spot on which the present chapel stands. In 1689, some of the members of the church purchased a small piece of land for a burying place, in Mottram S. Andrew's. There are several tombstones in it bearing dates between 1691 and 1756. The graveyard is still kept in good order, although there has been no interment in it for the last forty years.

In 1712, the congregation obtained the lease of a piece of ground in Warford, on which there were a cottage and a barn. It is conjectured that the barn, altered and beautified, formed part if not the whole of the original chapel. There is a dwelling-house adjoining to it, at which the minister resides; but both are so small that the ground on which they stand does not exceed forty-two feet by twenty-four. There is also a small burial ground in front. The members of the Baptist Church at Hill Cliffe, about two miles from Warrington, took a lively interest in the little church at Warford, which, like their own, had arisen in troublous times; and it was one of their number, Mr. John Rilance, who granted them a lease of the land for their chapel on a mere nominal ground rent.

The first preacher whose name is mentioned in connexion with Warford was Mr. FRANCIS TURNER of Knutsford. He is said to have been educated at one of the universities; but he refused conformity to the Established Church, and laboured in Cheshire as a Baptist minister. He was afterwards minister of the church at Hill Cliffe. His son, Mr. JOHN TURNER, was the first pastor of the church at Warford of whom we have been able to find any record. His father appears only to have preached to them occasionally. Mr. John Turner was the minister at Warford in 1730, for in that year the Baptist Church at Liverpool invited him to leave that place, and to settle among them. With the consent of his own people he accepted the invitation, and the church at Warford was left to the care of Mr. JOHN HAYES, who was dismissed from the church at Liverpool that he might be its pastor. How long Mr. Hayes continued to labour among the people at Warford is not recorded in the church book; but, as for some time before 1757, there are frequent entries of the

payment of four shillings for expenses to a preacher from Liverpool, it is probable, on the supposition that he was not that preacher, that he had ceased to be their appointed teacher before 1750. In 1757, three members of the church at Hill Cliffe were transferred to Warford, one of whom, Mr. John Taylor, was shortly after ordained pastor to the church. The commencement of his ministry was a period of revival. The church increased, and the chapel was crowded. But, in 1762, unpleasant circumstances led to the dissolution of the connexion between him and the people. In the following year the union was restored, but there was no return of prosperity. The minister was charged with conduct unbecoming his profession; in consequence several of the members withdrew and joined the church at Millington. He ceased to hold the pulpit in 1788. During the time of his ministry, from 1762 to 1788, there is not a single entry in the church book.

Mr. THOMAS HOLT was the next minister. He was a man of small education, but of good natural abilities. The Rev. Abraham Booth, whose ministry he attended when he was in London, wished to send him to the Baptist Academy, but he refused. He was somewhat eccentric, and exceedingly zealous in enforcing the necessity of baptism by immersion as a condition of communion; he was, moreover, an admirer of America and its institutions, and by his persuasion some of the members of his small church emigrated to that country. From this circumstance the interest was reduced to a state of great feebleness. Only one Lord's Day intervened between his last appearance in the pulpit and his death in 1831. He preached his last sermon from Romans viii. 1; and one who heard him on that occasion says that the discourse showed that his views were clear, his faculties vigorous, and his confidence and hope firmly resting on the promises of God. He was succeeded by his youngest son Mr. THOMAS HOLT, who died in 1836. For two years after his decease the church, reduced to four members, met every Lord's Day with the few hearers who remained, for reading the Scriptures and prayer.

In 1838, Mr. JOSEPH BARBER, one of their number, was appointed pastor. After a long season of barrenness, symptoms of improvement began to appear; the congregation gradually increased and the number in church-fellowship rose to nearly forty. Several of the members lived in the neighbourhood of Bramhall, and they were in the habit of walking every Sabbath seven miles to worship God, and

the distance they travelled, together with the return journey, proved the strength of their attachment to their religious home. But, in 1853, two Baptist ministers, from a distant part of the country, visited the people, and finding that some of the members resided so far from the chapel, they resolved to do something to meet the necessities of the case; the result was that a NEW MEETING-HOUSE was built at Bramhall, with sittings for one hundred and fifty hearers. Mr. Barber, who is in advanced age, and burdened with infirmities, performs the duties of both places, assisted by one of the members of the church. On each alternate Lord's Day he preaches twice at Bramhall. There is an endowment upon the chapel at Warford of fourteen pounds yearly, which was left in 1789 by Mr. Thomas Lee, a member of the family residing at Pownall Brow Farm. In 1813 a new front was built to the chapel, which greatly improved its external appearance. The attendance at it has been diminished by the erection of the meeting-house at Bramhall; but it is to be hoped that an interest which has lived through two centuries will not be suffered to become utterly extinct.

MOBBERLEY.

(By the Rev. S. ELLIS.)

OUR knowledge of Mobberley in Puritan times is very limited. In Palmer's *Nonconformists' Memorial* it is mentioned as one of the places in which a minister was ejected from his living, but it is only mentioned in the fewest words possible. "Mobberley, Mr. ROBERT "BARLOW." We learn from Ormerod's *History of Cheshire* that, in 1621, the Rev. Thomas Mallory, dean of Chester, enjoyed this living. He was a younger son of Sir W. Mallory of Studeley, in Yorkshire, and became dean of Chester in 1606. In 1610, he was admitted to the rectory of Davenham. Walker says that, nine years after, he purchased the advowson of Mobberley. He retained the living until 1642, when he was sequestered and compelled to live in great retirement. We are not acquainted with the reason alleged for his sequestration. Walker refers it in general terms to the Civil War. "He "was forced, by reason of the rebellion that raged then in England, "to fly from Mobberley, where he was rector, to Chester."*

* *Sufferings of the Clergy*, page 391.

probability is that Mr. Mallory was a zealous royalist, and resisted the authority of the Parliament, and that he had on this account been deprived of his church preferment. But it was a matter of comparatively small importance to him. He was then an old man, and his life was fast drawing to a close. He died at the dean's house in Chester, April 3rd, 1644, aged about seventy-eight years.

Mr. Mallory's son-in-law, the Rev. George Wyrley, brother of Sir John Wyrley of Hamstead Hill, Staffordshire, succeeded him in the living. Notwithstanding the confusion of the times, Mr. Wyrley obtained his institution to it from Dr. John Bridgman, then bishop of the diocess. But he also was sequestered, and continued under sequestration until the Restoration of Charles II. He then regained the full possession of the benefice, and afterwards obtained also the rectory of Loughton, in Essex. The testimony borne by the *Nonconformists' Memorial* to the ejection of the minister at Mobberley in 1660 is confirmed by Walker, who says, "The intruder at Mobberley during the usurpation was one Robert Barlow."

Mr. BARLOW, like other ministers of his class, is unceremoniously called an intruder. We pass over the contempt embodied in that term. But it is right to remember that he held the living according to the then existing laws of the land, which, if the Presbyterians had not suffered themselves to be cajoled and cheated by royal promises, would have continued to be the laws of the land. However, Mr. Barlow was compelled to give place to Mr. Wyrley at the Restoration. There is no trace of a Nonconformist congregation existing in the neighbourhood after he was removed from the church, and testifying to the results of the labours in which he was interrupted by his ejection. His name is not in the list of Cheshire ministers who, having submitted to deprivation for conscience sake, subsequently conformed to the Established Church. That list is exceedingly small, and several of the ministers whose names are found in it were brought in by Bishop Wilkins's soft interpretation of the terms of conformity. But, whether Mr. Barlow retired into private life, or, like other ejected ministers, continued to preach as he had opportunity, we have not been able to learn. If, in the congregation which he was compelled to relinquish, there were persons of decided Puritanic tendencies, they most likely joined in religious worship with their brethren of similar sentiments in the neighbouring parishes.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, KNOWLES GREEN.

There is at Knowles Green, in the parish of Mobberley, an Independent Chapel, which was erected in 1783. It was originally intended for the Wesleyan Methodists, who occupied it for several years. It did not succeed according to their expectations; they therefore left it to the disposal of the person who had advanced the money expended on the building. For several years afterwards very little use was made of it. The Methodists of the New Connexion occasionally conducted their religious services in it, but it was not the recognized home of any religious body. In 1803, the students belonging to the Theological Academy at Manchester, under the care of the Rev. W. Roby, who regularly visited Knutsford that they might diffuse the savour of the knowledge of Christ, were invited to preach in the chapel at Knowles Green. They continued to do so every Lord's Day. Considerable interest was excited, and gratifying success attended their labours. In the course of a few years the people, who had become attached to their ministry, purchased the meeting-house from the party who had a claim upon it, and vested it in trust for the use of the Independents. It is a small building, with a gallery at one end, and is capable of holding a congregation of one hundred and fifty or two hundred persons. A Sabbath-school is conducted in the chapel, which has been of important use in the neighbourhood. The Rev. JAMES TURNER of Knutsford, regularly preached there once on the Sabbath, or provided a supply for the pulpit. This faithful servant of Christ having ministered to the congregation here, as well as to the church at Knutsford, for upwards of fifty years, was called to his rest on May 22nd, 1863. An account of his life will be found in another part of this volume.* The chapel is still held in connexion with the church at Knutsford, and shares in the benefits of the ministry at that place. Mr. Lowndes, formerly a missionary to the Greek Islands, and afterwards an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, was among the earliest fruits of the gospel at Knowles Green Independent Chapel.

* See the paper on Knutsford.

STOCKPORT.

(By the Rev. ABSALOM CLARK.)

THE Christianity of Stockport is of ancient date. When and by whom it was first introduced are facts now unknown. The town itself was a military station of importance from the time of the Romans to the Norman conquest. The rectory was instituted in or about the year 1190.*

The names of at least two eminent Nonconformist ministers are associated with Stockport—Rev. HENRY NEWCOME, M.A., and Rev. SAMUEL EATON; and there are traces of the existence of a healthful spiritual life in the borough before the upas tree of the Act of Uniformity was planted in the land. There is a gravestone in the chancel of the Parish Church which bears the inscription, “Here lyeth y^e body of “ARTHUR STORER, M.A., who spent himself in this place thirty-seven “years to give light to others, and died an. 1630.” Subsequently there was a Mr. JOHNSON, styled in the life of Adam Martindale † “a rigid Presbyterian,” and to whom Mr. Newcome thus refers in his Autobiography:—“Sunday September 3rd, 1654, I was at Stockport, “and preached twice that day, and helped old Mr. Johnson to “administer the sacrament. I lodged that night with Mr. Johnson, “a reverend, learned, and aged divine. I remember he asked old “Mr. Syddal that he would put some question to talk of to employ “the holy time of the Sabbath in. In the evening, late, he went to “duties, and took his Bible, of a small volume and print, and read a “chapter. It was late, and so dark that I could not have read it I “am sure; and he admitted no candle, and so I perceived he read it “without book; and I believe he was so versed in the Scripture he “could have done so with most parts of the Bible. He preached at “the Exercise on 2 Peter iii., about the millenaries, and in his sermon “took occasion to expound the 20th chapter of Revelation, verse by “verse, and word by word, without book. He prayed all in Scripture “expression. He was a man mighty in the Scriptures. Old William “Syddal had been long acquainted with him, and they were discoursing “of the days that were passed. Among the rest he was telling how “Mr. Johnson and some others met at a day of thanksgiving when

* Notitia Cestriensis, vol. i., page 300.

† Page 63.

“ the king (Charles I.) and the Scots were agreed, about 1639, looking upon it as a certain omen of liberty unto the Puritans in England. Old Mr. Rathband, an eminent divine in those parts at that time, came to the place, but would not join with them in the duty, declaring that they were mistaken in the occasion. Mr. Johnson said upon it that Mr. Rathband did foresee that the prelates would not thus yield anything, which indeed came to pass. He (Mr. Johnson) before this taught the school at Merchant Tailors, in London, when Mr. Gataker preached at the Inns of Court, and used constantly to hear him, for (said he) ‘ he had matter enough in every sermon ‘ which I loved well.’ When at Ellenbrook, he constantly went to Eccles to the sacrament, and Mr. Jones (the vicar) gave him this liberty. When some others desired the same privilege, and urged the case of Mr. Johnson, the old vicar used to say he would indulge Mr. Johnson, for he had something to say for himself.”*

There was another minister at Stockport in 1659, who also seems to have belonged to the Puritanic party. Mr. Newcome relates, “ Mr. Heyricke and I went to Stockport to give old Mr. PAGIT a visit, who was come thither as parson. As he sat in his parlour he told us that Bishop Moreton, in that very room (for he was, when bishop of Chester, parson of Stockport) did say to him and some others that they despised the Common Prayer, but it had converted more than all their preaching could do, or ever would do, or to that purpose; which expression we much wondered at, from so learned a man and so great a divine as he was.”†

Mr. Newcome was minister of the Collegiate Church at Manchester, but he also had duties to perform at Stockport. He preached here every Friday for three years, from 1659 to August 22nd, 1662, after which the Act of Uniformity came into operation, and he was ejected. His last sermon at Stockport prior to his ejection was on Ecclesiastes xii. 1, *Remember thy Creator, etc.* He says, “ I was troubled a little to leave them, but it is the Lord’s good hand who will provide for them and me yet.”‡ Another entry in his diary soon follows, in relation to his successor at Stockport. “ August 30th, 1662, I heard Mr. Clayton had taken up the lecture at Stockport.

* Newcome’s Autobiography, pages 50, 51.

† Page 103.

‡ Newcome’s Diary, page 113.

“ An old base prejudice in my heart made me on the sudden troubled
 “ at it. But I hope it will be for good, and that I shall hereafter
 “ rejoice in it.”

Mr. SAMUEL EATON, the other ejected minister in Stockport, was the son of Mr. Richard Eaton, vicar of Great Budworth in Cheshire, and brother of Theophilus Eaton, the first governor of Newhaven in New England, who has the reputation of having been very tender towards the Indians.* The father, in his day, suffered much persecution for disobeying the royal order to read the *Book of Sports*, a crime for which many hundred clergymen were either fined, imprisoned, or expelled their livings. Mr. Samuel Eaton was educated at Oxford. Wood, whose *animus* towards the Nonconformists is very manifest whenever he has occasion to speak of them, gives the following account of him. “ He took orders in the Church of England, but, being Puritanically
 “ inclined, did dissent in some particulars relating to ceremonies.
 “ Whereupon, finding his place too warm for him, he went to New
 “ England, where he studied in the university and preached to the
 “ brethren there. Afterwards, when there was a gap in the church,
 “ he returned to England, took the Covenant, was an assistant to the
 “ commissioners of Cheshire for the ejection of such whom the godly
 “ party called scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient ministers and
 “ schoolmasters, and became a most pestilent leading person in the
 “ trade of faction in the said county and in Lancashire. In the time
 “ of the rebellion he was a teacher of the church at Dukinfield, in the
 “ parish of Stockport, where he feathered his nest and was held in
 “ wonderful esteem by the faction. At length, after His Majesty’s
 “ restoration, being silenced and forced thence, yet he carried on the
 “ trade of conventicling in private, and was therefore brought several
 “ times into trouble and imprisoned.”†

Persons more competent to judge give a different opinion of the character of this eminent man. He and Newcome were intimate friends, though on the question of church polity they held different views—the latter being a rigid Presbyterian, while Eaton was a staunch Congregationalist; indeed he is said to have originated the controversy between the Presbyterians and Independents.‡ Wood

* Palfrey’s History of New England, vol. i., pages 602, 605.

† Wood’s Athenae Oxon., vol. iii., pages 672, 673.

‡ Hunter’s Life of Oliver Heywood, page 64.

is substantially correct as to historic facts. Samuel Eaton, like his brother Theophilus, was among the earliest settlers in New England, and on his return he gathered a church at Dukinfield, where he was joined by such in the neighbourhood "as were stiffest for the Congregational government."* While there he was appointed chaplain of the forces at Chester, in which city he also formed a church. †

During his frequent absence from Dukinfield, caused by this appointment at Chester, divisions arose in the church, fostered, it is said, by certain members who, in the language of their day, were called "gifted persons," ‡ whom we now denominate lay preachers, and of whom we should be glad to see a greater number than at present exists. This so weakened the church that Mr. Eaton withdrew to Stockport, along with such as still adhered to him, and preached in the Grammar School, which was founded in the year 1487 by Sir Edward Shaw. What we have said about gifted brethren is recorded with some hesitation, inasmuch as Adam Martindale was a Presbyterian, and was at one time troubled by gifted brethren from the church at Stockport, who were, perhaps, a little too zealous in propagating their peculiar views of church government. One of them, named Barrett, was especially offensive to Newcome, who calls him a busy pragmatist. § He must have been a person of considerable influence, for his signature occurs in 1650 as one of the sequestrators for Cheshire appointed by the Council of State to enforce the Engagement.

Mr. Eaton was, as stated by Wood, one of the Triers appointed by the commissioners for the approbation of public preachers. In that capacity he, along with the Revs. Richard Heyrick and John Angier examined Mr. Newcome. Their commission was dated Whitehall, December 26th, 1656, and was "to receive a certificate concerning him, signed by three persons, and to make such further trial of the said person concerning the grace of God in him, as also his knowledge and utterance for preaching the gospel as you shall think fit." The approbation of Mr. Newcome took place at Stockport on January 9th, 1657. ||

* Martindale, page 74.

† See pages 15, 76.

‡ Martindale's Autobiography, page 74.

§ See page 225.

|| Newcome's Autobiography, page 272.

Mr. Eaton continued to officiate in the Grammar School Stockport, until he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity, in 1662. He and many of his hearers afterwards attended the ministry of Mr. Angier at Denton, who, though he did not conform, was allowed to continue the occupation of his pulpit there until death. Eaton did not long survive his ejection. No doubt his time was much occupied, as Wood remarks, in conventicling or preaching in houses, as he had opportunity. Arderne of Harden Hall had a town's house in Stockport, now used as a bank. Here Eaton no doubt often enjoyed the hospitality which the proprietor was accustomed to afford. He died on 9th January 1664, being sixty-eight years of age. "He was buried at "Denton Chapel, which was a favourite resort of Nonconforming and "ejected ministers, who finding it (as they designated it) a little "Goshen in life, desired a continuance of its peaceful associations in "the slumbers of the tomb."* Calamy says, "He left no child, but "left a good name amongst persons of all persuasions." He further speaks of him as "a good scholar and a judicious divine."

Mr. Eaton published several works. *The Mystery of God Incarnate*, directed against Mr. J. Knowles, a Socinian, published in 1650; and in the following year, a vindication of the same, both 8vo. Also, *The Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction and Reconciliation 'on God's part to the Creature; A Discourse on the Springing and Spreading of Error, and the Means of Cure; A Treatise on the Oath of Allegiance and Covenant, showing that they oblige not; The Quakers Confuted*. This is animadverted on by George Fox, in his book entitled *The Great Mystery of the Great Whore Unfolded*. He and Timothy Taylor† were joint authors of a book entitled *Defence of Sundry Positions and Scriptures alleged to justify the Congregational Way*, published in London in 1645, quarto; also, on the same subject, *Part second*, published in 1646. This work was replied to by Rev. Richard Hollingworth of Manchester, in a book entitled *Queries to Mr. Samuel Eaton and Mr. Timothy Taylor*, London 1646, quarto. The latter work is in the Chetham Library, Manchester. Among other subjects, the questions are discussed as to what number is required to constitute a church, and whether or not Christ died a member of the Jewish church, and on the subject of tithes there occurs this question,

* Chetham's Miscellany, vol. ii., Old Chapel Denton, page 115.

† For an account of Taylor see paper on Dukinfield.

“ Was there not liberty within this very kingdom formerly for persons
“ to pay their tythes to what minister they pleased? And consequently
“ they were not tied to the parish they lived in, but might choose their
“ own society and pastor. Hence there are pieces of a parish in
“ some places six or eight miles distant from it.”*

We know of no written records of the history of Nonconformity in Stockport from the passing of the Act of Uniformity until after the passing of the Act of Toleration in 1688. There is ample evidence, however, that the leaven of Nonconformity was operating during that dark period. Its life was of necessity to a large extent a hidden life. We find that Eaton, and many of those who had been accustomed to attend his ministry when he was allowed publicly to preach, attended the ministry of Mr. Angier at Denton, but there can be no doubt but that they secretly held meetings at Stockport. Soon after the passing of the act referred to in 1688, Nonconformity raises its head and leaves traces of its history. There have long existed in the town two distinct branches of Nonconformity, the one represented by the Tabernacle, the other by Orchard-street Chapel. Whether the two were ever united in the same stock cannot now be ascertained. The most ancient and complete records relate to the Tabernacle, but there is no account of any separation from the church at the Tabernacle having taken place to form the church which ultimately found a habitation in Orchard-street Chapel. Under these circumstances, the history of the two places must be treated of separately.

TABERNACLE CHAPEL, STOCKPORT.

The first Nonconformist minister in the town after Mr. Eaton, of whom we have any particular account, was Mr. JOHN BYROM. He entered Frankland's academy at Natland, March 17th, 1676.† His first settlement was at Stockport. We do not know the date, but, judging from the time he entered the academy, it could not be long after 1680; and no doubt prior to his settlement the Nonconformists of the town had united to form a church or congregation distinct from the Establishment, though many might during the period of restraint, from 1662 to 1688, continue to attend the Established

* Eaton and Taylor's reply to Hollingworth, page 5.

† See List of Frankland's Students. The Byroms were a respectable Nonconformist family in Manchester. Newcome often mentions them in his Autobiography.

Church whose sympathies were with the Nonconformists. Byrom's name occurs as one of the signatures to the Agreement of Cheshire Ministers, at their meeting at Dean Row in 1691. He took part at the ordination of the Rev. John Ashe of Ashford in the Peak, and other candidates for the ministry. Dr. Clegg says, "The ordainers " were the Rev. Mr. Bagshaw of Ford, Mr. Samuel Angier of Dukinfield, Dr. Eaton of Macclesfield, Mr. Gamaliel Jones of Chadkyrk, " and Mr. Byrom of Stockport. Some other ministers were present. " Mr. Byrom began with prayer and reading the Scriptures. . . . " Mr. Byrom prayed at the imposition of hands on Mr. Foolowe."* This ordination took place at Midsummer 1696. Dr. Clegg says, " Mr. Byrom finished his course a few years after, I think in a place " near Saddleworth." He remained at Stockport until about the year 1697.† The congregation of which he was the minister no doubt erected the chapel which occupied the site where the Tabernacle now stands, although dates will prove that he must have left Stockport before that chapel was built.

Mr. Byrom's successor was the Rev. RICHARD MILNE. He entered Frankland's academy at Rathmell May 16th, 1693.‡ In relation to his ordination, Matthew Henry makes the following entry in his diary:—"17th June 1700. This day I went to Macclesfield to join " my brethren the ministers of Cheshire and Lancashire in an ordina- " tion. The candidates were . . . Mr. Richard Milnes of Stopford."§ The chapel referred to must have been built during the early part of Mr. Milne's ministry, for the indenture by which the land on which it stands was leased is dated 24th June 1700, a few days after the date of his ordination. Where the congregation worshipped during the ministry of Mr. Byrom, and prior to the passing of the Act of Toleration, is not known—probably it was in some secluded court near to, if not on the same spot where the chapel was built. The indenture of lease is made between Edward Davenport of the one part, and Richard Clough, Samuel Hey, Enoch Henshall, and Thomas Taylor of the other part. Perhaps the lessor was as much in sympathy with Nonconformity as were the lessees, for, considering the site, the annual ground rent charged is a mere acknowledgment. It was

* Dr. Clegg's *Life of Ashe*, page 58.

† See *Monthly Repository*, vol. vi., page 204. ‡ List of Frankland's Students.

§ Tong's *Life of Henry*, pages 261, 262.

situated in Middle Hillgate, and, after standing for more than a hundred years, it was taken down and the present Tabernacle was erected on the same site in 1806-7.

Mr. Milne married Mrs. Lydia Stanfield of the Breck, near Halifax, on October 19th, 1703, by whom he had several children.* He was a member of the Association of Cheshire Ministers, but seems not to have attended regularly; for in 1709 it is noted in the minute book, "Mr. Richard Milnes of Stopford has for several meetings absented himself from us." In 1715 he had 629 hearers, of whom twenty were gentlemen. He was at Stockport from 1700 to 1718, when he gave up the ministry.

SAMUEL DE LA ROSE succeeded Mr. Milne. In the early part of his ministry a serious division took place in the church, which resulted in a separation. The seceding party erected a chapel in High-street, which, within the last few years, has been taken down. The church at this place ultimately embraced Unitarian doctrines, and their successors now occupy a very handsome chapel erected in S. Peter's Gate. The immediate cause of this division was a sermon by Mr. De la Rose. It was preached first on July 27th, 1718, and again, on account of the dissatisfaction which it had created, on February 12th, 1721, in which year it was also committed to the press, under the title of *A Brief Account of the Two Covenants*. Along with it is a preface by the brother of the author, John De la Rose, who appears to have resided at Sheffield, explaining the circumstances under which the sermon was composed, and endorsing the views which it contains.

The sermon is now before the writer of this paper, which he has carefully read, together with remarks on the same, in a pamphlet of seventy-one pages, written by James Clegg, M.D., minister at Chinley, and addressed to a friend at Stockport who had sent him the sermon; and considering the liberal views which are now held in relation to the topic on which it treats, it seems strange that it should ever have been the cause of so serious a division. It is a mistake to suppose that the questions at issue were those which divide Trinitarians from Unitarians; these are not so much as mooted. The cause of offence was what is now technically called "high doctrine." Mr. De la Rose was what would be called a High Calvinist, though there are passages in the appendix to his

* Wilson's MS., Red Cross-street Library.

sermon which shew that he did not belong to the extreme portion of that school—those opposed to him, as represented by Mr. Clegg, were what we should term moderate Calvinists, or simply *Calvinists*.

The text on which the sermon was preached is 1 Corinthians xv. 22, *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* He first gives “Some account of the covenant of works, or that covenant “ which God entered into with Adam in his state of innocence,” in which he asserts the federal headship of Adam, and in relation to his sin says, “It is our duty to be deeply sensible of the sin of our “ natures, and greatly humbled for it. That guilt which is upon us “ considered as in our first head, Adam, would sink every soul of us “ out of the reach of mercy, though we had never committed any “ other sin all the days of our lives. Christ’s blood is as absolutely “ necessary for the pardon of our *original sin* as for the pardon of the “ most daring and flagitious *actual sins* that we can commit.” He next gives “some account of that everlasting covenant which God “ and Christ had entered into for the sake of the elect.” It is to the representation given of this covenant that objection is taken by Mr. Clegg. There are four positions to which he objects, as being disagreeable to the doctrine delivered in the Scriptures:—

I. “That the covenant of grace was made betwixt God the Father “ as one party, and His only Son the Redeemer of men, considered “ as a publick person, as the other party.” Mr. Clegg objects that what is in Scripture called the “new” and “better” covenant, and which divines have generally agreed to call the “covenant of grace,” is throughout the Old and New Testament represented “as made “ betwixt God and man as the covenanting parties, and Jesus Christ “ as mediator of it.” He says, “The difference is not whether God “ the Father and God the Son did enter into a covenant concerning “ the recovery of fallen man, in which the method and the terms of “ our salvation were adjusted and secured, and the foundation of the “ covenant of grace was laid. This I do not deny, though many of “ our divines are of opinion it cannot so properly be called a covenant “ as a mediatorial law, which was given by the Father to the Redeemer, “ to be by Him fulfilled and obeyed in order to our salvation. And “ I find one of no mean esteem amongst the learned observing that “ God the Father and the Son, having one and the same essence, “ must have one and the same will; and there cannot be a covenant “ properly so called but where there are two wills mutually consenting

“ to it. Others call it a simple decree concerning man’s redemption, “ in which the will of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is included. . . . “ Let this transaction betwixt the Father and the Redeemer be called “ a mediatorial law, or a covenant of redemption (I shall not contend “ about words so long as we are agreed in the thing), call it how you “ will, such a transaction I freely grant. . . . The covenant of “ redemption made between God the Father and God the Son is not “ the same covenant with that which the Scripture calls the new and “ better covenant, and which divines have generally agreed to call “ the covenant of grace, in opposition to the first covenant made with “ Adam in his innocent state, commonly called the covenant of “ works. Therefore the *Brief Account of the Two Covenants* does “ not give a true account of them, for it either puts one covenant for “ another, or confounds one covenant with another which is in many “ respects quite different from it. And this confounding of these two “ covenants, or putting one of them in the place of the other, appears “ to me a matter of very ill consequence, as tending to defeat the “ whole design of the Christian religion; for if God hath made no “ other covenant relating to the salvation of sinners but that which “ He made with the Lord our Redeemer, it will follow that man is “ not personally bound to keep any covenant, nor can justly be “ charged with the breach of any whatever he does.”

I have quoted this lengthy passage from Mr. Clegg’s pamphlet because it contains the root principle of difference between him and Mr. De la Rose out of which the other objections advanced to the *Brief Account* naturally spring, and also because it shews how fully the persons opposed to Mr. De la Rose, as represented by Mr. Clegg, subscribed to the doctrines of the Deity of Christ and the Trinity. These are points never disputed on either side, and most clearly avowed by both.

II. The second position to which Mr. Clegg objects is “ That “ Jesus Christ, as the head of the elect, was to perform, and accordingly hath performed, the condition of the covenant of grace; and “ left nothing for us to do but to reap the benefits of it.” His objections to this position are, 1st, “ That if Christ were the federal head “ or representative of the elect in this transaction, then the elect “ would be in the covenant as soon as they are born, and even earlier, “ instead of which he finds the apostles inviting men to come into the “ covenant, and reminding the elect Ephesians of their former

“ condition, that in times past they *were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*”—Ephesians ii. 12. 2nd, “Whenever the covenant was renewed, man was a party to it—Abraham and David.” 3rd, “If Christ be mediator between God and man, then was the covenant made between God and man, for Christ is the mediator of the covenant, and consequently mediator between the covenanting parties.” 4th, “All the terms required by the covenant of grace are required of fallen man; therefore man was a party with whom the covenant was made. Man is required to yield himself to God, to repent, to believe, and to obey the gospel; and Jesus Christ never undertook to repent, to believe, or to obey the gospel in his stead. These conditions every man is bound to perform in his own person (though no man can by his own power), as he hopes for salvation,” &c., &c. Mr. Clegg here quotes Owen, Baxter, Tillotson, Pearson, and others, in support of his view of the subject.

III. “That whatever Jesus Christ hath done or suffered, as head of the covenant, is imputed to us; and God esteems of us as though we had done it.” On this Mr. Clegg remarks, “I firmly believe that whatever our Blessed Saviour did and suffered for us is so far imputed to every believer in him as to be every whit as effectual for his salvation as if the believer had done and suffered it in his own person; and he who relies upon anything besides this as coming in competition or concurring with it, to be in any degree the meritorious cause of any saving benefit will be found to trust to a broken reed.” Again, “It is certain that Christ suffered for the sins of mankind, and that not only to vindicate the honour of the divine attributes, law, and government, and to deter offenders from transgressing in hopes of impunity; but He suffered for our good, and that not only in the *Socinian* sense, to give us an example of constancy and patience in asserting the truth and bearing injuries; nor only to confirm the doctrine he delivered; but He suffered *loco nostro*, in our stead. His death was, strictly speaking, a propitiatory sacrifice offered to God instead of the death of the sinner, which was his due by law. But that we suffered or satisfied in Christ, or that God accounts us to have done so, is what I cannot understand; ’tis language the Scripture is a stranger to.” He then shews the immoral consequences which he conceives naturally follow from this view. “If God esteems

“ us as if we had done it ourselves, then there can remain no obligation upon us by the law either to obey it or to suffer for disobedience; we have neither anything to do nor anything to fear; there can be no such thing in the elect as sin or desert of suffering. How welcome must this doctrine be to the lazy and licentious! but how dangerous to the souls of men!”

IV. “ That neither faith nor repentance, nor any other gift or grace of the Spirit of God hath anything to do in the business of our justification before God.” Here Mr. Clegg quotes passages of Scripture which will readily occur to the mind, where we are said to be justified by faith, and where repentance and obedience are required in order to our acceptance with God.

The difference between Mr. De la Rose and Mr. Clegg manifestly results from the former confounding two things which ought to be kept distinct, namely—the arrangement entered into between the Father and the Son for the redemption of men, and the arrangement according to which the blessings of Christ’s work are conferred upon men. That an arrangement was entered into between the Father and the Son for the redemption of men Mr. Clegg admits, but prefers to call it a mediatorial law, or covenant of redemption. If this be called a covenant, then Mr. De la Rose is right in representing the Father as one party to it and Christ as the other. He is further right in saying that Christ performed all the conditions of this covenant, and left nothing for us to do but to reap the benefits of it, though it does not follow either that Christ was a party to this covenant, *considered as a public person*, namely, federal head of the elect, or that Mr. De la Rose’s views of imputation are correct “ that whatever Jesus Christ has done or suffered as head of the covenant is imputed to us; and God esteems of us as though we had done it.” Blessings are conferred upon us on account of what Christ has done, but God does not esteem of us as though we had been rich and became poor, and suffered the death of the cross as a sacrifice for sins. We may receive the benefits of Christ’s work without being esteemed to have done the work.

And then Mr. De la Rose ignores, in name at least, the arrangement by which God confers the blessings of Christ’s redemptive work on men, and which is called a covenant to which men are parties, and of which Jesus Christ is the mediator. We say he ignores it in name, because he does not wholly ignore it in fact. In the appendix

to his sermon, when answering an objection to the words "That
 "neither faith nor repentance, nor faith and repentance, nor any other
 "gift and grace, nor all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, have
 "anything to do with the business of our justification before God ;
 "'tis the righteousness of Christ we must be justified by before God,"
 he says, "All that I meant and mean is, that faith and repentance are
 "not the matter or meritorious cause of our justifying righteousness.
 "And I cannot but think still that faith and repentance, though
 "necessary to salvation in their place, yet are not the procuring cause,
 "in whole or part, of our justifying righteousness, much less that
 "righteousness itself."

It is clear from Mr. Clegg's strictures that the thing of which he and his friends were afraid was the prevalence of Antinomianism, which had just wrought such evils in New England. Whatever may be deemed the logical tendency of some of Mr. De la Rose's doctrinal positions, it would be unjust to his memory to suppose that he did not enforce the duties of a holy life. He does this earnestly at the conclusion of the sermon in question, when dwelling on the evidences of being in the covenant of works or the covenant of grace. One of the evidences of being in the covenant of works which he adduces is, "You are either not careful to maintain good works, or are for making another use of them than what God has appointed. Either you are careless of the commands of God, or else think that your obedience to them has something meritorious in it."

The ministers in the neighbourhood generally seem to have sympathised with Mr. Clegg and the party opposed to Mr. De la Rose. This was apparently not only on account of his theological views, but also because he did not apply to the Association of Cheshire for his ordination. The action which the association took in the case is shewn by the following extracts from their Minute Book:—

"May 2nd, 1721. Mr. De la Rose accused some of the ministers
 "then present that, in concurrence with other persons, they ordered
 "a paper to be read in his congregation, when he was absent, to his
 "prejudice. Upon a full examination of that matter, the question
 "was put whether Mr. De la Rose had made good his accusation,
 "and it was carried in the negative, *nemine contradicente*."

"August 8th, 1721. With respect to the affair of Stockport,
 "agreed that we think it advisable to consider their case, and to
 "invite both sides to give their declarations, and if one refuse,

“ however, to advise the complying party. Resolved,—The advice
“ of this assembly is that Mr. De la Rose leave Stockport; that the
“ contending parties unite in the choice of another pastor; that, in case
“ of refusal, the dissatisfied party is at liberty to choose for themselves.
“ Lastly, resolved that a letter of advice be drawn up agreeably to
“ these minutes, and that a committee be appointed to draw it up; and
“ a letter was sent, a copy of which here followeth:—

“ Knutsford, August 8th, 1721.

“ Sirs,—After mature consideration of the state of the congregation of Protes-
“ tant Dissenters in Stockport, upon the best information we were able to procure,
“ we are clearly of opinion that the following advices are the most seasonable:—

“ 1st. That Mr. De la Rose should peaceably withdraw from the said congre-
“ gation.

“ 2nd. That thereupon the two parties then should unite in the choice of a
“ suitable person to be their pastor. But, in case either Mr. De la Rose shall
“ refuse to withdraw, or those that adhere to him shall not consent to his with-
“ drawing, that then

“ 3rdly, It may be expedient for those who are dissatisfied with him to provide
“ themselves, as God direct, of a pastor.

“ Signed in the name of the ministers met at the time and place above by their
“ appointment,

JOHN GARDNER, * Moderator.”

“ September 4th, 1722. A question being put whether Mr. De la
“ Rose’s management, in not applying to the class for his ordination,
“ was an irregularity, it was carried unanimously in the affirmative.
“ Then another question being put, consequent upon the former,
“ whether Mr. De la Rose be admitted or not admitted a member of
“ this class, it was unanimously carried in the negative.”

Mr. De la Rose and that part of the church which adhered to
him retained possession of the chapel. The part of the church and
congregation that were opposed to him retired, and erected a chapel
in HIGH-STREET. The first minister of the new place was a Mr.
JAMES HARDY. His name occurs in the minutes of the Cheshire
Classis, where it is said that the ministers met at Stockport on Sep-
tember 3rd, 1723, and Mr. Hardy was ordained. He had then been
at Stockport above a year, namely, from July 11th, 1722. Mr. Clegg
was one of the ministers who officiated at his ordination. The names
of the other ministers were Worthington, Waterhouse, and Irlam.
As late as 1785 to 1792 there was a minister here, the Rev. L. WILSON,
afterwards D.D., whose doctrinal views did not prevent him from

* Mr. Gardner was Matthew Henry’s successor at Chester.

undertaking a charge in the Scotch Church at Falkirk. He was the author of a reply to Wakefield on the Sabbath.

At the old chapel, Mr. De la Rose was succeeded by Mr. EDMUND FLETCHER, probably about 1730, who afterwards removed to the Peak Chapel. The next minister was the Rev. JAMES SMITH, M.A., who was ordained on August 26th, 1741, and remained at Stockport till his death. He was succeeded by the Rev. PETER WALKDEN, A.M., of Holcombe, who gave the charge at Mr. Smith's ordination. He was educated at Manchester under Coningham and Chorlton, and died at Stockport on 5th November 1749. His successor was the Rev. THOMAS BROOK. He was educated at the Heckmondwike Academy, of which the Rev. James Scott, D.D., was tutor. He also continued here until his death, which took place on the 19th August 1789. Several of his descendants still attend the Tabernacle. There was a vacancy in the pastorate for four years after Mr. Brook's death, when he was succeeded by the Rev. THOMAS CROWTHER of Northowram Academy, who was ordained on the 6th November 1793. His ministry was short, for he died in about five months after his ordination, namely, on 30th March 1794. The next was the Rev. T. AUCHINCLOSS, D.D. He also continued minister of this place until his death, which occurred on the 29th of May 1800. In 1796, when infidelity prevailed in England as well as in France, he published three sermons, still extant, on *The Sophistry of the First Part of Payne's "Age of Reason;" or, a Rational Vindication of the Holy Scriptures as a Positive Revelation from God; with the Causes of Deism.* On the death of Dr. Auchincloss, the chapel was closed for a short time in consequence of its delapidated condition. After some repairs it was re-opened, and the Rev. DANIEL DUNKERLEY was appointed pastor, and removed to Loxley, near Sheffield, in 1803. "On the 15th October 1804, the Rev. SOLOMON ASHTON supplied the pulpit for the first time. The congregation then numbered only about forty persons. After hearing him for three successive Sabbaths, they gave him a call, which he accepted." From that time until his ordination, which took place on 19th June 1806, he was a student in an academy at Manchester, established and principally supported by the munificence of Robert Spear, Esq., and presided over by the Rev. William Roby. This institution was afterwards removed to Blackburn, and is now represented by the Lancashire Independent College. The congregation rapidly increased under Mr. Ashton's ministry, so that it became too large for the

chapel to accommodate. The old chapel was therefore taken down, and a new one erected on the same site and called the "Tabernacle." It was opened on the 23rd of August 1807, and will accommodate about six hundred people. Mr. Ashton continued here until his death, which took place on the 14th September 1836, in the sixty-second year of his age and the thirty-second of his ministry. His people evinced their respect for him by erecting, near the pulpit, a handsome marble tablet to his memory. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Samuel Bradley of Manchester, in the large room of the Stockport Sunday-school, which was crowded to excess, numbers being unable to obtain admission. Two of his sons now attend the chapel. The jubilee of the Tabernacle was held on 11th August 1857, when Mr. W. H. Ashton read a historical sketch of the place, from which this account of his father is chiefly taken. It does honour to the memory both of the ministers and the people who have been connected with this place, that their union was in so many cases perpetuated until terminated by death. It is said of some place that its ministers are immortal—none ever see death while minister of the place. The life-long union of minister and people was generally more common in former times than it is now. The vacancy caused by Mr. Ashton's death was supplied by Mr. EBENEZER DAVIES, a student of Rotherham College. He entered on the pastorate in July 1838, and resigned it in October 1839. He was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN THORNTON of Darlington, on the 22nd December 1840. In 1848 Mr. Thornton and a large portion of the church withdrew from the Tabernacle, and erected WYCLIFFE CHAPEL, a neat Gothic edifice, situated in Heaton Norris, and of which he continues to be the minister. The next minister at the Tabernacle was the Rev. MARK HOWARD, who was educated at Airedale College. He was ordained on the 30th January 1850, and resigned his office in April 1853. He is now minister of Lower Chapel, Heckmondwike. Mr. Howard was succeeded by the Rev. JAMES BUCKLEY, from Horbury, near Wakefield, who was also educated at Airedale College. He entered on his ministry at the Tabernacle in July 1854, and in 1861 his health was such that he felt it to be his duty to relinquish the responsibilities of a stated pastor. He therefore resigned his office in December of that year, after having spent thirty-six years in his master's service, as minister in succession of Independent churches at Thirsk, Peniston, Horbury, and Stockport. Mr. Buckley continues

to reside in the town, and preaches occasionally. Mr. WOODHOUSE, of Cavendish College Manchester, accepted an invitation to succeed him, and entered on his ministry at the Tabernacle on the 9th of August 1863.

There is another branch of Congregational Nonconformity at present represented by ORCHARD-STREET CHAPEL and HANOVER CHAPEL, the precise origin of which the writer of the present paper has not been able to discover. Neal mentions only one congregation in Stockport, but Matthew Henry, in his Diary, October 20th, 1711, mentions a Mr. HYDE of Stockport being recommended to the people at Ware.* At that date Mr. Milne was minister of the Tabernacle, then called Hillgate Chapel, so that Mr. Hyde must either have been residing in Stockport without a charge, or else there must at the time have been two congregations, for there is no evidence of his having been associated in the pastorate with Mr. Milne. We are disposed to think, however, that the branch of Nonconformity of which we now treat had its origin at a later date. Prior to the erection of Orchard-street Chapel, the parent congregation worshipped in what was called Water-street Chapel, so designated from its nearness to the river, situated in a district of the town known as the Park, which seems in former days to have been a pleasant slope from the castle down to the river. This building still stands, but has been converted into warerooms. Orchard-street Chapel was built in the year 1788. It would then be deemed a very respectable edifice, so that the congregation must at that time have possessed considerable strength. The first minister of the new chapel, and for whom it was erected, was the Rev. WILLIAM MAURICE, who had previously been minister at Haslington and at Bolton. He remained about five years at Stockport, and then removed to Fetter Lane Chapel London. Mr. Maurice must have been an effective preacher, and much respected. He delivered a discourse before the Missionary Society, at the solemn designation of the missionaries appointed for the second mission to the South Seas, on November 13th, 1798, at Spa Fields Chapel London, which was also published under the title of *The Meridian Glory of the Redeemer's Kingdom*. The writer of this paper has in his possession another sermon published by Mr.

* Wilson's MS. Red Cross-street Library.

Maurice, entitled *Mercy Triumphant; a Discourse delivered at Fetter Lane Meeting London, June 15th, 1800, occasioned by the Death of John Osborne Dawson, who was Executed for Forgery at Newgate, June 5th, 1800.* This sermon reached several editions, although its price was 1s. 6d. in a pamphlet form of sixty pages. There is appended to the sermon a brief account of the young man who was the occasion of its being preached. He was a person of education. He ascribes his misfortune to an over generous spirit. He says, in an account written by himself, on the evening before he suffered, "The fatal money was destined to a project which, had it been accomplished successfully, might not only have concealed the means of effecting it, but have worked the happiness and prosperity of many. I sought to relieve those I knew in need of help. I missed my aim, and lost my life!" Mr. Maurice was induced by a friend to visit him in Newgate. He had many interviews with him, which he was persuaded led to the most satisfactory result. On the morning of his execution he said to Mr. Maurice, "I am happy; I verily believe this will be one of my best days, and that as my day is so my strength will be." They then spent much time in prayer, in which the young man himself engaged. He observed, "I think if I shrink at all it will be at the tolling of the bell." When he heard it, however, he said without dismay, "There is the bell, but it has no unhappy effect on me; the Lord, I firmly believe, will not leave me till the last." At the latch he bade farewell to Mr. Maurice, and said, "We shall soon meet in a world where we shall never be separated." He had then a smile upon his countenance, and with that smile he appeared to the people, which led the *Times* newspaper to say that he died "with unconcern." The sermon preached by Mr. Maurice is on 1 Timothy i. 16, *Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.* He sets forth, 1st—The apparent obstacles in his character to his obtaining mercy; 2nd—The nature of that mercy which he found; and 3rd—The design of God in this example of mercy.

The next minister at Orchard-street Chapel was the Rev. ROBERT ANLEZARK. He continued there from February 1793 to May 1801, and afterwards conformed. He was succeeded by the Rev. WILLIAM EVANS. There is an interesting memoir of Mr. Evans published in

the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1816, from which the following account is chiefly taken. He was born at Bala, in Merionethshire, in 1773. He early displayed a thirst for knowledge, and took great delight in the writings of the old Welsh bards. The following is related as a well-authenticated anecdote. "A public meeting of the Welsh bards being held at Bala, when he was about fourteen years of age, at which a silver plate was to be awarded to the best composer in verse, an aged poet, Mr. Robert Hughes, was appointed judge on the occasion; who, being aware of his young friend's knowledge of the Welsh language, and of his accurate acquaintance with all the rules of Welsh poetry, informed the bards that he would not undertake the office unless *Billy Evans* were allowed to be his assistant. This being warmly recommended by a respectable clergyman, it was approved of; and the venerable old man and the young boy sat as critics and passed their united verdict on the performances of the day." In early life he was led to the knowledge of Christ. In January 1791, he was admitted by the Congregational Fund Board into their academy at Oswestry, then under the care of the Rev. Dr. Edward Williams, afterwards of the Rev. Jenkin Lewis. He was highly esteemed both by his tutors and fellow students. His first settlement as a minister was at Lane Delph, in the Potteries, in the year 1795, where he continued three years and a half, and then removed to Bridgnorth, in the county of Salop. Here he was ordained to the pastoral office on April 8th, 1801. In December of the same year the church at Orchard-street Chapel, Stockport, invited him to become its pastor, which invitation he respectfully declined. In June 1803, the invitation was renewed, and after due deliberation he accepted it, and on the 29th September he entered on his new sphere. The congregation was then small, but it rapidly increased. Mr. Evans soon turned his earnest attention to the dark and destitute parts of the county. This eventually gave rise to the Cheshire Union for the Support of Itinerant Preachers; the first report of which was drawn up by Mr. Evans, and published in 1806. He became secretary of the society, and was accustomed, half-yearly, to visit the itinerants to cheer them on in their work. The congregation at Orchard-street Chapel subscribed largely to the funds of the society, their contributions amounting to nearly 150*l.* per annum. The testimony borne to his preaching, both as to matter and style, is of the highest character. He frequently officiated on public occasions, such as ordinations. He

preached at the ordination of Mr. Silvester of Sandbach. His health seriously declined about two years prior to his death. He, however, continued to discharge his ministerial duties as long as his strength would permit. When asked by a friend, about the commencement of his illness, "Are you afraid of death?" he replied, "Yes, very; when " I think of the act of dying, and of the separation of body and spirit " from each other, it makes me shudder, though I feel no anxiety or " apprehension at all as to my future state." This fear of death was ultimately destroyed. A fortnight before he died, being asked if his covenant God was with him, he answered with a smile, "Yes, yes, I " have heaven in my eye and glory in my heart; I see what I never " saw before, I feel what I never felt before, and what I cannot express " to you. How unutterable are the glories of that kingdom to which " I am going! It is well to begin well; but it is glorious to end well. " I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; and there " is laid up for me a crown of life—but not to me, to Him who hath " saved me and taught me these things be all the glory." After speaking suitable words to his wife and other friends who had come to visit him, he said, "There is one thing more I have to mention, " which lies near and is very dear to my heart—the *Cheshire Union*. " Let it still continue and remain long a union; give up everything " but truth and a good conscience for the sake of union and brotherly " love; give it your support and let it have your prayers, for I know " it is the Lord's work." He fell asleep in Jesus September 29th, 1814, in the forty-second year of his age. His people testified their respect for his memory by subscribing a fund, the interest of which, amounting to upwards of 40*l.* per annum, was paid to his widow, and at her decease, which took place recently, the principal was distributed among his children.

The next minister of Orchard-street Chapel was the Rev. N. K. PUGSLEY, who was educated at Hoxton Academy. He settled in Stockport in 1815. Owing to the long illness of Mr. Evans, and his consequent incapacity for ministerial duties, the congregation was at the time much reduced. Under the new appointment it soon revived, and a steady and respectable congregation was maintained until Mr. Pugsley resigned the pastorate in December 1819. A portion of the congregation then withdrew from Orchard-street Chapel, and resolved to erect for Mr. Pugsley a new place of worship, HANOVER CHAPEL, in the township of Heaton Norris, where there was a large

population, and where, with the exception of a small Episcopal chapel at a distance, there was neither church, chapel, preaching station, nor Sunday-school. The first subscriptions towards the erection amounted to nearly 3,000*l.*, and this sum was soon increased by persons who had till then never been connected with the Nonconformist body. The chapel was commenced in the summer of 1820, and after some trials of faith and patience was opened for Divine service on the first Sunday of October 1821. The morning service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. McAll of Manchester, and the evening service by the Rev. William Thorpe of Bristol, and on the Wednesday evening following a service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. Collyer of London. Mr. Pugsley continued minister of the chapel until June 1858, when he resigned his office in consequence of age. At that time, among other expressions of esteem, the congregation placed a life-sized portrait of their minister in the schoolroom connected with the chapel. Mr. Pugsley was succeeded by the Rev. ERNEST COULSON JAY, who entered on the pastorate of Hanover Chapel in June 1858, and resigned in January 1862. A successor to Mr. Jay has not yet been appointed.

The successor to Mr. Pugsley at Orchard-street Chapel was the Rev. GEORGE FREDERICK RYAN, since Dr. Ryan, recently of Beverley, now residing at Bridlington, having resigned the pastorate in consequence of age. He settled at Stockport in 1820, and resigned his charge in 1831. Mr. Ryan was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN WADDINGTON, formerly a student at Airedale College, now Dr. Waddington of London, who commenced his ministry at Stockport in 1832. Hitherto the Independents of Stockport had almost wholly dispensed with Sabbath-schools in immediate connection with their places of worship, in consequence of the existence of what is called the LARGE SCHOOL—an institution which was founded in the year 1805, and is conducted on the principle of ignoring all denominational distinctions. Mr. Waddington secured the erection of a school in connection with Orchard-street Chapel in the year 1833. Another school of larger dimensions was erected in 1852, and the principle of having a school under the immediate supervision of the church has now become general among the Independents. It has never been otherwise with the Episcopalians and Methodists. Mr. Waddington resigned his charge at Stockport, and removed to Union Chapel Surrey, in June 1846.

Mr. Waddington was succeeded at Orchard-street Chapel by the present minister, the Rev. ABSALOM CLARK, who was educated at the Lancashire Independent College. He settled at Stockport in July 1847, and was ordained on the Good Friday following; on which occasion the Rev. John Angell James made his last visit to Stockport, and preached the sermon to the people. Dr. Vaughan delivered the charge to the minister, and the Rev. Richard Fletcher preached the introductory discourse, on the nature and constitution of a Christian church.

PARTICULAR BAPTIST CHURCH, STOCKPORT.*

For some years it was a cause of surprise and regret to many persons of the denomination, that no Particular Baptist Church was formed in the populous borough of Stockport. That the town was one of great importance was obvious from the fact that in 1831 its population amounted to 70,000 souls. Several attempts had been made to supply this deficiency, but they were so unsuitably conducted, and were so inadequate to the necessities of the case, that they at once proved abortive. With the hope that some efficient effort might ultimately be made, a small chapel which had been built by a zealous sceptic for the purpose of disseminating the infidel principles of the French Revolution, and situated on Brinksway Bank, was purchased by Joseph Leese, Esq., one of the deacons of the Baptist Church, York-street, Manchester, and a magistrate of the county of Lancaster. The situation of the chapel, however, was at too great a distance from the town to render it available for the purpose contemplated by the purchaser. The General Baptists were kindly allowed to occupy it free of charge, but they could not succeed in obtaining a congregation, and so gave up the place. In the year 1836, the Lancashire Itinerant Society resolved to renew the efforts which had been hitherto unsuccessful, and in this they were assisted by a grant of 30*l.* per annum from the parent Itinerant Society in London. A small committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements, consisting of the Rev. John Aldis, pastor of the Baptist Church, George-street, Manchester; Mr. J. Marsh of Ashton; and Mr. T. Harbottle of Heywood. The only place

*Furnished by the Rev. Joseph Pywell, minister of the place.

which could be procured was the old assembly room in Chestergate, which was taken at a rental of 15*l.* per annum, though it was felt to be anything but desirable for a place of public worship. This room was opened on Sunday, January 1st, 1837; Mr. J. Marsh and the Rev. J. Aldis preaching on the occasion. For twelve months this infant cause had many difficulties to contend with, arising chiefly from the want of a resident minister. Mr. Taylor of Bingley, Mr. Harbottle of Heywood, and Mr. Jones of Liverpool, respectively, visited Stockport with a view to a settlement, but each declined to undertake the duties of the station, and the hope which their presence, and the degree of success realised by them, had raised, was disappointed.

The pulpit was unoccupied for thirteen Sundays during the year, as there was some difficulty in obtaining ministers. The prospect of success was gloomy. The attention of the committee was at length directed to the Rev. CHARLES BAKER, the minister of a small church at Boston, near Nottingham, who, on application having been made to him by the Rev. J. Aldis, consented to visit the station and make trial of it for a few weeks. Mr. Baker reached Stockport on December 29th, 1837, and entered upon his preparatory labours on Sunday the 31st. The congregation on that day was very small, and during the five following Sundays there were scarcely any indications of improvement. However, after having sought Divine direction, and consulted with some of his friends at Nottingham, Mr. Baker consented to accept the charge at Stockport, and commenced his labours on Sunday February 25th, 1838. For some months his success was so inconsiderable that the Itinerant Society, at its annual meeting at Preston in the same year, proposed to remove him to Blackburn, but he prevailed upon them to allow him to remain in Stockport six months longer. During this time it pleased the Lord to grant a blessing upon the seed sown, and this Mr. Baker regarded as a pledge of future success. The preaching of the gospel was blessed to the conversion of an individual who, on a profession of his repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, was immersed by Mr. Baker in the river, in the presence of a thousand spectators. From this time the congregation gradually increased. Many persons connected with the Stockport Sunday School attended Mr. Baker's ministry, either regularly or occasionally, and success now began to follow his efforts. On September 2nd, 1838, a church was formed

consisting of nine persons, including the minister and his wife. Mr. Baker was ordained pastor of the church August 28th, 1839. Various providential occurrences led to the rapid extension of the congregation, and, consequently, to the desire of obtaining a permanent place of worship. A building, which had been occupied by the Socialists, was just at that juncture opportunely offered for sale. It was purchased, converted into a chapel capable of accommodating 750 persons, and opened for public worship in May 1840. The congregation continued to increase, and most promising prospects of usefulness, amid a deeply benighted population, opened before the church, when it pleased Divine Providence in the most unexpected manner materially to change the scene.

On a Sunday evening, in the month of December 1840, when the chapel was crowded previous to the administration of baptism, the stone on which one of the pillars of the gallery rested, gave way with two loud reports, endangering the lives of the assembly by the alarm immediately occasioned. By the Divine goodness no serious injury was sustained by any individual, but the repairs of the building incurred considerable expense, and occasioned the dispersion of the congregation whose confidence was very slow in returning. The church however by no means relaxed its diligence. Many important operations for the salvation of souls were carried forward, and there was the strongest reason to expect that prosperity would ultimately crown the efforts which were so diligently prosecuted. Subsequent events have justified this expectation.

Mr. Baker removed from Stockport in the year 1845, and was succeeded in the pastorate of the church by the Rev. JOHN RUSSELL, who after four years earnest labour removed to Chatham, and was followed in Stockport by the Rev. JOHN DAVIES, whose pastorate terminated in two years, when he became the pastor of the church at Margate. On the 23rd of June 1853, the Rev. JAMES MARTIN, B.A., of Lymington, accepted the cordial invitation of the church to take the oversight of them, and having continued in that relation for two years, was succeeded, in January 1856, by the present pastor, the Rev. JOSEPH PYWELL, formerly student at the Baptist College Bradford, and subsequently nine years pastor of the Second Baptist Church, Northampton. The Baptist Church at Stockport is now in a more flourishing condition than it has ever been, numbering 139 members. Eighteen persons were baptized this year on a profession

of faith, and received into fellowship with the church; and the congregation sometimes nearly fills the spacious chapel. The Sunday-school contains 120 scholars, with twenty teachers.

It may be stated, in conclusion, that there is reason to believe there were some persons residing in Stockport at the beginning of the present century who held the distinctive principles of the Baptists. It is well known that, fifty years ago, a few Baptists were accustomed to meet for worship in a room in New Bridge Lane, near the Park, but the place was lost to them, and they were dispersed. It is not unlikely that Stockport was occasionally visited, in the early days of Nonconformity, and subsequently, as many other places in the county were, by ministers holding Baptist sentiments, who through their evangelistic labours were the means of successfully calling many to Christ's service.

NORBURY.

(*By the Rev. ABSALOM CLARK.*)

IN the parish of Stockport, about three and a half miles S.E.S. of that town, we come to the chapelry and township of Norbury, from which place the Rev. JOHN JOLLIE was ejected. He was the brother of Thomas Jollie of Altham, in Lancashire, and son of Major James Jollie, a member of the Manchester Presbyterian Classis, and provost mareschal in the Parliamentary army in the county of Lancaster. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and was for a while an associate or assistant of the Rev. John Angier, at Denton.* Mr. Angier frequently had such associates, for it was his opinion that "young men intended for the ministry should be placed for some time with an able minister, and preach under his eye and ear." Mr. Jollie afterwards held the chapel of Norbury, from which he was ejected. Of this, Calamy's abridgement of Baxter's *History of his Own Times*† contains the following account:—"Going to preach one Lord's Day at Norbury, after the Act for Uniformity, he (Mr. Jolly) found the doors locked. The people by some means opened the doors. Certain gentlemen informed the King and council of this. A pursuivant was sent down who brought Jolly up to London.

* Chetham Miscellanies—Ancient Chapel of Denton. † Vol. ii., pages 124, 125.

“ Being before the King’s Council, the question in dispute was whether
 “ or not Norbury Chapel was a consecrated place. Mr. Jolly denied
 “ that it was. Sir Peter Leicester’s *Historical Antiquities* were brought
 “ to decide the question. The Earl of Shaftesbury having received
 “ a letter from Lord Delamere in favour of Jolly, became his friend,
 “ and procured his discharge.” At a subsequent date, Newcome, in
 referring to this event, says, “ Friday December 1st, 1683. As I rode
 “ by Norbury Chapel I thought of Mr. John Jolly, who for preaching
 “ there was fetched up to the Council; and of that passage, that the
 “ Chancellor set out his supposed crimes with such rhetoric that he
 “ almost persuaded him he was guilty.”* On another occasion he
 had to appear before this same council to answer for a similar offence.
 The circumstances were these. Mr. Jollie, who now resided at Gorton,
 was wont occasionally to preach in the chapel there. “ On the Lord’s
 “ Day January 2nd, 1669-70 (says Newcome), Mr. Ogden, a stranger,
 “ came to Gorton, and said he was sent there by the warden to preach.”
 For some cause the people were unwilling to receive him. On the
 following Sunday his visit was repeated, being accompanied on this
 occasion by Anson, an attorney, and other persons from Manchester.
 Finding the pulpit already occupied by Mr. Jollie, who refused to
 give way, he retired to an alehouse hard by, where he stayed until the
 service was over. This occurrence was much discussed, and led to
 Mr. Jollie being summoned to London.† The result of this trial is not
 stated. Mr. Jollie died on the 16th of June 1682. His death seems
 to have been very sudden. Newcome makes this entry respecting it.
 “ June 17th, 1682. I was affected with the news of the sudden death
 “ of Mr. John Jolly. This quick passage is a mercy to such as are
 “ prepared for it.”‡ Again, he says, “ June 28th. I preached a sermon
 “ on the account of the death of that honest, laborious, and useful
 “ man, Mr. John Jolly, at his house in Gorton, on Philippians ii. 20,
 “ *For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your*
 “ *state.*”§ A similar estimate of his character is given in a work
 already quoted.|| “ He was not a man for Common Prayer, but much

* Newcome’s Autobiography, page 247.

† Chetham Miscellanies—Old Chapel Denton, page 85. Mr. Ogden, above mentioned, succeeded Mr. Angier at Denton.

‡ Autobiography, page 241.

§ *Ibid*, page 242.

|| Calamy’s Abridgement, vol. ii., page 125.

“ approved the Scotch Presbytery. He was a man much in praising God and frequent in ejaculations, of pregnant parts, and of a resolute spirit.” He was only forty years of age when he died. He left several children, and among them a son who succeeded him in the ministry.

Bishop Gastrell notes that in his time, 1715, there were “ 145 families in Poynton and Norbury; *half of them Presbyterian and Independent.*” These families probably attended the ministry of the Rev. G. Jones at Hatherlow, and that of the Rev. Mr. Worthington at Dean Row.

HAZEL GROVE INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.

At the recommendation of Mr. Ryan, the Cheshire Congregational Union voted 50*l.* towards the support of an agent at Hazel Grove, and the Rev. THEOPHILUS DAVIES became minister there in 1823. When he went there a *Mr. Hoyle* was the Conformist at Norbury Chapel, and so few attended the place that the path to the chapel, which lay across a field, was overgrown with grass. Mr. Davies laboured with success for two years, and after he left the fruit of his labours appeared in the erection of an Independent Chapel. The next minister was the Rev. SAMUEL SIMON. Upon his removal to New Mills the place was supplied by an agent of the Cheshire Union, the Rev. Mr. Williams, and he again was succeeded by Mr. Healey. The Rev. J. YEATES was the next minister, and he left in 1861. The Rev. A. H. LOWE is the present minister.

HATHERLOW.

(*By the Rev. W. URWICK, M.A.*)

IN its geographical outline, Cheshire, like a bull's head, has its two horns. That in the west runs up between the estuaries of the Mersey and the Dee, and contains Runcorn, Birkenhead, Liscard, and other watering places. The east horn of the county runs up between Lancashire on the one side, and Derbyshire and Yorkshire on the other, and contains the manufacturing centres of Dukinfield, Hyde, and Stockport. The population of this horn was, according to the census of 1851, one-fourth that of the entire county, though its area is only

one-thirteenth. As far as can be gathered from the returns published, the census of 1861, while it exhibits a decrease in some townships, shows a preponderating increase in others; the population of this district (including only the two old parishes of Stockport and Mottram, now sub-divided) is estimated at 120,000; that of the whole county being 500,000. Important numerically as this narrow district is now, it was equally interesting two hundred years ago as the scene of the labours of several Nonconformist clergymen.

The village of HATHERLOW lies in the most picturesque part of the east horn of Cheshire, at the foot of the hills which branch like ribs from the backbone of England, and about eight miles from the Derbyshire Peak. The highest of these Cheshire hills, Werneth Lowe, commands a noble prospect. Looking towards the north we see the Manchester manufacturing district, with its tall chimneys, from Stalybridge on the extreme right to Stockport on the left; and looking towards the south, the beautiful scenery of Cheshire and Derbyshire presents to us a striking contrast with dark woods and green pastures and sequestered farmsteads—hill rising behind hill, with here and there a village church, and here and there a factory (shewing that the people are cared for week-day as well as Sunday, that there is work as well as worship among them), and the lofty table-land of Kinder-scout stretching far away against the horizon. In the valley below, close by Hatherlow, winds the Goit, at this place taking the more famous name of “the Mersey,” spanned a mile above by a majestic aqueduct over which the Peak Forest Canal passes, and by the new railway viaduct, which in height and length outvies the former work. The village of Hatherlow is on the borders of three townships—Bredbury, population 3,000; Romiley, population 1,500; and Marple, population 3,600. One mile from the place is MARPLE HALL, an interesting Elizabethan mansion, perched on the edge of a steep cliff overlooking a rich vale, and celebrated in the time of the Commonwealth as the residence of the Bradshaws, an old and distinguished Puritan family. Cromwell himself is said to have visited the place, and the bed in which he slept is still kept as a relic. Henry Bradshaw was born here, and succeeded his father as heir to the estate. His name occurs as the first signature to the Lancashire and Cheshire petition addressed to the Houses of Parliament, praying for the establishment of Presbyterianism.

The famous JUDGE BRADSHAW, brother to Henry, was born in

the neighbourhood, probably at Wybersley Hall, in 1602. In the registry of his baptism, in Stockport Church, some royalist has inserted the word *traitor* opposite his name. He received his education partly at Bunbury, under Edward Burghall, and partly at Middleton in Lancashire. He practised as a barrister many years at Congleton, where he was chosen mayor in 1637. He was president of the commissioners who sat in Westminster Hall to try Charles I., and his name is first among the signatures to the King's death warrant. He held the high office of lord president of the council of state, nominated by Parliament to be the executive in 1649, and to him in this capacity, Cromwell, as general of the army, addressed his letters during the years 1649—51. He was elected to represent Cheshire in Cromwell's first Parliament, 1654, but being too much of a republican to recognize the new frame of government "in a single person and a Parliament," he was among the recusants excluded. He was again a candidate for the representation of the county in 1656, but lost the election. He died in 1659. His body, together with Cromwell's and Ireton's, was dug up* in 1661, hanged on the gallows at Tyburn, and the head cut off and fixed in Westminster Hall. It is worthy of remark that this celebrated man was the friend and kinsman of the illustrious poet and secretary to Cromwell, John Milton. In his will Bradshaw bequeaths to his "kinsman" John Milton, a legacy of ten pounds.

In the township of Bredbury, two miles north from Hatherlow, is HARDEN HALL, another interesting house in the annals of Puritanism. It is a fine specimen of the domestic architecture of the sixteenth century, and resembles Poole Hall in Wirral. It is fast falling into ruin. The frescoes on the walls are quite obliterated; the wind blows through the large casements, and the floors are giving way. Ralph Arderne, Esq., who lived here during the civil wars, married Eleanor, daughter of Sir John Done of Utkinton, and her sisters came to reside at Harden, with the Rev. John Jones, a Puritan minister, as their chaplain. The Congregationalist Samuel Eaton of Dukinfield and Stockport, was a frequent guest at Harden Hall,† and so likewise was

* Among others whose remains were dug up on the principle of "retributive justice" at the same time were Elizabeth Cromwell, mother of the Protector, and Robert Blake, the famous English admiral.

† See page 81 of this volume.

the holy and peaceable JOHN ANGIER of Denton, a brief notice of whom may not be inappropriate here.

John Angier was born at Dedham, in Essex, in the year 1605. He was a student at Emmanuel College Cambridge, but received his theological training from two Puritan divines, Mr. Rogers of Dedham, in Essex, and Mr. J. Cotton of Boston, in Lincolnshire. He received Episcopal ordination, without subscription, at the hands of Dr. Lewis Bayley, bishop of Bangor, June 28th, 1629. For the first three years of his ministry he was settled at Ringley Chapel, Lancashire, and from that place he came to Denton, where he remained till his death, September 1st, 1677. He was a man of great earnestness and piety, and received several invitations to more public spheres of usefulness, which he uniformly declined, saying, "It is ill transplanting a tree that thrives " in the soil." He vindicated his plan of preaching short sermons with the remark, "I would rather leave my hearers longing than loathing." He occasionally met his fellow-ministers Mr. Jones of Marple, Oliver Heywood of Coley, and Adam Martindale of Rostherne, at Harden Hall, about two miles from Hatherlow, where prayer meetings and conferences were held. In 1647 he published *A Help to Better Hearts for Better Times*, in the dedication of which he states that for nine or ten years he had not been two single years without interruption. In that time he was twice excommunicated. He was suspected of writing a book which was found in Stockport, and which reflected on a speech made by Laud in the Star Chamber, and a pursuivant was sent to apprehend him, but he retired to his friends in Essex until the storm was over.* He signed the Attestation of Lancashire Ministers to the Covenant in 1647, and refused the Engagement in 1649, though to his great prejudice, having lost 200*l.* thereby.† He was one of "those who thought they might not engage to be true and faithful to " the *usurped powers*, yet believed that justices of the peace or other " officers might take commissions from and act under such usurped " powers."‡ At an exercise at Eccles, a short time before the passing of the Act of Uniformity, he gave remarkable hints of what was coming on from Exodus xiv. 12. He was one of those ministers who, on S. Bartholomew's Day 1662, did not conform, yet were permitted

* Davids' Nonconformity in Essex, page 583.

† Oliver Heywood's Life of Angier.

‡ Martindale's Autobiography, page 90.

to continue their ministry undisturbed. On that Sunday he preached "very plainly" from Esther iv. 1, *When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry.* He was a moderate Presbyterian, and a member of the Manchester Classis, but he entertained very kindly feelings towards the Congregationalists. He had several assistants in the work of the ministry at Denton; first, *Mr. John Worthington*, B.A., of Catharine Hall Cambridge, a probationer and unordained, acted as assistant from April 1646 to April 1647. He afterwards took the Covenant, was ordained, and became minister at Oldham. Second, *Mr. Ralph Seddon*, B.A., of Christ College Cambridge, took up his abode with Mr. Angier. In 1654 he was ordained minister of Gorton, whence he removed to Langley, in Derbyshire, at which place he was silenced in 1662. Third, *Mr. James Holm*, resided with Mr. Angier in the Parsonage House, until ejected from his curacy in 1662. He received a call to Kendal, in Westmoreland, where he died in 1688. Fourth, *Mr. John Jollie*, ejected from Norbury, and fifth, *Mr. Samuel Angier*, Mr. Angier's nephew, who afterwards settled at Dukinfield.*

About ten minutes walk from the present Hatherlow Chapel is a place called CHADKIRK, with which the early history of Nonconformity in this place is closely connected; in fact, as we shall presently see, the Nonconformists of Hatherlow originally worshipped there. In the Doomsday survey it is stated that Gamel held this manor under Earl Cedda, a Saxon, who was suffered to retain possession, and from whom (according to the able editor of Gastrell's work) the place derived its name. The earliest ecclesiastical notice of the place occurs in the *King's Book*, or *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII., where a "Cantaria in Chadkyrke" is named, endowed with lands and tenements worth four pounds and sixteen pence; tithes, eight shillings and one penny. The name of the chaplain, *Radulphus Greene*,

* Of Mr. Angier's three children, John, the eldest, was born 1629, at Boston, and educated for the ministry at Emmanuel College Cambridge. By his careless and profligate life he gave his father much anxiety; but he reformed, and was ordained by the Lancashire Classis as minister of Ringley, in Prestwich parish, on August 13th, 1657. He was resident in Lincolnshire at the time of his father's death. Elizabeth, Mr. Angier's eldest daughter, became, in 1655, the wife of the celebrated Oliver Heywood, and died at her father's house in 1661. The younger daughter appears never to have married, and was residing with her father at the time of his death.—*Booker's History of Denton Chapel, Chetham Miscellanies*, page 75.

appears also as the vicar of the extensive parish of Prestbury, and the probability is that Chadkirk was then, 1535, an appendage to the church of that parish. The place was at that date a Roman Catholic chapel. In King's *Vale Royal of England* the following reference to it occurs:—"And now as we go over the new bridge beyond Stockport we see Harden Hall, from which, leaving on the right hand that great mountain called Werneth Lowe, at the foot of which, towards the Mersey, lies an old *dearn and deavly* chappel (so people call desert places out of company and resort) called Chad Chappel, which seems to have been some monkish cell, we come by Duckenfield." Not far from the chapel, by the river side, there is a long avenue still called "the Priests' Walk," where probably the monks of the place were accustomed to study in peripatetic fashion. The situation is very romantic and sequestered, surrounded by woods and rich pasture delightfully varied by the river Mersey; thus confirming the proverbial remark,

The cunning rooks
Pitched as by instinct on the fattest fallows.

At the Reformation in Henry VIII.'s reign, these worthy monks had to fly, and the scene of their labours at Chadkirk passed into Protestant hands. The next allusion to the place is in Adam Martindale's life. When a young man he preached there, and received an invitation to become the minister of the chapel about the year 1640, which, however, he did not accept. His words are, "A little before my departure from Gorton, I was invited to no less than five places in Cheshire — Ashton-upon-Mersie, Rotherston, Northwych, Lower Peovir, and Chadkirke."* From this notice it is evident that religious worship was at that time maintained under Protestant and Puritan influence at Chadkirk. Through the influence of the Bradshaws of Marple Hall, Puritanism flourished in the neighbourhood, and the next name we come to in connection both with Marple and Chadkirk is that of the Rev. JOHN JONES, who is mentioned in Calamy's Memorials as one of the brave two thousand of 1662. The following is the account given of him:—

"He was born in Wales; he officiated for some time in his younger years at Tarporley Church, in the way of the Church of England; but, being afterwards dissatisfied with it, he was invited by two

* Life, page 76.

“ pious gentlewomen, Mrs. Jane and Mrs. Mary Done, to reside with
“ them at Utkington Hall in the capacity of a chaplain. Upon their
“ removal from thence to Harden, on the other side of the county,
“ he went with them, and being earnestly importuned by the inhabi-
“ tants of the township of Marple to labour fixedly among them in
“ their chapel, he accepted the invitation, lived in the neighbourhood,
“ preached every Lord’s Day, catechised the younger sort in public,
“ administered the two sacraments, and brought several that had
“ been guilty of scandalous enormities publicly to acknowledge their
“ faults and profess their repentance. He had a vast auditory, and
“ his ministerial endeavours were attended with great success. After
“ some years thus spent, he was forced to desist from preaching there,
“ even before the Restoration of 1660, and yet I know not what
“ place to put his name to better than Marple.” (The probability is
“ that Chadkirk became the central place of his labours.) “ He after-
“ wards made several removes to chapels in that neighbourhood, and
“ though he was always content with a mean allowance from his
“ people, and given to hospitality and bountiful to the needy, yet his
“ estate did manifestly increase. The last chapel he laboured at was
“ Mellor, on the borders of Derbyshire, out of which he, in the year
“ 1660, was unkindly excluded by some leading gentlemen, upon a
“ groundless pretence of his not being well affected to kingly govern-
“ ment. In the following years he preached privately in his own
“ house, which he enlarged for the better convenience of those who
“ were inclined to attend his ministry there, and he met with much
“ opposition, and received no little damage from his enemies on
“ account of his Nonconformity. He was seized and imprisoned
“ some time in Chester, and his house was rifled under pretence of
“ seeking for arms, and some goods were actually taken away, though
“ he had not acted against the king or been guilty of any disloyalty.
“ Being called to preach at Manchester, on the Lord’s Day, he was
“ taken ill, and not without difficulty brought to his house. He gave
“ serious advice to his friends and visitors as his acute pains would
“ allow him, and finished his course in August 1672, in the seventy-
“ second year of his age. He had a considerable share of learning
“ and ministerial abilities. In his will he devised eight pounds per
“ annum out of the profits of his lands in Marple, for the maintenance
“ of two poor boys in Tarporley town three years in school, to be
“ chosen by the overseers of the poor for the time being, ordering

“ that the same sum should in the fourth year be employed towards
 “ procuring them some suitable trades; and that if his son died without
 “ lawful issue, this sum should be appropriated to these uses for ever.
 “ He was an affectionate preacher and a zealous promoter of family
 “ worship; he would pray admirably on special occasions. He was
 “ a great opponent to Quakerism, and undertook, with some other
 “ worthy ministers in those parts, to dispute with them publicly, and
 “ did so before vast multitudes of people; the dispute was managed
 “ closely and calmly, and had good effects. He was a bold reprover
 “ of sin, though in cases of some offenders he could easily see, what
 “ he experienced afterwards, that it would turn to his outward preju-
 “ dice. He was of the Congregational persuasion, but of a catholic
 “ spirit, and for holding communion with all that agreed in the main
 “ points of Christianity, though they had different sentiments about
 “ lesser matters. He told some of his friends that were for separating
 “ from their brethren, who were not altogether of their principles and
 “ way, that for his part *he would be one with every one that was one*
 “ *with Christ.* He left a son that was bred up to the ministry, and
 “ is fixed at Chadkirk, near Marple, where he exercises his ministry
 “ with good encouragement.”

From the registers in the University of Cambridge we learn that Mr. John Jones graduated M.A. at Christ College, Cambridge, in 1630. He did not long submit to the tyranny of the dominant bishops, but resigned his living at Tarporley and became a Congregationalist. There is no trace of his settlement at Mellor Chapel, whence he was ejected in 1660; but that his labours there were fruitful is evident from the fact that we find a Nonconformist minister at Mellor after the passing of the Toleration Act. The Rev. ROBERT MOSELEY, who had signed the Cheshire Agreement as minister of Ringway, removed in 1692 to Mellor Chapel, and in the registers of that place the following entry occurs:—“*Robertus Moseley de Thornycroft, clericus, sepultus fuit vicissimo quinto die Novembris 1701.*” It is uncertain whether this good man, of whom we have only these slight notices, ministered in the Episcopal or in some Nonconformist chapel at Mellor.

After his ejection, Mr. Jones laboured in the neighbouring chapels, Chadkirk among others, and had service in his own house. Speaking of the weekly lecture at Stockport, Newcome thus refers to Mr. Jones. “March 21st, 1661-2. It pleased God to provide for

“Stockport by Mr. Jones this day, which was a great ease to me, especially in the afternoon, when I understood he did preach for me.” The registers of Stockport Church contain the entries of the death of his wife, and of “Theophilus, son of Mr. John Joanes, minister of Marple.” The register of his own burial occurs a few pages after in the same book—“Mr. John Joanes of Marple was buried the 31st day of July 1671.” This entry shews that Calamy was misinformed regarding the date of his death.

The Rev. John Jones was succeeded in the ministry by his son GAMALIEL JONES, who entered the celebrated Dissenting academy kept by the learned and reverend Mr. Richard Frankland, at Natland, near Kendal, in Westmorland, on the 16th April 1678. As soon as his college course was finished, he returned to his native place, and became pastor of the church at Chadkirk.

The Romish chantry of 1535, the “dearn and deavly Puritan chappel” of 1640, had become a well-attended Independent chapel. How it happened that it remained in the hands of the Dissenters after the Act of Uniformity cannot be explained. It was the same with Denton Chapel, where Mr. Angier remained, with Ringway Chapel, where Mr. Brereton continued, and with Whitley Chapel, where Mr. Ainsworth was minister. Probably Mr. Jones, senior, preached there without interference on account of the obscurity of the place, and his son Gamaliel succeeding him, continued to labour as the minister of the church without Episcopal ordination or subscription to the Book of Common Prayer. Like his father, he was a Congregationalist, and an eminently pious and useful man. Upon the passing of the Toleration Act, and the accession of William of Orange, we find him foremost among the Cheshire Presbyterian and Congregational ministers in the formation of their Association. At their second meeting, 1691, he was appointed Scribe, and the minutes of their meetings in May and August every year—still preserved at the Presbyterian (now Unitarian) Chapel at Knutsford, where the ministers usually met—are in his handwriting. Mr. Gamaliel Jones frequently preached before the Association, and occasionally acted as moderator, as the following extracts shew:—

“April 14th, 1691. Gamaliel Jones was desired by all present to be y^e scribe, which he consented to.”

“August 13th, 1695. The following subscriptions were made for a stated contribution for pious or charitable uses, to be disposed of by y^e united ministers

“assembling at Knutsford, especially for y^e maintenance of y^e poorer sort of ministers, education of young men designing y^e ministry, &c. :—G^{el}. Jones, *ol. obs. od.*” This subscription he continued annually.

“May 9th, 1699. A movable lecture against profaneness was then agreed on. . . . The second to be at Congleton first Wedn. in July, G^{el}. Jones to preach.” “Mr. Dearnley to preach at Chadkirk the first Wednesday in March.”

“June 18th, 1700. At Macclesfield, Mr. Gam. Jones took part in an ordination—praying over Mr. John Brooks.”*

“August 6th, 1700. The fund money was then paid in, and that which was in G. Jones’s hand was all disposed of at that meeting to Mr. Irlam, Holland, &c., and it was then agreed also that the Reformation lecture should be carried on. Accordingly G. Jones was appointed to preach at Northwich on Wednesday the 9th of October; Mr. Scholes at Duckenfield first Wednesday in February; Mr. Samuel Lowe at Chadkirk first Wednesday in March; Mr. Henry at Mid-*de*wich first Wednesday in April.”

“August 6th, 1701. Reformation lecture appointed to be at Chadkirk on the first Wednesday in March, by Mr. Scholes.”

“Ordination at Warrington 16th June 1702. Mr. Jones preached from 2 Corinthians xii. 15.”

“August 3rd, 1704. Mr. Jones was moderator, and in discoursing about an ordination this rule was agreed to: That candidates for the ministry that are constantly employed among a people should be called upon to be ordained, especially if their people express their desires of it.”

“August 6th, 1706. Mr. Jones took part in an ordination; praying with hands laid on for Mr. Sidebottom.”

“August 3rd, 1708. The stated meeting at Knutsford; present, ministers and candidates, in all 20. Divers from Lancashire. Mr. Jones preached, Zechariah i. 5, *The prophets, do they live for ever?* I moderator.” This was probably Matthew Henry, who had become the scribe in place of Mr. Jones.

“July 24th, 1708. Paid, of Mr. Lee’s legacy, to Mr. Gamaliel Jones of Chadkirk, 2*l*.”

“March 29th, 1710. Mr. Gilbert Taylor was privately ordained in Mr. Angier’s house by Mr. Angier, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Irlam, to the congregation at Tinsel.”

“August 8th, 1710. Meeting of ministers. Mr. Jones was moderator.”

“April 24th, 1712. Mr. Gam. Jones was moderator.”

“August 5th, 1712. At the ordination of Mr. Joseph Mottershed, Mr. Jones prayed, when hands were laid on, who likewise gave y^e exhortation from Hebrews xiii. 22.”

“August 4th, 1713. Mr. Gamaliel Jones was moderator.”

“June 15th, 1714. Mr. Jones preached at the ordination of Mr. Buckley, from Matthew v. 14.”

“May 1st, 1716. Mr. Jones was moderator, and it was then declared to be

* See Tong’s Life of Matthew Henry, page 261.

“ y^e opinion of this assembly that all candidates shall receive y^e Lord’s Supper
“ before they be allowed to preach.”

Mr. Gamaliel Jones continued to prosecute his labours undisturbed at Chadkirk until the year 1705. His name occurs in the registers of Marple Church as having sometimes officiated at baptisms and burials there between May 15th, 1689, and 1701. Through Episcopal interference he and his Puritan congregation were at length obliged to leave the old Chadkirk Chapel, and they removed in 1706 to “ a handsome new chapel,” at Hatherlow, erected chiefly if not solely at Mr. Jones’s expense. The *present* Chadkirk Chapel was erected by the Episcopalians in 1747, the old building having fallen into ruin, and been used in the interval as a stable for cattle. Sergeant Bretland, who lived at Thorncliffe Hall, in Longdendale, and possessed an estate at Chadkirk,* had left 5*l.* per annum to *any orthodox or preaching minister* at Chadkirk, payable out of the rents of his manors of Werneth and Romily, desiring in his will “ that the parson of “ Stockport may add so much thereto.” This endowment was left during Mr. G. Jones’s ministry. The sergeant died in 1703, and in 1718 it was certified that the rent charge had never been paid, and that no service had been performed there for several years. On rebuilding the chapel the Episcopalians gained this endowment. A clergyman named Wilde officiated in it for many years, and obtained Queen Anne’s bounty.†

Considering the population, the congregation at Hatherlow when the chapel was opened there must have been large. The trust deed contains certain provisions as to the course to be taken “ in case the “ toleration granted be taken away, and such Protestant Dissenters “ be restrained from the public exercise of religious worship.” Bishop Gastrell, in his ecclesiastical survey of the county, refers to “ a meeting- “ house at Hatherlow,” and to the existence of “ many dissenters” at Marple.‡ As Mr. Jones himself still resided at Marple, it is most likely that a large portion of his congregation also resided there, and constituted the *many Dissenters* of whom the bishop speaks. The

* Gastrell, vol. i., page 279.

† The following are the names of the ministers of Chadkirk after Mr. Wilde :— The Revs. Dr. Bowness, Mr. Bland, Mr. Daker, Mr. Dodson, Andrew Ayre, A.M., J. Whittaker, A.M., C. Haswell, John Lingard, A.M., Kelsal Prescott, A.M., W. Newstead, C. H. Bevan, — Sheppard, and J. P. Winder, M.A., the present curate.

‡ Notitia Cestriensis, vol. i., pages 299, 305.

chapel was substantially fitted up inside with solid oak stalls and pulpit, and the communion table still has the chain attached to it to which the New Testament used to be fastened.* In 1715 Mr. Jones had three hundred hearers.† After an active and useful life, ministering at Hatherlow eleven years, and nearly twice that period to the same congregation at Chadkirk, Mr. Gamaliel Jones died in 1717. He was buried in Marple Churchyard, on "June 6th, 1717, by R. Berks." The Rev. James Clegg, M.D., who followed the united calling of a minister of the gospel and a physician at Chinley, on the borders of Cheshire and Derbyshire, and who was the successor of the venerable Bagshawe, "the apostle of the Peak," mentions Mr. Jones among the ministers who took part in the ordination of Mr. John Ashe of Ashford in the Peak, Mr. William Bagshawe, Mr. Joseph Foolowe, Mr. Hargreves, and Mr. George Lowe, in the Midsummer of the year 1696.‡ He says, "Mr. Jones then preached from 2 Corinthians xii. 15, *And*

* It was a folio edition of the New Testament, containing the Rev. W. Burkitt's expository notes. It contains the following inscription:—"June 24th, 1726. This book is the proper and entire gift of one to this congregation, who would not sound a trumpet before him, and so desires to be concealed, not seeking this way any honour to himself, but hereby evidencing a concern for the glory of God, in furthering all he can the good of souls. I hope such of you as here attend will redeem your spare time on Lord's Days from your worldly chat in consulting this good and useful BOOK, that you may grow in the knowledge of the Scripture. Use it carefully."

† Rev. Josiah Thompson's MS. Red Cross-street Library.

‡ Dr. Clegg gives the following account of these ministers:—"Mr. William Bagshaw was placed at a country village called Stannington, north from Sleaford; where by his serious and constant labours, and an holy and exemplary conversation, he did a great deal of good: but he was taken off in the midst of his days and his usefulness, to the great loss of those parts. He published a funeral sermon for Mrs. Elizabeth Jolly, of Attercliffe, 1709. Mr. Joseph Foolowe's time and labours were divided between the congregations of Chesterfield and Stony-Middleton; and in both places he was highly valued and greatly beloved, on account of his great piety, his exemplary conversation, and his zealous desires and endeavours to do good. He had but a weak and tender constitution, but was willing to spend what strength he had in the Lord's service; and it was soon spent. He died of a consumption, December 8th, 1707, in the thirty-first year of his age. Mr. Hargreves was many years at Leek, in Staffordshire, but removed thence about nine or ten years since [*i.e.* about 1725] to S. Ives, in Huntingdonshire. Mr. George Lowe was for many years chaplain to the family of Stephen Offley, Esq., at Norton. Having left that place, and being returned to his father's house in Chappel-le-Frith, he became assistant to Mr. John Ashe, preaching once in the month at Hucklow, and often at other places. In the year 1717, in April, he departed this life at his father's house, in Chappel-le-Frith. He preached his last sermon at Hucklow, about three weeks before his death. A sermon was preached on occasion of his death at Chinley Chapel, on the Lord's day following, from 2 Corinthians iv. 7."—*Clegg's Life of the Rev. John Ashe, pages 61, 62, 71, 74.*

“ *I will very gladly spend and be spent for you.*” Dr. Clegg also gives the following account of him :—“Mr. Gamaliel Jones lived many years after, but was turned out of the chappel at *Chadkyrk*, and his people erected a handsome and spacious place of worship shortly after at *Hatherlow*, where he laboured with good acceptance and success till his death, and where he is succeeded by his son. He was a good man, a serious minister, and very desirous to do good ; he delighted much to converse with and encourage younger ministers ; would be innocently cheerful with them, and very free and communicative to them ; he died of an asthma and dropsy. I visited him in his sickness, and among other things desired to know his sentiments of his Nonconformity, when he expected so soon to appear before the Judge of all. To which he answered in these, or terms to this effect, ‘Dear brother, I am very glad you mention that ; I assure you, and you may assure any others you think fit, that I am fully satisfied in the way I have chosen. I look upon the cause of the Protestant Dissenters as the cause of God, and a cause that God will own ; and if I were to begin again I would make the same choice, and take up my lot with them.’”*

Some years previous to his death, this devoted minister had been assisted by his son, who entered Mr. Frankland’s academy at Rathmel, in Craven, May 22nd, 1695, and whose name frequently appears in the minutes of the Cheshire Classis as present at its meetings among the candidates for the ministry. The following are the most important notices of him :—“August 7th, 1711. Information was given that Mr. JOHN JONES, son of Mr. Gamaliel Jones of Chadkirk, was, on November 8th, 1710, examined, approved, and allowed to preach as a candidate by Mr. Cunningham of Manchester, Mr. Worthington, and Mr. Perkins.” Six years afterwards, two months after his father’s death, the following entry occurs :—“August 6th, 1717. The case of the congregation at Hatherlow was brought before this Classis. The unanimous opinion of the ministers here assembled was, that to preserve the peace of the congregation the people proceed to elect a minister with all convenient speed, and that those who are communicants, with those who ordinarily have been contributors, shall have a free vote. It is likewise thought advisable that Mr. John Jones, having for a considerable time

* Life of Mr. Ashe, page 61.

“preached among them, and out of respect for his revered father, should be proposed as the first candidate, and that they should determine the matter concerning him before they set up another candidate.” Happily the peace of the congregation was preserved; Mr. John Jones was chosen their minister, and the following account is given of his ordination, twelve months afterwards:—

“August 19, 1718. Mr. Jones of Hatherlow, and Mr. Pilkington of Walton, in Lancashire, were ordained at this meeting. They read their theses that morning. Mr. Jones his question was, *An Sacra Scriptura sit perfecta ita ut contineat illa omnia quæ ad salutem necessaria sunt*;—affirmative. Mr. Pilkington’s was *An Christus sit vere Deus, Patri co-essentialis et co-æternalis*;—affirmative. Afterwards, in a numerous assemblage of ministers and people met together in the new chapel (Knutsford), they were both solemnly set apart for the office and work of the ministry. The minister of the place began with prayer and reading some portions of Scripture. Then Mr. Cotton [of London] prayed, before the sermon, which was preached by Mr. Worthington [of Dean Row], from 1 Corinthians ix. 27, *But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*. After the sermon ended, Mr. Jollie [of Attercliffe] called for a confession of their faith, which they made before the congregation, and then he put the usual questions to them, which they answered *verbis conceptis*, and afterwards they were set apart by prayer and imposition of hands of Mr. Worthington, who prayed over Mr. Jones; Mr. Jollie, who prayed over Mr. Partington; Mr. Cotton, Mr. Waterhouse, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Holland, and others. Then followed the exhortation, which Mr. Culcheth gave from Colossians iv. 17, *And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfil it*. So concluding with prayer, thanksgiving, singing, and pronouncing the benediction, the congregation were dismissed.”

Other notices afterwards occur in the minutes of the Cheshire Classis. On May 7, 1723, Mr. J. Jones preached before the ministers, from 2 Timothy i. 12. On “May 7, 1728, Mr. Jones preached from Matthew ix. 38, *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest*; and he was desired to accept of thanks for his good sermon. A letter from Mr. Thornton was read, pleading his necessity, and it was agreed that Mr. Jones,

“ who was moderator, *pro tem.*, should recommend his case to the London ministers.” “ May 6, 1729. Mr. Jones of Marple, appointed among others to Mr. Fletcher’s Ordination, at Stockport.” On another occasion, September 1, 1730, Mr. Jones took part in the ordination of Mr. Nichols and Mr. Worthington of Leek, offering the ordination prayer. His name occurs as a regular attendant at the Meetings of Ministers up to May 3, 1743. He continued to preach at Hatherlow, residing at Marple upwards of half a century dating from the time he began to assist his father, forty-four years from the date of his ordination. A calendar drawn out in the Baptismal Register kept by him, indicates considerable knowledge of the science of astronomy. In the same book the following entry occurs:—“ October 5th, 1742: I, John Jones, have baptised five hundred children, which are all registered in this book.” Three hundred and seventy-three more baptisms are recorded in his handwriting, as performed by him up to 1762, the year of his death. The Registers of Marple Church contain the following entry:—“ 1762, October 3rd. The Rev. John Jones of Bradbury, was buried by T. Jennings.”

In the three excellent men whose history has now been given, we have an extraordinary case of father, son, and grandson succeeding each other as ministers of the same place;—a natural as well as apostolical succession, at least for three generations. Each of them sustained his ministry for several years; Mr. Jones, senior, for thirty years; his son, Mr. Gamaliel Jones, for thirty-three years; and his son again, Mr. John Jones, for forty-four years.

The Rev. JAMES SHEPLEY, a native of the neighbourhood, succeeded Mr. Jones as pastor of the church at Hatherlow, in the middle of the year 1763. In the beginning of his pastorate a PARSONAGE was erected by the congregation “ for the benefit and enjoyment of the minister that should stately preach or officiate at Hatherlow for the time being, during the said term and continuance of the liberty granted to Protestant Dissenters.” Mr. Shepley was much esteemed by his people, but his labours among them, though useful, were of short duration. In a sermon preached, June 1769, the following passage occurs:—

“ O my Lord, how amazing Thy condescension not only to come to us, but to be made even as any of us, and clothed in our flesh, that Thou mightest offer Thyself a sacrifice for us! O Emmanuel!

“ unspeakable is Thy grace and love expressed concerning us. Be
 “ pleased, dear Lord, to come yet nearer unto us, even into our very
 “ hearts, and unite Thyself with us, that we may not only live by Thee
 “ but in Thee, and of Thy fulness receive life abundantly and grace
 “ sufficient for us; so that Thou mayest not be ashamed to own us,
 “ and transform us more and more into Thy likeness, till Thou shalt
 “ translate us into Thy heavenly kingdom.”

From that kingdom he was not far distant when he delivered these words. His last entries in the Baptismal Register were on the 2nd and 3rd December, 1769, and on the 27th his earthly ministrations were over. His remains lie in the burial ground at Chadkirk, and a tombstone with the following inscription marks the spot:—

“ Here resteth the body of the Rev. Charles Shepley, minister of Hatherlow,
 He died Dec. 27, 1769, aged 33.

Farewell, vain world! as thou hast been to me
 Dust and a shadow—those I leave with thee:
 The unseen vital substance I commit
 To HIM that's substance, light, and life to it.”

One of the most noteworthy of the Hatherlow ministers was Mr. Shepley's successor, the Rev. JOHN BURGESS, who had been settled at Hall Fold Chapel, Rochdale, and commenced his labours at Hatherlow in the spring of 1770. Under his ministry the congregation continued to increase, but in about six years he returned to his former pastorate, where he soon after died. He is best known as the author of a sermon entitled *Beelzebub Driving and Drowning his Hogs*, founded on the miracle of the Gadarene Demoniacs, Mark v. 12, 13; in which he introduces and illustrates “three old English proverbs: first, the
 “ devil will play at small game rather than none at all; second, they
 “ run fast whom the devil drives; and thirdly, the devil brings his
 “ hogs to a fine market.” In the advertisement preceding the sermon (which was published in 1770) we are informed that “the three
 “ proverbs which make the general topics of the following discourse
 “ were raised from the subject (Mark v. 12, 13) by Hugh Peters, of the
 “ last age. Let him that reads consider what some people said con-
 “ cerning the prophet Ezekiel (xx. 49), *Doth he not speak parables?*
 “ And let those gentlemen who ridiculed the preacher attend to what
 “ Horace says in one of his Epistles (vi. lib. 1):—

Siquid novisti rectius istis,
 Candidus imperti: si non, his utere mecum.”

The sermon is vigorous and original in its thought and language,

and well repays perusal. Mr. Burgess was the author of several works of some celebrity in their day, indicating great breadth of thought and liberality of opinion. Among these were, *A Proverbial Catechism for Youth*; *The Pilgrim's Travels from Mount Sinai to Mount Zion*; and *The Reconciler*. The last of these contains a clever reply to two queries—Doth the gospel of Christ open any door of hope and salvation, first, to all dying infants; second, to the devout and virtuous part of the Pagan world? Mr. Burgess was “Baxterian” in his theological views, and he argues for an affirmative answer to both these questions, as the following brief extracts show:—

“All tender-hearted parents, those especially who have laid their lovely offspring in the dust, yea, every humane person whose breast has not been petrified into hard stone, no doubt wisheth that this query could be answered in the affirmative concerning these young innocents. Young innocents! says the fiery zealot, rather call them young vipers, and the devil’s spawn, seeing they are declared in Scripture to be shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin (Psalm li. 5); are they not also said to be by nature children of wrath? (Ephesians ii. 3.) ’Tis answered; if all became children of wrath by nature, through the demerit of Adam, a mere man, why may not all of them become children of divine mercy, through the superabounding merit of Emmanuel God-man? . . . But lest some doubts and fears should still hang on the minds of some timid parents, I shall, to the foresaid Scripture proofs, subjoin two very encouraging Scripture specimens. The former is King David, in 2 Samuel xii. If ever any had cause to be afraid for the eternal states of their dying infants, it must certainly have been this tender-hearted royal parent at the death of his base-begotten child. But is it supposable that he who was so deeply distressed for its less than seven days’ sickness of body as to fast and lie all night in sackcloth on the bare ground (verses 16, 18), would he, upon the death of that child, have changed his sable mourning apparel into garments of praise, and solaced himself with hopes of going to him (verse 23), if he had the least suspicion that his child was gone to hell? The latter case is that of a parent infinitely superior to David, even the great Parent of the universe, whose pity to the infant offspring of Nineveh was such that he produced them as a plea for sparing all the Pagan inhabitants of that populous city (Jonah iv. 11):—*Shall not I spare Nineveh, saith the Lord, in which there are*

“ more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons that cannot distinguish between their right and left hands! Surely I shall.”

The reply to the second question begins thus :—

“ This being tickle ground, I must tread it with such caution and wariness, as neither to supersede the necessity of a divine revelation on one hand, nor pass a cruel sentence on the major part of the human race on the other. However, as 'tis safer to lean more to the charitable than uncharitable side, I am inclined to judge favourably of the present characters and future states of some heathens, especially as God's own unerring word speaks favourably of them too ; yea, more so at times than of some of its own first-rate professors. . . . Heathens are favoured with the light of nature or reason, which beameth forth from the same Father of lights that the light of revelation doth. This is a light which in some sort *lighteneth every man that cometh into the world* (John i. 9); and indeed the light of nature improved will do more than the light of revelation misimproved. Hence, conscientious heathens are far better than unconscionable Christians.”

In a discourse on Moderation (Phillipians iv. 5), the following pithy remark occurs :—“ S. Jude tells us that when Michael the archangel had the roughest adversary in the world to dispute against, even the Devil, he durst not bring one railing accusation against him ; for loving angels cannot, like peevish mortals, either rail or scold. Now I considered that if even a devil must not be treated indecently in a dispute, much less a Christian brother of the same nature, of the same religion—yea, perhaps, of the same communion with myself.”

These quotations, which might be extended *ad libitum* from the writings of Mr. Burgess, may suffice to give an idea of the liberality of his views and the vigour of his style. He was succeeded by the Rev. GEORGE BOOTH of Tintwistle, who was minister of Hatherlow from 1777 to 1785, when he resigned his office, but continued to reside in the neighbourhood till his death.

About this time a very eccentric character, the Rev. R. ROBINSON, D.D., came to reside at Hatherlow, and though he was not minister of the place, in a history of the locality he must not be passed by. He was first settled at Congleton, where he preached a sermon against “ Popish Projectors,” and drew up a small “ Scripture Catechism,” both of which he published. He was minister of the Old Chapel,

Dukinfield, for about two years after the Rev. William Buckley's death, from 1752 to 1755, when he received a "causeless dismissal," as he calls it, from the church there, having forfeited their good opinion by the following circumstance:—A beggar coming to his door one day was so importunate as almost to refuse to depart without relief, in consequence of which Mr. Robinson sent for a constable, and had him whipped at his own gate. He removed from Dukinfield to Dob Lane, near Manchester, and there printed "two sermons, occasioned by the then high price of corn." This put him to some inconvenience, as it drew upon him the animosity of the interested and rich speculators in that commodity. He continued minister of this place for nearly twenty years, labouring under a constant dejection of spirit and melancholy, when a "causeless dismissal" was given to him at the close of the year 1774, by the Dob Lane congregation. Upon this he published a tract entitled, *The Doctrine of Absolute Submission Discussed, or the natural right claimed by some Dissenters to dismiss their Ministers at pleasure, Exposed, as a practice produced by principles of unrestrained liberty, though contrary to the dictates of reason and revelation.* His next removal was to Hatherlow, where he purchased land and a farm-house. Here he entered into an agreement with a Manchester printer to edit for him a copy of the Bible. It was to appear in numbers, and he procured a diploma of D.D., that his name might come before the public with more advantage in the title-page of the work. At his death he left directions that his body should be kept one month before its interment, and that his coffin should be constructed with a movable pane of glass over the face, which was to be carefully watched to see whether it was breathed upon. These injunctions were literally complied with. According to his express desire, he was buried in his orchard, a short distance from his residence, and a square brick building was raised over his tomb, which is yet to be seen.

In the year 1786, the Rev. JOHN MELDRUM of Brighouse, Yorkshire, accepted the invitation of the church at Hatherlow to become their pastor, and he continued in that office for twenty-eight years, till his death in 1814. He was the author of a work on *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, in two volumes 8vo, 1807; and of a smaller treatise entitled *The State of Religion, a Call for Humiliation*, 8vo, 1796. In this latter book he designates Paine's *Age of Reason* as "a performance which demonstrates itself to be the rage of treason

“ against the Majesty of Heaven and the common sense of mankind.” He also refers to the Nonconformists of 1662 in the following words:—
“ Human authority in matters of religion is absurd ; so far as this goes, it takes from the unalienable authority of Jesus Christ, the sole Head of the Church. It implies that His institutions are defective, and that politicians can improve them, which is both a weak and wicked implication ; but it has been practised, and of consequence separations and divisions have followed. The year 1662 can never be forgotten whilst religion remains in Britain, when upwards of two thousand of the most eminent, learned, and laborious ministers this or any other nation ever produced were driven from their flocks by the Act of Uniformity. Rather than veil religion with useless insignificant ceremonies, they chose to take up their cross and retire with it as their chief comforter, as it were, into the wilderness, trusting in that Providence which would support them and their cause. They were not disappointed ; they formed a religious connection, and that connection never has been dissolved. This noble stand against human authority in matters of religion is the glory of our party.”

During Mr. Meldrum's pastorate, in 1792, the chapel was repaired, a gallery added to it, and a portion of common ground enclosed by the freeholders as a burial ground to be connected with Hatherlow Chapel. Here lie the remains of the Rev. J. Meldrum, who departed this life in 1814. For some time after his decease the pulpit was occupied by preachers from the neighbouring churches. The house, in a cluster of cottages, at which these ministers were entertained was called the *Holy House*, which gave rise to the name by which that locality is designated now “The Holehouse Fold.” Tradition says that at this house the congregation met after their ejection from Chadkirk in 1705, while the chapel at Hatherlow was building. The Rev. JOHN POTTER, of Rotherham Academy, was next invited to the pastorate ; but though his ministry was prosperous he remained at Hatherlow barely two years, from the spring of 1817 to the end of 1818.

On January 1st, 1819, the Rev. THOMAS BENNETT of Dukinfield, and previously of Congleton, came to Hatherlow, and he continued pastor for twenty-three years. In his time, in 1830, a schoolroom was erected, for Day and Sunday-schools, at the top of the village. Mr. Bennett died suddenly on Sunday evening 16th October 1842, after

preaching in the morning at Hatherlow, and in the evening at Woodley. He was succeeded by the Rev. THOMAS COWARD, in 1843, during whose pastorate the church and congregation increased rapidly in numbers. During his ministry the NEW CHAPEL was erected, in 1845, by means of the voluntary subscriptions of the people—the late Ormerod Heyworth, Esq., of Oakwood Hall, being the chief contributor. In consequence of failing health Mr. Coward resigned his pastorate in the month of May 1850.

On the 19th June 1851, the present pastor was ordained at Hatherlow. In 1853 a bell was hung in the tower of the new chapel, bearing this inscription:—*Gloria in excelsis Deo, Patri, Filio, et Spiritui sancto.* In 1854, by the voluntary contributions of the church and congregation, several repairs and alterations were made in the old chapel, in order to render it a comfortable schoolroom; and by the same means a new organ was erected in the chapel in 1856. The Bicentenary year, 1862, has been celebrated by the erection of a new schoolroom, with class rooms, for the better accommodation of the Sunday and Day-schools, at a cost of 700*l.*

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, MARPLE BRIDGE.*

There is some uncertainty as to the origin of the Dissenting interest at Marple Bridge, which was commenced at MILL BROW, about a mile from the present chapel, where the original “meeting-house” and “chapel” stand, the former being now used as a barn, the latter as a dwelling-house, bearing on its gable the date 1716. The position and structure of the barn show that it was erected in troublous times, when Nonconformity could not show its face without meeting with injury. We have no historical documents to prove the antiquity of this congregation, nothing being handed down by our forefathers, except the Registers of Baptisms and Burials, which go as far back as the middle of last century, and a Church Register, Declaration of Faith and Church Covenant subscribed by the members, and written no doubt before their removal to the present chapel in 1787.

In all probability the congregation was first gathered by the “Apostle of the Peak,” the Rev. W. BAGSHAW, Vicar of Glossop,

* Furnished by the Rev. J. W. Benson, minister of the place. Marple Bridge is in Derbyshire, but so close upon the Cheshire border, that it deserves a notice in this volume.

ejected for his Nonconformity in 1662. Ejected but not silenced, he went about visiting the various villages and hamlets of the High Peak Hundred, preaching as opportunity offered to the assembled families. When deprived of his benefice he retired to his estate at FORD HALL, near Chapel-en-le-Frith, and went forth on his apostolic mission through his old parish, and the Peak generally. He founded an Independent Church on his own estate, afterwards meeting in the chapel at CHINLEY, which was built in 1711. It is a remarkable fact that the successive pastors rest in the burial ground adjoining the chapel at Chinley. There is scarcely any doubt that the congregation at Mill Brow was gathered in consequence of Mr. Bagshaw's labours. A number of reapers, it is said, in a corn field near Smithy Lane, began to converse on religious matters, and at length determined to have a place of worship at Mill Brow. Smithy Lane lies almost midway between Mill Brow and Charlesworth Chapel, where Mr. Bagshaw often preached during his monthly visit to his old parish; and no doubt his occasional ministrations had so directed the attention of these men to religion, as to induce them to secure regular service.

It cannot be ascertained with any certainty who were the pastors of the church when it assembled within the walls of the unpretending meeting-house, but it is pretty certain that the Rev. SAMUEL HARDMAN, a native of Hollinwood, in Lancashire, was the first who ministered in the *chapel*. My informant dates the commencement of Mr. Hardman's pastorate about the year 1710—that is, six years before the erection of the chapel. It is recorded that his views of the plan of salvation were not very clear, as he had a leaning towards Arianism. He remained in connection with this congregation during his life, and some of his descendants still reside in the neighbourhood, and belong to the congregation at Marple Bridge. About this period a small Baptist church was formed, to which Mr. Glover frequently ministered, who is described as a "rank Antinomian," but after some years it became extinct.

In a brief history of the church here, drawn up by the senior deacon, it is stated that Mr. Hardman's successor at Mill Brow was the Rev. ROBERT HARROP, who held the double pastorate of Greenacres, Oldham, and of Mill Brow, Derbyshire, until his removal to Hale, in Cheshire. Threlgeld has the following information concerning him:—
"R. Harrop left Daventry Academy in 1765, went to Mill Brow, married Miss Worthington; left for Hale in 1769, where he was until

“1816, when he resigned.” His doctrinal leanings were Arian. On account of this, some of the more intelligent and respectable of his hearers attended the neighbouring chapels of Charlesworth and Hatherlow, where the gospel was still preached. Threlgeld gives the following, as the succession of the ministers :—“Hardman, Gladstone; Nehemiah Bostock, who died June 15th, 1764, aged twenty-one; John Clegg; Robert Harrop.” However true the former part of this order may be, it is certain that the Rev. JOHN CLEGG was not the predecessor, but the successor of Mr. Harrop; and that through his clear exposition of gospel facts and principles the church was led back again to the purity of evangelical truth, and became eminent for its deep-toned piety.* Mr. Clegg was the grandson of Dr. Clegg of Chinley, who succeeded Mr. Bagshaw in 1702 at the original meeting-house at Chapel-en-le-Frith, and afterwards continued his ministry in Chinley Chapel. During the ministry of Mr. Clegg, one of the preachers in connection with the Rev. George Whitefield, Captain Scott, created no small stir by preaching in full regimentals, in the open space near the Mill Brow Chapel.

The Rev. THOMAS HOLGATE was the next in succession to Mr. Clegg, and was highly esteemed for the fervour of his preaching, the purity of his doctrine, the blamelessness of his life, and the zeal with which he discharged his ministerial duties. After remaining a considerable time at Mill Brow, he removed to Bradford, in Yorkshire, about 1779, where he took charge of a congregation, and died in 1807, aged fifty-eight years.

The Rev. JAMES BARTLE succeeded him. He was a good preacher, and by a good conversation commanded the veneration and respect

*The following is a copy of the *Church Covenant*, taken from the “Confession of Faith, with a form of Church Government deduced from the Holy Scriptures, at Mill Brow, Derbyshire” :—

“We Sinners, and (by Nature) Children of wrath, even as others, being brought through Grace and everlasting Love, to a sense of our exceeding Sinfulness; to mourn and repent before the Lord, and to look to him, on whom our help is laid, Do here openly, and without reserve, give up our Selves Wholly to Christ, the Compleat Saviour of Sinners, in Church-Fellowship and Communion promising to make the written word our Rule, or to adhere to the Faith therein contained; and Serve Him, and each other according to the Statutes, Ordinances, and Rules of his House: Aiming in all at the Glory of God, the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom: each others Edification; and the Good of all Mankind. That this is our Steady purpose, and Resolution under the Special Assistance of the Holy Spirit we Solemnly Attest by Subscribing our Names.” This was probably by, and at the beginning of the Ministry of, the Rev. John Clegg.

of all the neighbourhood. During his pastorate the chapel at Mill Brow was found inadequate to the demands of the population, and, in consequence, the "New Chapel" at Marple Bridge was erected in 1787, and the congregation removed thither, having sold their premises at Mill Brow. Mr. Bartle died, full of years and honour, in 1795, and was buried in the chapel, near the place where the pulpit then stood.

In 1796 the Rev. JOSEPH BATLEY, a student of the late Dr. Williams, at Rotherham, entered upon the pastorate. Several years after the minister's house was built, and in the latter part of 1819 the first schoolrooms were erected. In the early part of 1820 a Sabbath-school was established. In the year 1832 the chapel was first enlarged, by the addition of a gallery behind the pulpit. Such was a part of the success attendant upon Mr. Batley's ministry. He was considered to be a profound preacher, and was pastor of the church for forty-one years.

In 1838 the Rev. ROBERT KIRKUS was called to the pastorate. During his ministry, which was fervent, energetic, and effectual, a further enlargement of the chapel was made, through the liberality of the late Moses Hadfield, Esq., then of Shiloh, in Derbyshire, whereby accommodation was secured for about four hundred persons. This took place in 1839; in the year following the new Sabbath-schools were built, at the sole charge of Mr. Hadfield, who in addition to this, left at his death the sum of three hundred pounds, the interest of which should go towards the support of the ministry there for ever. Having accepted an appointment as chaplain to a cemetery, Mr. Kirkus resigned his pastorate in 1846, and was followed by the Rev. T. G. POTTER (now of Buxton), who was pastor of the church for eight years.

In September 1854, the Rev. J. W. BENSON of Lancashire College, accepted an invitation to the pastorate; was ordained in the presence of his brethren and a large congregation on the first of January next ensuing, and has continued, with much imperfection, but with a hearty love for the truth, to open up and unfold the revelation of Jesus Christ.

CHEADLE.

THE Rev. William Nicholls, D.D., was rector of this parish for several years previous to the Civil wars. He was also dean of Chester, and from 1636 to 1641 the name *Francis Shelmerdine* occurs in the

registers as his curate. Walker, in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, names Dr. Nicholls as sequestered from this living, and adds that he died at Etchells in 1658. A monument to his memory in Northenden Church bears date 1657, and intimates that he was buried there. He is described by the editor of Gastrell's *Notitia* as "the son of a rich tanner in Chester. In 1645 he compounded with the Parliament for his estates, by paying 143*l.* He died 16th December 1657, *at.* "sixty-six."

The *Rev. Thomas Gilbert*, "a Scottish divine of useful abilities for the ministry, and of great zeal against error and prophaneness," was minister of this parish for some years previous to 1654, when he was presented to the living of Ealing, Middlesex, from which place he was ejected for his Nonconformity in 1662. He emigrated to New England, where he died. The following is the epitaph on his tombstone at Charlestown:—"Here is interred the body of that reverend, sincere, zealous, devout, and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. Thomas Gilbert; some time pastor of the Church of Christ at Cheadle in Cheshire: also some time pastor of the Church of Christ at Ealing in Old England: who was the proto-martyr, the first of the ministers that suffered deprivation in the cause of Nonconformity in England; and after betaking himself to New England became pastor of the Church of Christ in Topsfield, and at sixty-three years of age departed this life. Interred October 28th, 1673."

The next minister of Cheadle during the Commonwealth was the *Rev. Peter Harrison*, D.D. Walker numbers him among the sequestered clergy, and says, "He was likewise plundered of all that he had, to the utter ruin of his children. His widow was afterwards relieved by the corporation for ministers' widows." There is abundant evidence that this statement is incorrect. Peter Harrison did not hold the living of Cheadle before the ejections by the Long Parliament—Dr. Nicholls, a Royalist, was the sufferer then. It is possible that Harrison was given the living of Cheadle as a Presbyterian after Dr. Nicholls' sequestration, and before Mr. Gilbert; and that, like many Presbyterians, he was ejected for refusing the *Engagement* in 1649. But, however that may have been, it is certain that he was appointed to the living of Cheadle after Mr. Gilbert's removal in 1653, because his name occurs in the registers there as "minister" and "rector," from 1653 to 1661. This proves that Walker is here (as he is in so many places) in error. The probability is that Dr. Harrison

was one of the Nonconforming ministers, because his name occurs frequently in the registers down to 1661, and then disappears altogether.

Henry Newcome has the following entry in his Diary:—"Saturday July 13th, 1662. Got to Cheadle in pretty good time. I preached twice on Romans viii. 6, and the Lord did very much help me to a very great congregation there."

George Newton seems to have been the name of the Conformist who got the living. There is a chapel in Cheadle Church called Handford Chapel, which belonged to the Breretons of Handforth, the Puritan family of which the well known Parliamentary general was a member. In this chapel there are memorials to the Breretons. A large altar tomb has two knights in plate armour. On another altar tomb is also the figure of a knight in armour, for Sir Thomas Brereton of Handforth, dated 1673.

Bishop Gastrell notes "two families of Dissenters" at Cheadle in his day.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, GATLEY.

The Rev. JEREMIAH PENDLEBURY of Bolton, Lancashire, was invited by some Nonconformists in this parish to be their pastor in the year 1777. He first preached to a small congregation in a room; but, upon the increase of the number of his hearers, and the formation of an Independent church, the present chapel was erected and opened in 1779. During the former part of Mr. Pendlebury's ministry his labours were greatly prospered, but he was laid aside through bodily affliction, and died in August 1788. The Rev. SAMUEL TURNER, who had been his assistant, succeeded him in the pastorate, which he held till his death, August 28th, 1792. He had a son who was missionary surgeon in the ship *Duff*. The Rev. JAMES SMITH, student of Rotherham Academy, was ordained as the next minister in April 1794. He declined the ministry in 1799, and is since deceased. His successor was the Rev. J. MACPHERSON, in whose ordination the Revs. Messrs. Wilson of Northwich, Smith of Manchester, Meldrum of Hatherlow, and Anlezark of Stockport took part. He continued at Gatley a short time only, and removed to Liverpool. The Rev. J. HANDFORTH from Congleton, was ordained here on July 15th, 1801, and continued his pastorate till 1813, when the Rev. THOMAS

CHESTERS became the minister. After a pastorate of upwards of ten years he was succeeded by the Rev. CHARLES LOWNDES, a pious man, though eccentric, who laboured here faithfully till his death in 1860.

NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, CHEADLE.

This chapel was erected in 1860, and in May 1861 the Rev. ROBERT PANKS was chosen minister. He was a student in Homerton College in 1842, and was afterwards minister at Bridgewater and Truro. He died suddenly at Cheadle on February 6th, 1862.

DISLEY.

THIS was originally a parochial chapel in Stockport parish, and was the scene of the labours of a faithful Puritan minister before the Commonwealth, as the following extract from the scarce but interesting little work of the celebrated Bagshaw, *De Spiritualibus Peccis*, shews. He says:—"I have not only heard of, but in my childhood have often heard worthy Mr. CRESSWELL, one who drew as his first so his last breath in our parts. He was some time chaplain at *Lime Hall*, and preacher at *Disley*, not far from it; and as his ministry was headed by others, it is credibly reported that having preached on these words, *The fool hath said in his heart there is no God* (Psalm xiv. 1), one counted a Natural did, after sermon, follow the coach wherein he was, and charged him (at least) with a mistake, saying, "I do believe there is a God."

"I well remember at *Tideswell* his text was, *There is no peace saith my God to the wicked* (Isaiah lvii. ult.) Of that and other sermons which he preached there I, when young, have heard elder persons speak much: similitudes and histories, of which he made use and application, were very affecting. The Lord was pleased to house him when the great storm of war fell on England. He called this servant from his work when that black night was come or coming.

"Surely *Edale* was a dale or valley of vision in those days. May their posterity shew their profiting by others, as many did that were profited by him.

"One who succeeded him was Mr. ROBERT WRIGHT, who though

“ less furnished than many with a desirable library, and falling short
 “ of not a few as to outward estate, was diligent in service and patient
 “ in suffering for God. Far is it from me to say what was said, that
 “ he was (*vox, etc.*) a voice and nothing more. May not the plain-
 “ ness of some preachers be in some places and to some persons of
 “ as great use as the elegancy of others would have been?

“ A reverend divine (Mr. Firmin)* relateth this as the saying of a
 “ famous prelate (Bishop Brownrigg) concerning that rowzing preacher
 “ Mr. John Rogers, ‘ he doth more good with his wild notes than we
 “ ‘ with our set musick.’ Though matter in a sermon is most material,
 “ yet the manner of delivering it is of no small consideration and
 “ conducibleness to people’s profit.

“ He was one of a thousand (Mr. Finner) who hath left it under
 “ his hand that an affectionate preacher (and such an one *Mr. Wright*
 “ was) doth represent as the mind so the heart of God to his hearers.
 “ Some that I know, and, I doubt not, some that I know not, found
 “ that the Lord was with and in his ministry. Surely in one thing he
 “ pleased some, who are more than enough displeased with his
 “ fellow-sufferers: tho’ whilst he lived, there was an indulgence that
 “ outlived him, he took no license for preaching, nor was (that I
 “ know of) an hearer of those that did so. The Messenger of Death
 “ that was sent for him was very swift in carrying him off, giving him
 “ no more time than to cry for mercy. Is not its language to us, *Be*
 “ *ye also ready?*

“ His studious rational successor, who preached at his funeral,
 “ hath succeeded him in dying, though not in the manner of it. I
 “ do on divers accounts honour his memory; may I not without
 “ offence wish that he and some others had more esteemed one of
 “ the greatest lights the Church of God had since the Apostles’ times
 “ (Calvin), as to some points of doctrine. I see that one whom they
 “ admire, being a great pattern of Conformity (Mr. Richard Hooker),
 “ had that great man of God in great honour.”

From the above extract it is evident that Mr. Cresswell was minister at Disley for some years, and died about the year 1642, when the Civil war began. It is not clear, however, whether he continued

* Giles Firmin was born at Ipswich 1614, matriculated at Cambridge 1629, attended the ministry of John Rogers of Dedham, was ordained minister of Shalford, in Essex, in 1643, whence he was ejected in 1662. See Davids’ *Nonconformity in Essex*, page 457.

at Disley to his death, or removed to *Edale*, which is seven miles distant. Nor does it distinctly appear whether Mr. Robert Wright succeeded Mr. Cresswell at Disley or at Edale. From the registers at Disley it appears that a Mr. Creswell was minister there during the Commonwealth, and until the Restoration, when (1660) there is a change in the handwriting. He may have been son of the excellent man referred to by Bagshaw. There is another change in the handwriting in the year 1662, indicating a change in the ministry in that memorable year; but no signature of the officiating minister appears.

DUKINFIELD.

THIS place is celebrated as the seat of the oldest Congregational church in Cheshire; the oldest, perhaps, in the north of England. Adjoining Dukinfield Old Hall is a small Gothic chapel, originally the private oratory and domestic chapel of the Dukinfield family, which was appropriated by the celebrated Colonel Robert Dukinfield for the use of the Congregationalists. Colonel Dukinfield was himself a Congregationalist and a zealous republican. He was born August 28th, 1619. In 1643 he was appointed by Parliament one of their commissioners for Cheshire; in the ordinance for sequestrating estates of delinquents, and in another for raising money for the service of the Commonwealth. In the next year (May 24th), in concert with Colonel Mainwaring of Kermincham, he commanded a few forces sent to guard Stockport Bridge against Prince Rupert. In 1650 he was governor of Chester. In 1653 he was summoned, with Henry Birkhead, to represent Cheshire in the Little Parliament, July 4th, 1653. He was too strong a Republican to approve of Cromwell's Protectorate, and was a main hand in quelling the *Cheshire Rising* in 1659. He escaped the vengeance of the Restoration, and died September 18th, 1689, aged about eighty years, and was buried at Denton Chapel. That he was a Congregationalist is evident from the fact that he gave Samuel Eaton and his congregation the use of the chapel attached to his hall, and was the instrument of obtaining for Eaton the appointment of chaplain to the garrison at Chester.

The following quaint story in Edwards's *Gangrana* bears upon the antiquity of Congregationalism at Dukinfield. "There is a godly " minister who was lately in London that related, with a great deal of

“ confidence, the following story, as a most certain truth known to many of that county (Cheshire), that last summer the church of Duckingfield (of which Master Eaton and Master Taylor are pastor and teacher) being met in their chapel to the performing of their worship and service, as Master Eaton was preaching, there was heard the perfect sound as of a man beating a march on a drum; and it was heard as coming into the chappel, and then going up all along the Ile through the people, and so about the chappel, but nothing seen; which Master Eaton preaching and the people that sate in the severall parts of the chappel heard, insomuch that it terrified Master Eaton and the people, caused him to give over preaching and fall to praying; but the march still beating they broke up their exercise for that time and were glad to be gone.

“ Now I conceive this passage of Providence towards these Independents speaks thus much to them and to the kingdom, especially considering this church of Duckingfield is the first Independent church visible and framed that was set up in England, being before the Apologists came from Holland, and so before their setting up churches here in London; First, that the Independents are for warres, desirous of warres, to maintain and uphold their Independent churches by them; and thirst for a new warre with Scotland as much as ever an unhappy boy did to be at fisty-cuffs with another boy: Secondly, the warres which they would have and occasion shall prove their ruine, the means to overthrow all their conventicles; they are greedy of a warre to establish them, but as now the beating of this drum drove them out of the chappel, broke up their meeting, so shall the warre which they have sought overthrow all their opinions, meetings, and cast them out of England for ever.”*

This extract, from a quarter hostile to Independency, bears witness to the antiquity of the church at Dukinfield, and proves that if not, as is stated, the oldest Independent church in England, it was already of note and influence during the Civil wars.

Particulars regarding the Rev. SAMUEL EATON have already been given in this work.† He was born in Cheshire, educated at Oxford, and settled first as rector of West Kirby in Wirrall. Renouncing Conformity to the ritual of the Established Church, he was suspended

* Edwards's *Gangræna*, part iii., pages 164, 165.

† See pages 15—18, 76, 77, 288.

by Bishop Bridgeman in 1631, and three years afterwards sought shelter in Holland. The climate not suiting him, he returned, but had again to transplant himself to New England. When he returned the Long Parliament — “this renowned reforming parliament” — had assembled, November 1640. His settlement at Dukinfield probably took place soon after his arrival in England. Certainly he was here in 1645, because in that year the book was published which contains the particulars here given, and which is entitled *A Defence of Sundry Positions and Scriptures alleged to justify the Congregational way*, by

Samuel Eaton, teacher,	}	of the church in Ducken-
and		
Timothy Taylor, pastor,		field in Cheshire, 1645.

The distinction of pastor and teacher (Ephesians iv. 11) was maintained by the early Independents. Each church had two ministers, the one a man of preaching ability, the other possessing the requisite talent and taste for pastoral work. The two offices were not however wholly separate; the teacher would help the pastor, and the pastor would sometimes preach. The teacher was generally the more public and popular character, and frequently visited other churches. Eaton was a man of this stamp; he resided at Chester for a time as *chaplain*, while he still retained his office in connexion with the church at Dukinfield. He quitted the chaplaincy, however, because he could not fulfil his ministry at Dukinfield and yet live at Chester; and he was faithful to his church when they lost their pastor, accompanying them to Stockport, and after his ejection, to Denton, till his death in 1664. He was denominated the *great apostle* for promoting Independency in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire. ❖

TIMOTHY TAYLOR, the *pastor* of the church, was the son of Thomas Taylor of Hempstead, in Hertfordshire, entered Queen's College Oxford in 1626, and took holy orders in 1634. He then became vicar of Almesley in Herefordshire, where he preached twice every Sunday. The following is the account given, probably by himself, in the book above named, regarding his conversion to Independency. “Some years before the bishops fell, and while their power seemed to be bound as with a band of iron and brass, being enforced by the then Chancellor of Hereford to turn his afternoon lecture into a Catechism lecture; upon that occasion studying more elaborately and industriously the second commandment, through the rich grace and mercy of God, he not only saw the evil of *Episcopacy* and

“ceremonies imposed, but also repented of the use of them, and publicly
 “in the parish of Almele preached *against* them, and *for* all the sub-
 “stantials of that way of Congregational government which ever since
 “and at this day he hath and doth judge to bear most conformity
 “with the Word of truth. Afterward being troubled in the Bishops’
 “Court for Nonconformity, and having no hope of liberty, he did by
 “consent leave *Almele*; and lived about three years in a small pecu-
 “liar exempt from Episcopal jurisdiction, viz., *Longton-upon-Trene*,
 “in Shropshire.”

We learn from Wood’s *Athenae Oxonienses* that Mr. Taylor then became pastor of the Congregational church in Dukinfield. He held this office about eight years. “Thence he removed to Ireland, in
 “1650, became minister of Carrickfergus, then resorted to by Presby-
 “terians and Independents. After the Restoration he was silenced,
 “and removed to a hired house at Grange, near Carrickfergus, and
 “carried on the trade of preaching in private. In 1688 he lived at
 “Dublin, and took charge of a church of Dissenters there, as colleague
 “with Samuel Mather, and continued there till his death.”

Adam Martindale says that “the churches of Duckenfield and
 “Birch ceased to be so amiable in the eyes of prudent Christians
 “that dwelt nigh them as once they were, for Mr. Wigan* quite left
 “Birch, and became a captaine and then a major. Mr. Taylour was
 “dismissed and went to Dublin. Mr. Eaton was chaplain to the
 “garrison of Chester, by occasion whereof, and many journeys to
 “London, Scotland, &c., he was frequently absent from the church,
 “and his place was then supplied by gifted persons, whereof the
 “best was many degrees below him, and many other neighbouring
 “ministers, and some of them bitter presumptuous fellowes, to say
 “nothing of the scandalous breaches that shortly afterwards fell out
 “amongst them, even to printing one against another.”†

Martindale also gives us Mr. Angier’s opinion regarding the Congregationalists of Dukinfield and their ministers. “He was very
 “moderate towards all that he judged godly of the Congregationall
 “way, and spoke with very great reverence of Mr. Eaton and Mr.
 “Taylour, his neighbours at Duckenfield, praying them for pious

* Mr. Wigan was Martindale’s predecessor at Gorton, and then the Independent minister of Birch, near Manchester; afterwards he became a Baptist minister in Manchester, preaching in a barn which he turned into a chapel.

† Autobiography, page 74.

“men, good scholars, and excellent preachers.” For himself, Martindale adds, “I was just come out of a part of Cheshire where Mr. Eaton and Mr. Taylour (but especially the former) were had in “greate esteem, and I inclined to the same opinion concerning their “worth, and was very much pleased with Mr. Taylor’s moderate “spirit.”*

The Independents of Dukinfield and Stockport attended the ministry of Mr. Angier, at Denton, till his death in 1677. For ten years Mr. Angier had been assisted by a nephew, the Rev. SAMUEL ANGIER, son of his brother Bezaleel of Dedham, in Essex, where he was born August 28th, 1639. He settled at Denton as assistant to his uncle in February 1666-7, and was ordained October 29th, 1672, at the house of Mr. Robert Eaton, Deansgate, Manchester—the first ordination among the Nonconformists in the north of England after the enforcement of the Bartholomew Act. Mr. Newcome offered the ordination prayer, and preached on the occasion.

It was the wish of Mr. Angier, senior, and of the congregation that his nephew should succeed him at Denton. A petition was addressed to the patrons of the chapel by the inhabitants of Denton, Haughton, and Hyde, praying that “Whereas Mr. Samuel Angier “hath for many years approved himself very faithful, painful, careful, “and laborious, in the work of his ministry . . . it is our earnest “desire and humble request that he may still continue among us.” In spite of this petition the wardens and fellows of Manchester appointed a Conformist, the Rev. John Ogden; and Mr. Holland recognizing the appointment obliged Mr. Samuel Angier to vacate the parsonage. In a letter of Mr. Holland’s to Mr. Angier, it appears that the right of appointment on the part of the Manchester College was disputed, and that Mr. Angier, supported by his congregation, for some time stood his ground at Denton. Mr. Angier says that “the more they (the wardens) trouble him, the better would his people “love him; that it was not the house he so much regarded as to be “amongst his people; that *malgré* all they (the wardens) could do “he would continue his conventiculing; that as Nonconformity had “been there so many years so it would continue.”† The sentiments of the inhabitants towards their chosen minister, Mr. S. Angier, are

* Autobiography, page 64.

† Chetham Miscellanies—History of Denton Chapel, page 82.

evident from the fact that the Conformist Mr. Ogden was obliged to leave in a year owing to the hostility of the people towards him. On the appointment of the next minister, moreover, the Rev. Roger Dale, they presented a petition against him on the ground "that he is put into the place without the consent and good liking of all or the greater part of the chapelry, and contrary to the usual way of bringing in a minister for very near a hundred years past." Mr. Dale, in one of his letters, writes, "Confidence is not wanting already openly to express the design of getting a Nonconformist in, if devices can get me out." And again, "I can prove that some have had the impudence, since Mr. Sam. Angier's suppressing, to bring him in the absence of Mr. Ogden and me, both to preach funeral sermons in the chapel, and to make long speeches at the grave of his own composure instead of the church prayers. And John Johnson was a man that frequently had him at his house, encouraged him to preach in a barn belonging to his wife, till he was informed against; after that went publicly and constantly to hear him each Lord's Day, while the said Mr. Angier preached in his own house or barn in Dukinfield, which was too shameful a time to mention." Again Mr. Dale writes, "I have presented (for punishment) such as neither brought their children to me nor to Manchester, but to Mr. Sam. Angier, to be unlawfully baptized; . . . or such as have buried at Denton and then had their funeral sermons preached by Mr. Sam. Angier the Nonconformist at Dukinfield." In another letter he says that "Mr. Angier was and is great with them [his parishioners] as Diana of old was with the Ephesians;" and that "Peter is notoriously robbed to clothe Paul—I mean the ancient and usual wages of the chapel of Denton to supply the barn of Dukinfield."* In 1691, Mr. Dale finding the place too hot for him accepted the curacy of Northenden. The registers of the Nonconformist church which Mr. Angier formed at Dukinfield begin in 1677. The first meeting of the church took place May 29th, 1681, at Mr. Angier's house. According to a memorandum in his handwriting, he began to preach in his barn October 10th, 1686, and this continued the place of meeting for his congregation for upwards of twenty years.

Mr. Samuel Angier was present at the early meetings of the Cheshire Association of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers,

* History of Denton Chapel, pages 89—102.

and signed the Heads of Agreement assented to by the united ministers in 1691, as "preacher of God's word at Duckenfield." A chapel was built and opened for him at Dukinfield in 1709. He died November 8th, 1713. The Cheshire Minute Book contains the following notice of him:—"He was born October 28th, 1639. He " was a scholar of Westminster School, and student of Christ Church, " from which place he was turned out by the Act of Uniformity. He " entered upon the ministry in very troublous times. He was assistant " to his uncle at Denton Chapel while he lived, and afterwards (the " chapel being taken away) he continued pastor to the congregation " thereabouts unto his dying day, and was a burning and shining " light there. He first preached at his own house, afterwards in an " out-building fitted up for that purpose; and some years before his " death in a new erected chapel, near which he lies interred. He " was an excellent scholar, and retained much of his school learning, " and had it very ready. He was both a judicious and a lively " preacher, and a zealous asserter of free grace and justification by " faith only. He well understood the reasons of the Dissenters' " separation, and often expressed his satisfaction in them. He was " an eminent Christian, and zealous of good works. His sight " decayed many years before he died, yet as long as he was able he " diligently wrote sermons, as if he had been a young man. When " he could no longer read or write, he had those around him that " read to him and wrote for him, and then he entertained himself " with frequent repeating of the greater part of David's Psalms and " Paul's Epistles, which he had committed to memory."*

The following is the inscription on his tomb in Dukinfield Old Chapel-yard:—

Hic requiescit in Domino

SAMUEL ANGIER

Jesu Christi Minister

Vir primævæ Pietatis et omni Virtute præclarus Dedhamiæ in Comitatu Essexiæ piis et honestis Parentibus natus Octobris 28, 1639; Westmonasteriensis Scholæ deinde Aedis Christi Oxon., Alumnus regius, Concionator egregius et assiduus, continuis Evangelii Laboribus et Morbis fere obrutus, Lumine etiam, ingravescente ætate, orbatus, tandem animam placide Deo reddidit Svo Novembris Anno Salutis MDCCXIII, Ætatis LXXV.

In perpetuam Pietatis Memoriam Bezaleel et Johannes Filii sui

H.M.P.C.

* Aspland's History of the old Nonconformity in Dukinfield, page 18.

Mr. S. Angier was succeeded in the pastorate at Dukinfield by the Rev. W. BUCKLEY, who was ordained at Knutsford in 1714. Matthew Henry of Chester, Gamaliel Jones of Hatherlow, and other ministers taking part in the service. Mr. Buckley's thesis was *An Jesus Christus sit versus Deus, Deo Patri co-essentialis? Affirmative.* He continued minister here till his death in 1752. After some dissension his son, Mr. WILLIAM BUCKLEY, who had been a student at the Dissenting College, Daventry, was elected minister. He commenced his services in 1762, and continued them till infirmities induced his resignation in 1791. His opinions were Arian.*

After Mr. Buckley's death, the Rev. D. L. DAVIES was minister 1791—1794. "He is believed to have been the first minister who, in the pulpit of the Old Chapel, avowed what is sometimes called "*modern Unitarianism.*" The Revs. THOMAS SMITH and WILLIAM TAIT, both of whom had been brought up among the Methodists, followed. The Rev. JAMES HAWKES was the next minister, and after the lapse of some years he was succeeded by the Rev. JOSEPH ASHTON. The Rev. JOHN GASKELL became minister of the place in 1819, and continued seventeen years, till his death in 1836. The Rev. R. BROOK ASPLAND, M.A., followed, and to his *Sketch* of the Old Non-conformity at Dukinfield we are indebted for this list of ministers.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, DUKINFIELD.

The declension of a large part of the congregation in the Old Chapel from evangelical truth, occasioned the secession of those who held Trinitarian views. In the year 1795 these persons opened a room at Ashton-under-Lyne, where for some time they enjoyed the ministrations of several Independent ministers. Owing to a failure in the supply of preachers, the congregation was dispersed, and the members of it were compelled to travel five or seven miles every Sabbath to attend the preaching of the gospel. Towards the close of the year 1805, Mr. WILLIAM MARSH, from London, came to reside at Dukinfield, and consented to preach every Sabbath evening in a dwelling house. An out-building was afterwards obtained, and fitted up, sufficient to accommodate one hundred persons. Here a Congregational church was formed, and the number of hearers still

* Aspland's History, page 19.

increasing beyond the capacity of the building, a CHAPEL was erected, and opened on January 1st, 1807, by the Revs. W. EVANS of Stockport, who preached from Haggai ii. 9, W. Roby of Manchester, who preached from Psalm xc. 6, and Mr. Blackburn of Delph, who preached in the evening from Psalm cxviii. 25. On May 21st, 1807, the Rev. William Marsh was ordained pastor of the church.*

Mr. Marsh's continuance as pastor of the church he had established was but brief. In Midsummer 1808 he removed to a congregation in Cannon-street, Manchester, and subsequently to Charlesworth Chapel, in Derbyshire. He was succeeded at Dukinfield by the Rev. T. BENNETT, from Congleton, who continued his labours for ten years, when he removed to Hatherlow. During his ministry the congregation increased, but previous to his leaving a disturbance arose, resulting in the formation of the present church at Albion-street Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne.

Mr. Bennett was followed in 1819 by Mr. DUNKERLEY, an occasional preacher from Manchester, and he again by Mr. RAMSEY. In the year 1827 the Rev. Mr. IVY became pastor, and was so successful in his ministry that the chapel was enlarged, and a schoolroom and parsonage were built. His ministry lasted till 1841. After an interval of three years, the Rev. Mr. FARNSWORTH was chosen pastor, and held that office from 1844 till 1861. There is no settled minister at this chapel at present; some of the members have joined the church at FURNESS HILL, under the pastorate of the Rev. J. T. BARKER, B.A.

HYDE.

HYDE CHAPEL, Gee Cross, was built in the year 1708. The conjecture that it originated among some members of Mr. Gamaliel Jones's congregation, when they were ejected from Chadkirk, is without foundation, since Gee Cross is three miles distant from Chadkirk, and Werneth Lowe intervenes, while Mr. Jones's congregation belonged for the most part to Marple. Mr. Jones, moreover, was, like his father, a Congregationalist, and his people were doubtless of the same persuasion.

* Evangelical Magazine, vol. xv., page 532. Christian Instructor, vol. iii., page 455.

The first minister at Gee Cross was the Rev. JOHN COOPER, a pupil of Mr. Chorlton of Manchester, who married the daughter of Mr. S. Angier of Dukinfield, and had previously preached for some years at Tintwistle. He was ordained at Knutsford in 1710. The thesis given him was, *An infantes fidelium sint baptizandi?* Affirmative. He continued minister till his death in 1731, and was buried at Dukinfield. The Rev. THOMAS HARTLEY, the next minister, was ordained at Knutsford, September 5th, 1732, and had for his thesis the question, *An S. Scripturae sint Divinae Auctoritatis?* During his ministry the number of communicants was reduced. He died in 1755, and was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN HOUGHTON, who had been a student at Dr. Doddridge's academy. The Rev. SAMUEL MERCER, another of Dr. Doddridge's students, who had been minister of Charlesworth, followed Mr. Houghton, and continued to labour successfully at Hyde four years. He was followed by the Rev. GEORGE CHECKLEY, who previous to his coming to Hyde was assistant to the Rev. Job Orton of Shrewsbury. The congregation at Hyde during his pastorate was large. The chapel was rebuilt. He was considered a good scholar and a practical preacher, and continued at Hyde about fifteen years. On his removal to Ormskirk, after some difference of opinion, the church chose the Rev. BRISTOWE COOPER, who was the esteemed minister of the place from 1781 till his death in 1805. He was followed by the Rev. JAMES BROOKS, who continued to fulfil the pastorate with faithfulness and success for forty-five years, and who died in the year 1852. This list of ministers is taken from a history of Hyde Chapel, compiled by him, in the Christian Reformer for 1848. The Rev. C. BEARD, B.A., succeeded Mr. Brooks, and is the present minister.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, UNION STREET, HYDE.

A chapel was built and opened for Divine service here in September 1814. Galleries were erected in it, and a church was formed in the year 1822, when the Rev. W. OROM of North Frodingham became the pastor. He resigned his charge on October 5th, 1823. The chapel was then taken down and a larger one erected on the same site, which was opened on the 15th May, 1825. The Rev. JOSEPH MASSEY of Airedale College was the next minister. He entered upon his pastorate in July 1826, and continued in that office

till April 1836. He was followed by the Rev. E. EDWARDS of Garstang, Lancashire, who began his work in 1836, and resigned in April 1841.

The Rev. REUBEN CALVERT of Upper Mill, Saddleworth, became pastor of the church on July 18th, 1841. His labours were eminently useful and successful. A new and much larger chapel was erected and opened in the year 1843. Mr. Calvert continued to fulfil the work of the ministry with zeal and earnestness for fifteen years, until his death on the 29th December 1856. He was buried in Hatherlow Chapel-yard, where a tomb has been erected to his memory. The next minister was the Rev. J. H. GAVIN from the Lancashire Independent College, who entered on his labours here in the beginning of 1858, and resigned his pastorate in March 1863, when he removed to Harrogate.

ZION CHAPEL, HYDE.

This chapel was erected and an Independent church formed in the year 1847. On April 6th, 1849, the Rev. EDWIN DAY of the Lancashire Independent College, was ordained pastor. He resigned his pastorate and went out as a minister to Castlemaine, Australia, in October 1853. In February 1854 the Rev. A. STROYAN, the present minister, succeeded to the pastorate. The chapel and school were enlarged, and re-opened with the addition of a new organ, in December 1859.

MOTTRAM.

THE name "*Henry Hibbert*, now minister at Mottram, 7th February "1650," occurs in the Parliamentary Survey;* but it appears that he did not long remain here. When Henry Newcome was about to leave Gawsworth, and was visiting Manchester previous to his settlement there, he informs us, "they hugely solicited me to preach "at Mottram upon the Tuesday [May 29th, 1655]. The next day I "went to Mr. Angier, and lodged with him the Monday and Tuesday "nights. He went with me on the Tuesday to Mottram; and I was "much out of order in body. The Lord ordered it for good to me, "for I never preached in more pain, nor less pride, than that day."†

* Lambeth MSS., vol. iii.

† Autobiography, page 54.

The church at Mottram was soon after this supplied with a pastor. The Rev. FRANCIS SHELMADINE was appointed to that office, probably by the Triers. The following notice of him proves that he was the minister of Mottram in 1659, and that he belonged to the Independent rather than to the Presbyterian party; the former being friends of Cromwell, the latter being favourable to the "Cheshire Rising." Martindale says, "I engaged Mr. Shelmadine of Mottram to goe with me to Mr. Samuel Eaton, to see if we could engage him to make use of his interest in Lambert to prevent, if possible, the effusion of Christian blood." Calamy names Mr. Shelmadine as ejected from Mottsham [Mottram], Cheshire. This was probably between 1660-62; and in further confirmation of his Nonconformity we have a third witness in Oliver Heywood, who notes in his Diary, 1674, "God hath sadly broken us by death of several Nonconforming ministers—Mr. Bath of Rochdale, *Mr. Shelmerdine of Mottram*, and Mr. Jones of Eccles."* The manner in which the name is spelt here suggests the idea that this good Nonconformist minister of Mottram belonged to the same family as Daniel Shelmerdine, the ejected minister of Barrow-upon-Trent, and son of Mr. Thomas Shelmerdine, the Nonconformist minister of Matlock.

The following reference to the Conformist who was appointed to Mottram in place of Mr. Shelmadine shews that he was a liberal man:— "On the fifth of June 1664 he (Mr. Heywood) went, by invitation from the churchwarden, to preach at the church of Mottram-in-Longdendale, and this with the consent of the vicar, though a Conformist. The vicar himself was present at both the services, and was very desirous to have Mr. Heywood come again."†

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, MOTTRAM.

This place, together with a school at Hollingworth (established in the year 1839), has been for some years one of the stations of the Cheshire Congregational Union. In the year 1848 the Rev. T. DAVIES was the agent of the Union at both places, and laboured with considerable success, preaching regularly at Hollingworth every Sabbath morning and evening, and at Mottram Chapel every Sunday afternoon. In 1850 the Rev. A. BELL of Mount Mellick, Ireland,

* Hunter's Life of Oliver Heywood, page 160.

† *Ibid*, page 262.

settled at Mottram, and laboured here faithfully for about five years. He was followed by the Rev. Mr. HARWOOD, who was employed as the agent of the Cheshire Union from 1858—1862 at Mottram and Newton near Hyde.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, STALEYBRIDGE.

This chapel was erected and opened for Divine worship in the year 1835. The opening services were held on May 24th and 25th in that year, and the Revs. R. Fletcher of Manchester, J. Sutcliffe of Ashton-under-Lyne, and W. M'Kerrow, M.A., and R. S. Mc.All, LL.D., of Manchester preached. The Rev. J. H. GWYTHYR, B.A., is the present minister.

TINTWISTLE.

(By the Rev. R. G. MILNE, M.A.)

AMONG the ejected worthies of the north, WILLIAM BAGSHAW, vicar of Glossop, occupies a foremost place. On taking leave of his flock that holy man declared, "My principles have led me to suffer as a "Nonconformist;" and he lamented that "in consequence he had "been driven from his beloved Glossop."

But painful as was that persecuting act of the dissolute Charles to Bagshaw and his fellow-confessors, it is one of the many events in which God visibly steps forth from His holy habitation to teach men *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways.* It was His will that the precious seed of the kingdom should be scattered where as yet it had not been hidden, and, by this permissive providence, many a Seed-sower, hitherto detained within the bounds of one parish or diocese, found his way to nooks and corners of the land where the story of the gospel had been unpreached.

One such isolated spot in those days was the township of Tintwistle in Longdendale; and, if the tradition may be relied on, the first evangelist who visited these parts was William Bagshaw, more generally known throughout the vicinity as "the Apostle of the Peak." In referring to him as the Vicar of Glossop, Dr. Calamy bears the testimony "that people enjoyed him about eleven years. Amongst "them he went about doing good, and God was with him. He kept

“back nothing that was profitable for them, but taught them publicly “from house to house.” Nor did his works of faith and labours of love cease on his retirement to his own estate at Ford, Chapel-le-Frith. Dr. Clegg, one of his successors at Chinley, attested, “Mr. Bagshaw had a considerable congregation at Malcoffe, near his own house, to which he generally preached twice every Lord’s Day, catechising the children, and frequently visiting the families of their parents; besides which he preached several lectures on the other days of the week in the vicinity. In most of these places the people who had profited under his ministry formed themselves into worshipping societies, and he went amongst them as often as his strength would allow, to help forward their edification.”

What Longdendale was when the Apostle of the Peak itinerated its vales, “preaching repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,” it is easier to imagine than to picture. The whole district was then thickly studded with farmsteads of unlimited size; the pastures were clothed with flocks. There were few bridges save bridle bridges; few roads save sheepwalks or footpaths trodden by the pack-horse. Trees, if credit be given to an old tradition, were then so contiguous and dense in the vale and along the base of the surrounding hills, that a squirrel could find a pathway across the tree-tops from Mottram to Woodhead (a distance of ten miles). But these hardy sons of the forest have, with very few exceptions, long since succumbed before the axe of the woodman and “the invasion of the people.” And whatever of clothing was required for the necessities of the family, was entirely home-grown, home-spun, home-woven—and whatever of food, was chiefly the produce of their own dairies and fields. Of factories, their unromantic chimnies and rattling wheels—of railways—the strife between the broad gauge and the narrow—of water reservoirs, spreading themselves with lake-like serenity over miles of the level—of electric wires, whispering the last news with lightning rapidity along the Queen’s highway—the primitive dwellers on those hill sides never dreamt.

As to means of religious instruction, they had none except those provided at the parish church of Mottram on the one side, and, on the other, at Woodhead Chapel, which was founded by Sir Edmund Shaa, Lord Mayor of London, whose will, bearing date 1487, provided, “I will have two honest preestes, oon of them to syng his mass and say his other Divine service...and pray especially for my soule, and

“ for the soules, &c...and I woll that he have for his salarie yearely “ for ever-more the sum of *4l. 6s. 8d.*” In 1655 this chapel was returned to the Parliamentary Commissioners as being six miles from the mother church, and no means belonging to it.*

For the inhabitants of Tintwistle and Micklehurst there was no separate religious ministry. To join in worship with others, they had to travel to one or the other of these extreme points.

Of their destitution Bagshaw kindly thought, and, in addition to his labours at Glossop or Chinley, he was wont to visit Tintwistle on the mission of teaching its inhabitants the words of eternal life ; and, methinks, I can see the venerable evangelist going from house to house, farmstead to farmstead, collecting together under this roof and under that, as many as the suspicions of a lynx-eyed bigotry would tolerate. For a long time—probably twenty years (1668 to 1688)—these assemblies never met but with closed doors, or unless a scout were stationed on an adjoining stand-point to signal the approach of an informer. But the hand of God was seen in the clearing away of those dark skies, and in the lessening of such obstacles as had stood in the way of a free worship according to conscience.

Upon the accession of William III., the Protestant Prince of Orange, in 1688, and the passing of the Toleration Act, none were more prompt in availing themselves of the liberty granted than the Dissenting inhabitants of Tintwistle and Micklehurst. Too poor to rear an edifice for Divine worship, in 1689 they purchased an old barn on the site of the present building. Within this homely sanctuary, with its whitewashed interior, its bare rafters and rush-bottomed floor, the forefathers of this church enjoyed many a long and blissful Sabbath.

That they were not without fears of the return of persecuting times may be inferred from the ancient trust deed, which provided that the building should be employed as a place of worship for the Protestant Dissenters, inhabitants of Tintwistle and places adjacent, “ unless the Dissenters should be restrained as to their religious “ liberties. Then, during that time and no longer, it might be employed as a place for the said inhabitants to meet in and consult “ about their lawful affairs, and for that time a school might be taught “ there; but immediately on taking off the restraint the said edifice

* Lambeth MSS., volume iii.

“ is to be employed as before.” A similar clause existed in the case of some small endowments, which were left for “ the maintenance of a minister so long as there is preaching. But if liberty”—according to one of these legacies—“ should be called in, and there should be a minister still ready to serve in that place, and be not suffered to preach in public, I will that he receive the interest of the same; but for want of a minister, the interest of the money shall be paid to the poor of Mottram parish on every New Year’s Day, until there shall be again liberty of conscience.”

Not long after their occupation of this barn conventicle, the members of the first congregation of Nonconformists in this neighbourhood invited the Rev. ANDREW GRAY, a Scotchman, to be their pastor. He appears to have been a man well-read, thoroughly evangelical in his spirit and doctrines,—and for clearness, force, and terseness of style, he was an author far beyond his contemporaries.

For several years Mr. Gray had the oversight of this small flock, and was an earnest champion of Nonconformist principles, occasionally attacking others holding opposite views with needless severity. But, for reasons no doubt satisfactory to his own mind, he suddenly abandoned the ranks of Dissent, and was promoted to the curacy of Mottram, the mother-church of the parish. On his first appearance in the pulpit of S. Michael, his former people went in great numbers to hear him, being rather curious, as it is recorded, “ to know with what face Mr. Gray would demean himself in the very robes which he had so often denounced as ‘ the foppery of Babylon ! ’ ” Nor were they disappointed, being not a little amused by his “ confused countenance and awkward deportment upon the occasion ! ”

While holding that curacy, Mr. Gray published two volumes, the one entitled, *The Mystery of Grace*; the other, *A Door Opening into Everlasting Life*. And if the same doctrines which pervade these two volumes are still as fully preached in that parish pulpit, “ therein I do rejoice ; yea, and will rejoice.” There was no stickling for “ regeneration in baptism ; ” there was no belief in “ the grace of sacraments ; ” there was no placing of the book of Common Prayer or of Rubrics and Canons on an equality with the Word of God ; there were no mental reservations in preaching Christ and Him crucified as the only hope of a perishing world. “ Look in all the boxes,” said the writer, “ where a Christian’s comfort is, they are all empty without Christ. Therefore hasten to Christ, and get possessed of Him by

“faith. It will be the best market you ever made. Christ does not come to destroy your bodies, but to save your souls; not to slay your first-born, but to bring salvation to you and your posterity; not to molest your houses, but to dislodge your lusts; not to make you beggars, but to bestow upon you the riches of his grace. Admit him, therefore, not only to your houses, but also into your hearts. Let proud Diotrephes say, ‘It is good for me to have the pre-eminence.’ Let covetous Judas say, ‘It is good for me to bear the bag.’ Let Demas say, ‘It is good for me to embrace the present world;’ but let thy soul say, ‘It is good for me to embrace this glorious person, ‘Christ Jesus.’”

Such were the doctrines preached 170 years ago, before the fathers of the Congregational Church at Tintwistle, and though subscription to a creed has never been imposed upon its pastors, it is a fact to be recorded with devout gratitude to the great Head of the Church, that neither the tongue of calumny, nor the jealousy of the most orthodox has insinuated a doubt respecting the evangelism of any one of them.

On the retirement of Mr. Gray from the pastorate, a successor was found in the Rev. REYNALD TETLAW. His name first appears among the delegates to the Cheshire Union of Dissenting Ministers present at the Knutsford meeting, August 6th, 1701. The year following he was ordained, with eight others, at Warrington. Matthew Henry, in noting the events of that day—June 16th, 1702—wrote, “That was a day of fasting and prayer and imposition of hands in a very great congregation; where I trust God was with us. I took the confession and vows. The work of the day was done to general satisfaction. There were many other ministers present.” Mr. Tetlaw’s ministry at Tintwistle was of short duration. He removed before the ministers meeting of May 11th, 1703, to Rainford in Lancashire, and was succeeded by Mr. COWPER, who had been trained for the ministry under Mr. Chorlton. Mr. Cowper held the pastorate till the beginning of 1705. At the May meeting of the Union the congregation applied to the ministers for help. On the recommendation of Mr. Henry the congregation chose Mr. GILBERT TAYLOR to be Mr. Cowper’s successor. Mr. Taylor was privately ordained March 29th, 1710, at the house of the Rev. S. Angier, Dukinfield, by Mr. Angier, Mr. G. Jones of Hatherlow, and Mr. Irlam of Congleton. From memoranda in the records of the Cheshire Union meetings, it appears that Mr. Taylor, for three successive years, received a grant of 2*l.* out of the 100*l.* left

by Mr. Thomas Lee of Darnal, for the support of the Presbyterian ministry. Bishop Gastrell notes that in his time there was a "Dis-senters' meeting-house at Tintwistle, about two hundred meeters." From another source we learn that "in 1715 Mr. Taylor had 574 hearers, seven of whom were gentlemen"* After May 3rd, 1715, Mr. Taylor's name disappears from the list of attendants at the ministerial meetings. The probability is that he finished his earthly course in 1716.

In May 1718, Mr. EDWARD THORNTON of Tintwistle was proposed, along with others, for ordination at the next meeting of ministers at Knutsford. It was likewise agreed that "Mr. Thornton should be examined by the Classis, and that he should prepare a discourse from Matthew xi. 12." He also brought a testimonial under the hand of his tutor Mr. Rothwell, which is as followeth:—"This may certify all whom it concerns that Edward Thornton has spent some time in my family, and under my direction and tuition; in which time he has gone through a course of philosophy, made a very considerable progress in theology, followed his studies with a commendable assiduity and diligence, redeemed his time and behaved himself soberly, regularly, piously, and as becomes the gospel. Holcom, February 23rd, 1715." In May of the following year Mr. Thornton was set apart to the ministry, when Mr. Irlam of Congleton prayed with imposition of hands, and gave the charge from Colossians iv. 17. Like his predecessor, Mr. Thornton had to battle with poverty. From the Minute Book of the Cheshire Union, it appears that a letter was read from him, May 1728, "in which he pleaded his necessity, and it was agreed that Mr. Jones, who was moderator *pro tem.*, should recommend his case to the London ministers."

In the eleventh year of his pastorate, Mr. Thornton formed a Religious Fellowship Society, of which Mr. John Buckley of Tunstead was appointed the scribe. Lest any should misconstrue the design of their monthly meetings, which were usually held at Mr. Buckley's, it was announced in the prospectus of that society:—"We solemnly protest against all immoral, mischievous cabals; as also against all rebellious, schismatical societies, declaring ours only to be religious, viz., to read the word of God together, confer about spiritual things, pray with and for one another."

It was afterwards resolved,—“ On the days of meeting we will not meddle with matters too high for us, nor that relate to the government, unless to express our loyal subjection, and to confirm us more in those just principles. We agree that nothing shall be told out of the society, or of anything else managed there, especially if it will tend to the prejudice of the whole or any one of its members. We make not this rule to screen rebellion or immorality, for our most fervent and serious prayers are for the King, the Queen, the Prince, Duke and Princess, and for every branch of that most illustrious Protestant princely family. . . . We make this rule, because the debauchees of this age will but make a mock at religion, and a jest at religious duties.”

How suggestive these cautionary resolves are of the risks incurred by the forefathers of this cause by their Nonconformity to the state church; of the sharp-sighted jealousy which constantly dogged their steps; of the circumspection required from the individual members of their society,—in debate and in prayer,—lest by the imprudence of one, all the rest should be confounded with anti-royalists or debauchees!

By the notes of its journalist, John Buckley, a worthy ancestor of the family bearing that name in Ashton,—the history of this Christian brotherhood can be traced from 1730 to 1749. Between them and their pastor, the Rev. E. Thornton, there existed an affectionate intimacy of a most pleasurable kind. Through constitutional delicacy and repeated attacks of ague he was frequently absent from the monthly meetings, but the loss of his presence was somewhat compensated by his love-breathing epistles. Having heard of the serious illness of his friend Buckley, he wrote June 17th, 1744 :—“ Not your family, not the society, not the church, can spare you. A brother so loving, so affectionately concerned for us, how shall we give you up? . . . Let my mistakes give advice. Eat something in the morning. Confine not yourself in serving others, as to bring tenderness and disorder upon your body, and let ten be thy bedtime; but stop, only long fasting, long standing, much starving, long waking, are not for thy health.”

When this godly preacher was gathered to his fathers, or where he was interred, neither marble pillar nor inscription cut in the rock commemorates. But, in the absence of definite information, the conjecture may be ventured on that the tomb immediately beneath the chancel window of Mottram Church, where “ resteth the body of

“ William, late son of Edward Thornton, V.D.M., of Tintwistle,” contains also all that was mortal of the father. Somewhere about 1747 he fell asleep in Jesus.

The three pastorates immediately following that of Mr. Thornton were not happy ones, owing to the inadvertency, eccentricities, and, in one case, the immorality of the ministers. During the pastorate of the first of them (1748), the members of the church residing at Micklehurst requested permission from their Tintwistle brethren to connect themselves with the church at Delph, urging that some of them were so far advanced in years that they could not travel the distance, and that others felt it an obligation to worship nearer their home for the sake of their families. These reasons, however, were not so weighty in the estimation of their fellow-disciples as to secure their compliance; and as the answer to the petition of John Buckley and others shows in what a solemn light the obligation of church membership was regarded, it may not be amiss to cite one paragraph. “ Thus far we agree that you may join in the reception of the supper ordinance with the Protestant Dissenting church at Delph as occasional members. But hereby you do not disannul or revoke that covenant which you made at your entrance into church-membership with us and with the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church.” Early in the ministry of the second (1763), a successful effort was initiated for the building of a new chapel, more capacious and more suitable to the times. The means were promptly supplied by the congregation, and with a generosity which obviated the necessity of appeals for help from without.

Passing thus rapidly over the space of twenty-four years, we reach the date of the Rev. WILLIAM HUDSON'S settlement, which occurred in 1782. He was then in his twenty-fourth year; but from the outset he commended himself to all around him by his deep seriousness, fervent piety, and genial kindness. Mr. Hudson, assisted by lay-coadjutors, founded the first Tintwistle Sunday-school in the year 1788. Finding, however, that the very class of youth whose improvement was contemplated did not avail themselves of the proffered benefit, the school was broken up after six years of trial. During the next ten years there was a suspension of all direct Sabbath-school labour. This circumstance, coupled with the fact that for fourteen years he had apparently laboured in vain, had a very depressive effect on the mind of the devoted pastor. Mr. Hudson saw but one step before

him—that of resigning his charge. From the execution of this purpose he was dissuaded by neighbouring ministers, and especially by his own people: to those intreaties and dissuasives he could not turn a deaf ear. The precious seed, which had been sown in the hearts of so many, began to spring up, and a religious awakening was ushered in, which, more or less, lasted to the end of his ministry. In the autumn of 1803, the school was resumed, and before long a larger house of prayer was needed. With a cheerfulness “which the Lord loveth,” the people gave abundantly of their substance. But the pastor did not live to see the glory of that latter house. On the very day, March 26th, 1811, when the old meeting-house was razed to its foundations, Mr. Hudson breathed his last, aged fifty-one. What he was in life may be inferred from his death. On being asked by the Rev. W. Evans of Stockport, if he had left any manuscripts behind him in a state to meet the public eye and to gratify the wishes of his friends, Mr. Hudson replied,—“I have given directions that my papers should be locked up or burned. I wish to be unnoticed.” And then, with a sweet placid smile, repeated,—

Thus let me live unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented, let me die.
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie!

After a vacancy of nearly three years, the pulpit was occupied by the Rev. B. SENIOR, a student from Idle, who was ordained pastor of the church at Tintwistle, September 6th, 1815. He was succeeded in 1827 by the Rev. JOHN CASS POTTER, now of Whitby. On the date of his settlement, the church numbered only forty-seven members. Under his earnest and popular ministrations the congregation and the school were greatly increased. Eleven years after (February 1838), Mr. Potter removed to another sphere of labour.

In the subsequent May, the congregation unanimously requested the Rev. T. J. DAVIES of Royston, to occupy the vacant pastorate. The late Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe of Ashton-under-Lyne, has left the following testimony regarding him:—“He gave convincing proof that he was willing to spend and be spent. His heart was in his work. In his unwearied exertions there seemed a complete oblivion of self. Such was the intimate union between him and his flock that he seemed to feel what every member bore. Hence when a re-action took place he became depressed and exhausted.” On

May 20th, 1843, he was taken suddenly, in his 39th year, from his work to his reward. Upon his tombstone the following epitaph is engraven :—

“In memory of the Rev. Thomas Davies, who was pastor of this church for nearly five years. He died May 20th, aged thirty-nine years. He was an affectionate husband, a tender parent, and a sincere friend; obliging in manners, affable in disposition, and prompt to deeds of benevolence. A good minister of Jesus Christ; ardent in zeal, abundant in labour, and an instrument of much good. He rests from his labours, and his works do follow him.”

Mr. Davies was succeeded in the pastorate by the present minister, the Rev. R. G. MILNE, M.A. What has since followed the hand of other chroniclers must tell. Gratitude, however, prompts both pastor and people to rear a pillar of remembrance, and with glad hearts to write on it—“The Lord hath done great things for us.”

NOTE.

THE REV. WILLIAM BAGSHAW.

WILLIAM BAGSHAW was born at Litton, in the parish of Tideswell, Derbyshire, January 17th, 1628. His father, having been left an orphan, was defrauded of a considerable property by some of his relations. But it pleased God to raise up friends for him, through whose wise advice the little that remained was so profitably invested that he became wealthy. Ever after his heart beat with true sympathy toward the oppressed and the fatherless. Of his numerous family, William, the eldest, was the only one to reach the years of maturity. He was baptized at Tideswell, by the Rev. Mr. Greavel. Under the ministry of Mr. Rowlandson of Bakewell, and Mr. Bourne of Ashover, he received a deep tincture of religion. “With what pleasure,” says he, “do I call to mind that, when I was a schoolboy, Mr. Rowlandson was a diligent catechist as well as preacher. He remembered the charge given him by the Lord Jesus for the feeding as of his sheep so of his lambs.” Of Mr. Rowlandson he further says, “I have heard that this worthy man, when young, was employed in and at our Chappel-le-Frith.” He applies to him the saying, “His doctrine was as thunder, and his life was as lightning.” On quitting the school, where he had distinguished himself by his diligence and ability, William Bagshaw entered Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and, while passing through the curriculum of study, was religiously benefited by the public labours of Drs. Hill, Arrowsmith, and Whichcot. On his return from the university, he preached his first sermon in the chapel of Warmhill, in Tideswell. Thence he removed to Attercliffe, as assistant to the Rev. James Fisher of Sheffield. Before leaving that post, Mr.

Bagshaw was solemnly ordained at Chesterfield by the presbytery, before a numerous congregation, on January 1st, 1650. The ministers prominent in the service were the Revs. Immanuel Bourne, moderator; Messrs. John Rowlandson of Bakewell, James Hewit, and John Brocklehurst. A few months after he was invited to the parish of Glossop. For eleven years he prosecuted his pastoral duties with great earnestness and fidelity. His labours were manifold, and, as a father, he lived among his people. His administration of the Lord's Supper was a service marked by great solemnity. "As he would not admit the grossly ignorant and notoriously profane to that sacred feast, so he durst not exclude those in whom he saw anything of the image of Christ; though they were of different sentiments in lesser matters of religion, and had been too averse to that way of church government which he believed to be most agreeable to the rules of the gospel."

His usefulness was suddenly stopped by the Act of Uniformity. In consequence he vacated his home at Glossop. But such was the value put on his services that a gentleman in the parish, who had an interest in the presentation, offered to secure it for him, if the attempt met with Mr. Bagshaw's consent. But, having conscientiously refused to conform, he declined the generous offer. He retired to Ford, near Chinley, in the same county, and lived on his own estate. For several years he attended the Parish Church with his household, morning and afternoon. But, being persuaded that no power could cancel his authority or disannul his obligation to preach the gospel, he preached privately in his own house on the Sabbath evening. Upon the declaration by Charles II. for liberty of conscience, 1672, he preached three Sabbaths in the month in the parish of Chapel-le-Frith, and on the fourth Sabbath in the parish of Glossop, from which he had been banished. "He was the chief instrument in gathering the congregations at Ashford, Malcoffe, Middleton, Bradwall, Chalmarton, and Hucklow; besides setting up lectures at several places, which were afterwards kept up." When Charles, on the petition of Parliament, recalled his Declaration of Indulgence, he kept up his meetings privately; changing the place of assembly almost every Lord's Day, lest his hearers should be subjected to the penalties connected with conventicle worship. On one such occasion the preacher himself had a narrow escape. The two informers who disturbed him ingenuously acknowledged that his very countenance struck a terror into them. And one of them, while on his deathbed, sent often to beg his pardon and his prayers. Mr. Bagshaw heard of Charles II.'s death with great concern; as his successor—James—was reputed to be a Romanist at heart. Yet his suspicions did not interfere with his zeal in his heavenly master's work. "He laboured more abundantly than ever. He allowed himself but little time for sleep, and was very seldom out of his study—unless at meal times, at family worship, or when abroad on the work of the ministry, in which he was employed two or three days in every week, and frequently at two or three different places on the same day. Yet such was his industry that, though he preached so often and seldom on the same text in two auditories, he had prepared several hundreds of sermons which he lived not to make use of." In addition to his pastoral labours, Mr. Bagshaw published several treatises of great value. Of these may be enumerated *Liping Water*,

Sermons on Revelation xxi. 6, The Miner's Monitor, The Riches of Grace, Trading Spiritualized, De Spiritualibus Peccis—or Notices of some of his Co-workers in the High Peak. Besides these published treatises "he left behind him fifty vols., some "in folio and many in quarto, written fair with his own hand on several subjects. "At the end of every year he usually repeated to his people the substance of his "discourses during the prior twelve months; and in the beginning of the new year "he went to the houses of his hearers and preached a suitable sermon to each." His name occurs as the first signature to the Agreement of London Ministers adopted by the ministers of Cheshire, at the formation of their union in 1691. He signs himself "William Bagshaw, minister of ye gospel in Glossop parish." "His health at last began to suffer, and his growing infirmities compelled him to "shorten his journeys and lessen his labors. Yet he desisted not wholly from his "delightful work more than one Lord's Day before his death." On that occasion, March 22nd, 1702, Mr. Bagshaw preached his last sermon with "a vigour and "vivacity which would have indicated perfect health to a stranger." However, he had no sooner done than he himself was sensible that his preaching work was over, and he thereon said he thought it would be tempting God to make another essay. He became weaker every day. On the following Sabbath he was confined to his bed, and to those about him he remarked that his silence that day was his sermon. The two following days he was visited by several of his hearers. To them the dying Apostle of the Peak *declared his satisfaction in his Nonconformity, and blessed God who had kept him from acting against his conscience.* And, after a young minister's extempore prayer, he expressed surprise that so much should be said against free prayer; adding, "there is not a prayer in all their books *would "have suited my present circumstances so well as this has done.*" On Wednesday night, April 1st, 1702, he requested that a hymn might be sung, to be followed by a prayer. At the close of the latter he added his Amen, and then fell "asleep in "Jesus." His mortal remains were consigned to the grave at Chapel-le-Frith. His funeral sermon was preached by his nephew, the Rev. J. Ashe of Ashford, on Hebrews xiii. 7. The fruits of his labours still live in many of the places where he preached the gospel stately or occasionally. Though 160 years have passed away since the Apostle of the Peak finished his testimony, the traces of his earnest life are yet visible.

NORTHENDEN.

THIS parish was the scene of the labours of a Puritan minister, the Rev. HENRY DUNSTER, who had he lived till 1662 would probably have been a Nonconformist. His predecessor was Mr. Rootes, who is described as minister of Northenden in 1643. The survey of 1649 states that "the corn and tithes of Northenden are worth 100*l.*; one "Mr. Henry Dunstarr is minister there, and was presented by the "Committee for Plundered Ministers. He is an honest able minister."*

* Lambeth MS., vol. iii.

Mr. Dunster was both a relation and a friend of Henry Newcome, who makes the following references to him in his Diary. "I preached at a fast for rain the next Tuesday after (June 1652) at Northenden." "August 17th, 1659. Mr. Dunster preached in the afternoon on 2 Kings ix., at the Manchester Classis." "January 11th, 1662. Mr. Dunster preached for me at Stopford [Stockport] on the Friday." "November 12th, 1661. Got to Northenden before eleven. I preached on Exodus xx. 6, at the baptism of Felicia Dunstarr." "March 14th, 1662. After, I went to Northenden, hearing my cousin Dunster being so very ill, whom indeed I found very weak." "March 18th, 1661-2. One from Northenden acquainted me with the death of my cousin Dunster, with desire to me to preach his funeral on Thursday. A sad breach it is!" "Thursday March 20th. Came to Northenden before one. I preached at the funeral of Mr. Dunster, on 1 Kings xx. 1, where was much lamentation made. Poor family and poor people."

Calamy names Mr. Dunster among the Nonconforming ministers of Cheshire, and adds, that "he did not afterwards conform; Mr. Melbury was remarkably kind to him after his ejection." Palmer omits these remarks, having probably been better informed regarding Mr. Dunster. The following epitaph is among the inscriptions in Northenden Church:—"M.S. Henrici Dunster, in artibus magistri, verbi sacri preconis pii, fidelis et docti, hujus ecclesiae Pastoris nuper vigilantissimi, qui obiit Mart. 17, et sepult. 20, anno Dⁿⁱ 1661."

DEANERY OF FRODSHAM.

FRODSHAM Deanery is nearly co-extensive with the Bucklow Hundred, and contains ten parishes, some of which are very large, and embrace several chapelries. Eleven Nonconformist ministers were ejected from their livings in this Deanery in 1660 and 1662, viz., Mr. Ford of Ashton-upon-Mersey, James Livesey of Great Budworth, John Machin of Whitley, James Cockayne of Frodsham, Thomas Bradshaw of Grapenhall, Adam Martindale of Rosthern, Robert Hunter of Knutsford, Robert Norbury of Over Peover, and Robert Eaton of Daresbury.

ASHTON-UPON-MERSEY.

(By JOSEPH THOMPSON, *Esq.*)

THERE was a Presbyterian incumbent here during the Civil Wars. Adam Martindale, in his Autobiography,* states that he had been invited to become minister of the place (in 1647), and again† he tells his people on the memorable Sunday August 17th, 1662, that he had been invited to Ashton at double the salary his people paid him. The pulpit was occupied by Mr. FORD, who is mentioned by Newcome,‡ Friday October 4th, 1661, "Was after supper an hour " at Mr. Heyricke's, and procured Mr. Case for Mr. Ford at Ashton, " for y^e next Lord's Day but one." Mr. Ford was afterwards ejected. Nonconformity must have spread in this parish, for Gastrell states that in his time there was a Presbyterian meeting-house there, and that one eighth the families were Nonconformists.

* Page 76.

† Page 171.

‡ Diary, page 5.

CROSS-STREET CHAPEL.

Cross-street, now commonly known as Sale Moor, is supposed to have taken its name "from the ancient Watling-street, which forded the Mersey and entered Cheshire at the same point with this road, and proceeded for some miles in a similar direction."* Nonconformity took its rise here most probably immediately after Mr. Ford's ejection. Bishop Gastrell† says there was "a Presbyterian meeting-house at Cross-street in this parish, to which great numbers resort, anno 1716." Prior to this Mr. MICHAEL FLETCHER, who was a student of Mr. Frankland's, at Natland, in 1695, was ordained the minister 18th June 1700, and in the year 1715 he still continued to be the minister, and had—for so scanty a population—the large number of 322 hearers.‡ His name also appears among the signatures to the censure of Mr. De la Rose of Stockport, in 1722. The good man, however, fell into trouble, for, after spending upwards of a quarter of a century in the ministry, his conduct had to be enquired into, and a committee of ministers was appointed to make the investigation September 3rd, 1728.§ Two years after this date the vacant pulpit was offered to Mr. Hamnett as a candidate; he did not settle there, for in May of the following year "it was agreed that, upon Mr. NEHEMIAH REYNER'S removal to Cross-street, the Rev. Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Mottershed, and Mr. Jones shall join in a letter to y^e London ministers to procure the money formerly allowed to that place, which for some time has been discontinued."|| Mr. Reyner appears to have been excluded from the Ministers' Association August 1738. The censure was afterwards revoked, and he was owned as a brother again at a meeting held May 6th, 1740. Subsequently the pulpit was occupied by Mr. MOTTERSLED, and then by the Rev. R. HARRISON, formerly of Shrewsbury. The Rev. ROBERT HARROP, who had previously undertaken the charge of the chapels at Millbrow and Greenacres, followed Mr. Harrison. He preached at Sale for thirty-seven years, and combined with his duties there the oversight of the chapel at Hale Barn, which he held for forty-six years, "when he retired

* Ormerod, vol. i., page 421.

† Notitia Cestriensis, vol. i., page 312.

‡ Josiah Thompson's MS. in Dr. Williams's Library.

§ Cheshire MS.

|| *Ibid*, page 69.

“with the undivided respect and affection of his flock.” It is probable that, during this period, he was assisted by Mr. Gabriel Nichols, who preached at Sale and Partington alternately in 1773. The Rev. WILLIAM JOHNS of Manchester was afterwards minister here for several years.

The old chapel still exists at Cross-street, but the date and origin of it are not known. It has an endowment consisting of a small farm at Ashton-upon-Mersey, which produces about 40*l.* a year. Like many of the chapels built by the Protestant Dissenters after the passing of the Toleration Act, it has lapsed into the hands of the Unitarians, and, although the connexion cannot be clearly traced, it is probable that the introduction of Congregationalism originated from this cause.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, SALE.

In the year 1800 some gentlemen from Manchester, deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of this neighbourhood, commenced the preaching of the gospel in a cottage at Cross-street, and their labours appear to have continued about three years. The success of this effort was sufficient to induce the same friends to build a substantial chapel, capable of holding about four hundred hearers. The principal contributors were Messrs. Robert Spear* and Arthur Clegg, the former giving 50*l.* for every 20*l.* contributed by the latter, and by these means the whole amount was raised with the exception of about 50*l.* contributed by the people in the neighbourhood.

In the year 1805 a church was formed which consisted of twelve

* Mr. Spear's name is mentioned in connexion with Partington, near which place he resided, and where he bought his house—Mill Bank—in the year 1807 (*Lysons's Cheshire, page 515*). Mr. Spear—unlike too many men both before and since his time—when he had accumulated a fortune by his own exertions, did not consider it necessary, either to forsake the principles he had previously held, for the sake of position in the world, or to hoard up his money for his own gratification and selfish enjoyment—on the contrary, he looked upon these things as talents entrusted to his care, and he put them out to interest like a faithful steward. His portrait now adorns the walls of the Lancashire Independent College, of which he may be said to have been the father, as he greatly assisted young ministers by placing them under the care of the Rev. William Roby for education, and this training was afterwards carried on at Blackburn until the Lancashire College was opened, to which institution the Blackburn students were transferred. For a fuller account of this good man's life the reader is referred to the Autobiography of the Rev. Wm. Jay, page 432.

members. For some time this chapel was supplied by Mr. ASHTON, a gentleman of fortune, who thought fit to devote himself to the ministry, and had received some instruction from Mr. Roby. Under his ministry the church greatly prospered, and was regarded as one of the most flourishing of country congregations. It is not known how long Mr. Ashton's labours continued, but for some time subsequent to his withdrawal the pulpit was supplied by lay preachers from Manchester.

In 1821 the Rev. Mr. CROCKFORD became the minister of the place ;* the church prospered under his pastorate for a time, but afterwards it languished, whereupon Mr. Crockford removed in 1826 to Salem Chapel, Warrington, where he remained for about seven years. No record remains of the spiritual condition of this church at Sale previous to the year 1826. For nearly five years the pulpit was filled by laymen from Manchester.

About the year 1831 Mr. GIBBON, who had formerly been a local preacher among the Wesleyan Methodists, but had subsequently united himself to the Congregational Church at Grosvenor-street, under Mr. Roby, came to preach at Sale. Shortly afterwards he became the minister of the chapel, and as a preacher he was successful. The church which had been reduced to three members was increased sevenfold during the year. A large amount of prosperity rewarded the preacher during the next five years, when he unhappily adopted Hyper-Calvinistic views, and also took a prejudice against Sunday-schools. These views did not suit the common sense of the people, who speedily forsook the preacher, and in the year 1841 Mr. Gibbon removed to Warrington. The pulpit was then occupied by lay preachers who held the same views as the last minister, but the congregation still declined till 1842, when the few persons remaining were unable to defray the expenses incidental to public worship. The place was closed for about two months when, at the request of the trustees, the Rev. EDWARD MORRIS—then settled at the neighbouring village of Stretford—re-opened the chapel, and in conjunction with Mr. Jonathan Lees of Manchester and the junior students of the Lancashire College, made an effort to quicken the religious life of the place. Their attention was first turned to the Trust Deed,—a matter far too much neglected by our smaller churches—and to the condition of

* Slate's History of the Lancaster County Union, page 48.

the building, both of which were found to be in a most unsatisfactory condition ; after the expenditure of a large amount of labour and money, they were both renewed, and the chapel now began to assume a more inviting appearance.

In October 1842 the present church consisting of eleven members was formed—the Revds. R. Fletcher, James Griffin, and E. Morris, taking part in the service. An invitation was offered to Mr. Morris to become pastor of the church, which he accepted in addition to the pastorate of the church at Stretford. The result was most satisfactory, large additions being steadily made to the school and congregation—the church also increased and numbered about fifty members at the close of the year 1849.

The character of Sale Moor rapidly changed about this time in consequence of the railway to Bowdon having been opened : in addition to the cottages which lined the high road, the few gentlemen's houses and scattered farms, new houses were built in large numbers, caused by a largely increased population. Mr. Morris felt that this increase demanded his whole attention at one place, and relinquishing his connexion with Stretford, he accepted the pastorate of the church at Sale. In March 1851 it was found necessary to provide additional accommodation. The erection of a new chapel was agreed upon, and the result of the movement was the building of the present chapel on a site of land presented by S. Brooks, Esq. ; the chapel will hold five hundred persons ; it is of the early English style ; it is fronted with stone, and cost 2,200*l.*, the whole of which was paid on the completion of the building. The number of members received into the church since its re-organization in 1842 is 184. The Sunday-school numbers two hundred, and the present accommodation being too limited, the enlargement of the schoolroom is contemplated.

BOWDON.

(By JOSEPH THOMPSON, Esq.)

“ THIS town of Bowdon takes its name from our two old Saxon words *Bode* (which is yet in use with us for a dwelling or habitation) and *Don* or *Dun* (which is as much as a plain upon a rising hill, for which we now use the word Down), so that *Bodon* signifies as much as a town or dwelling on the downs, unless, perhaps, we

“ write it *Boge-don* (for so we find it anciently written in Doomsday “ Book), and then it may denote a down or hill by a bog; at the side “ whereof, towards Ashley, lieth a great deep bog.”* It may be added that, on the north and east, are the mosses or bogs of Carrington and Sinderland, as also the flat land which was once the bed of the Mersey. Which of these derivations is the more correct is of little matter to the present sketch, but the latter may be adopted as more appropriate, for as Bowdon is situated on a hill it commands a view of nearly all the places mentioned in this paper.

The religious history of Bowdon goes far back. “ There was a “ church here in the Conqueror’s time : ‘ ibi Presbyter et ecclesia, “ ‘ cui pertinet dimidia hida,’ saith Doomsday Book, so that it seems “ to surmount the time of the Norman Conquest.”† In confirmation of this it may be stated that during the recent rebuilding of the parish church, traces of three foundations were discovered, one of Saxon origin, another supposed to be of the twelfth century, and the third that of the Tudor building recently removed. Little is known of ecclesiastical affairs before the middle of the seventeenth century, for the parish registers only begin with the year 1628. Shortly after this date many events of importance occurred, and as Sir GEORGE BOOTH of Dunham Hall was so much mixed up with them, it will be well, perhaps, to give a sketch of his life.

“ Sir George Booth ‡ (says Clarendon) was a person of one of the “ best fortunes and interest in Cheshire, and for the memory of his “ grandfather, of absolute power with the Presbyterians. He sat as “ representative of the county in the Long Parliament, after the dis- “ placing of one of the other members, and was thrice returned “ member for the same during the usurpation in 1654, 1656, and “ 1660. In the struggle between the King and his subjects, he was “ engaged on the side of the Parliament. He and Sir William Brereton “ are the only Cheshire gentlemen mentioned by name, in the first “ order issued by Parliament for the arming of the county and securing “ the equipments and magazines of the Royalists at the first breaking “ out of the civil disturbances, and he was again actively employed in “ arming the county, on the approach of Sir Marmaduke Langdale “ in 1648.

* Sir P. Leycester, in Ormerod’s Cheshire, vol. i., page 392.

† Ibid, page 393.

‡ Ormerod, pages 404-5.

“ Sir George Booth afterwards favoured the cause of the Restoration. By a commission sent to him from the King at Brussels, in 1659, he was constituted commander of the King’s forces in Cheshire, Lancashire, and North Wales. In pursuance of this, he undertook in this year one of the attempts which were simultaneously executed in various parts of the kingdom, for seizing the strongholds for the King, and his attempt was the only one which succeeded; he obtained possession of Chester city, but Colonel Croxton, the Parliamentary governor, resolutely defended himself in the castle. On this the Royalists divided—Sir Thomas Middleton proceeded towards Wales, and was defeated on Pree’s Heath; Sir George Booth set out to march by Kendal and Skipton towards York, which was deemed likely to fall into his hands; but from this expedition he was recalled by the advance of Lambert, to his position at Chester, where Colonel Croxton still held the castle, and the city walls had been partly razed. Prevented by these circumstances from standing a siege, which might have been fatal to the Parliament forces, Sir George sallied forth to meet Lambert, and sustained defeat at Winnington. In Lambert’s letter to the Parliament, the Royalists are stated to have rallied again, within a quarter of a mile of the scene of their defeat, ‘disputing the place very gallantly, both parties shewing themselves like Englishmen.’

“ After the battle, Sir George attempted to effect his escape in female attire, but being discovered, and taken at Newport Pagnell, was committed to the tower. He was afterwards liberated, and was restored in February 1659-60 to his seat in Parliament, and had shortly after the happiness of being the first of the twelve members elected to carry to King Charles II. the answer of the house to His Majesty’s letter. In the same year the sum of twenty thousand pounds was on the point of being voted to him, as a reward for his eminent services and great sufferings, when he himself, in his place, requested that his reward might not be more than half the amount, which was accordingly granted by the Commons on August 2nd, and confirmed by the Lords the day following. As a further reward from the crown he had the barony of Delamer, of Dunham Massey, conferred upon him, and had liberty to propose six gentlemen to receive the honour of knighthood, and two others to have the dignity of baronet. ‘After this,’ according to Collins, ‘not being studious to please the court in those measures that were taken in some part of

“ ‘ that reign, both he and his family were soon afterwards disregarded
 “ ‘ by the King, and ill-used by his successor James II.’

“ A memorial of George lord Delamer, placed over his vault by a
 “ faithful domestic, will be found in the list of epitaphs in the church
 “ of Bowdon.”

The death of Oliver Cromwell completely broke down the Commonwealth, and enabled the Royalists to strike for the King, though under false colours. Sir George Booth, backed by the Presbyterians, if judged by his proclamation, rose to maintain the freedom of Parliament; he really fought for the King, and the Presbyterians afterwards reaped a “Stuart’s gratitude” in being utterly forsaken. “But it is generally agreed that from this time the Presbyterians appeared no longer among the King’s enemies, but very much promoted his restoration. Upon the foundation of this union an insurrection was formed in several parts of the country. . . Sir G. Booth, a Presbyterian, had an opportunity of appearing about Chester, but was defeated by Lambert and made prisoner. The King and Duke of York came to Calais, to be in readiness to embark in case it succeeded. . . Several of the Presbyterian ministers appeared in this insurrection, . . all were afterwards ejected by the Act of Uniformity.”*

The district had experienced troublous times before Sir George’s rising, for in the year 1642 there was issued to the “gentlemen of Cheshire,” “a declaration of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, concerning the late treaty of peace in Cheshire. Wherein they renounce the said agreement, as being very prejudicial and dangerous to the whole kingdom, that any one county should stand as *newter*, and withdraw themselves from the assistance of the rest.” This declaration was ordered to be “read in all parish churches and chappells in the county of Cheshire, by the parsons, vicars, or curates of the same.” It recites that “For this, and other reasons, we hold ourselves bound in conscience in performance of the severall *Protestations* that we have made to hinder all further proceedings upon that agreement. And therefore it is ordered by the Lords and Commons that no such neutrality be observed in that county, which will secretly advantage the forces raised there, and

*Neal’s Puritans, vol. iii., pages 7, 8, edition 1837. See also Hume’s History of England, vol. viii., pages 350—353; Hunter’s Life of Oliver Heywood, page 112; Adam Martindale’s Life; Newcome’s Autobiography, &c., &c.

“ in the neighbour counties against the Parliament, and no way benefit Cheshire, but rather be most dangerous to them, by keeping that county without any defensive forces ; whereby it will be open to the King to bring back his army thither at his pleasure ; by which meanes it will become the state of the wars, and if this should not fall out, yet if the rest of the kingdome be suppressed, what hopes can Cheshire have but to be involved in the publick misery.” &c., &c.

According to Walker, in the year 1643 the Vicar of Bowdon, named *Smith*, was sequestered. “ He was turned out by a committee of Parliament without ever being heard.”* Then followed the Presbyterian occupancy of the pulpit, for we read that *James Watmough*, pastor of Bowdon, signed the Cheshire Attestation of Presbyterian ministers in 1648. There is little to be found relating to this man ; it is certain that he did not prevent the disturbances which speedily rose up between the Presbyterians and Independents both at Bowdon and elsewhere. During the year 1651 Adam Martindale of Rostherne was drawn into the controversy. He relates that the malcontents of his own parish had long before engaged him in a dispute with the Separatists in Bowdon parish, which caused “ a paper scuffle” between their teacher and him.†

During the Commonwealth, ASHLEY HALL was in the possession of Thomas Brereton, Esq., who built a domestic chapel there in 1653. The minute book of the Manchester Classis contains entries regarding two ministers who were successively appointed to this chapel. “ Mr. THOMAS ASPINALL, B.A., aged about twenty-five years, was ordained and licensed to exercise his ministry in the chapel of Ashley, Cheshire, on February 28th, 1654.” “ Mr. JOSEPH BIRCH, B.A., of Caius College, Cambridge, was ordained minister of Ashley, and brought a certificate from Thomas Brereton of Ashley, Esq., shewing his desire to have him his chaplain, March 30th, 1659.” Mr. Brereton died in 1660, aged sixty-six, and was buried at Bowdon.

Sir George Booth was a warm friend of the Presbyterians, both before and after he was ennobled as Lord Delamere ; he had Divine service in his own house, and was very kind to the ministers after the passing of the Act of Uniformity. Newcome,‡ the exemplary preacher

* Sufferings of the Clergy, part ii.

† Life of Adam Martindale, pages 105, 106.

‡ Autobiography, page 74.

at the Collegiate Church, and subsequently at Cross-street Chapel, Manchester, makes frequent mention of him, and speaks of the second lord with all the warmth and earnestness of a father. "1657, August " 22nd. I went to Dunham, and preached there the next day, in the " forenoon ; and at the chapel in the afternoon at Bowden, on Heb. " ii. 3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation.* And " at this time had the first knowledge of, and acquaintance with, that " honorable person Sir George Booth." Again in 1664 he stayed four days at Dunham when the effects of the ejection were fully experienced : nor was he alone, for the good Mr. Eaton* "three years " lived at Dunham," whither Adam Martindale also went to read mathematics with the Lord Delamere, and to instruct the children therein.† He also officiated as chaplain at Dunham for fourteen years. Martindale tells us that, in 1663, "the bishop (of Chester) " preached fiercely against Nonconformists at Bowdon, and as one " that had a notable faculty of extracting salt water out of a " pumice upon those words, *We are not ignorant of his devices,* " 2 Corinthians ii. 11 ; made even the most harmlesse practices of the " Nonconformists devices of Sathan, soe farre as his Episcopall " authoritie would authenticate such doctrine." Though the minister of Bowdon was probably a Conformist, these references to the *Separatists of Bowdon parish*, and the *Nonconformists of Bowdon*, prove that the Dissenters were a strong party there in 1662. They probably attended Martindale's ministrations, at the Sunday evening services which he held as chaplain to Lord Delamere, and at Ringway Chapel, where Mr. Brereton preached.

The first "Lord Delamere, my good friend and favourer, died " (says Newcome) a little before this (September 3rd, 1684), and was " buried in great solemnity at Bowden, September 9th."‡

The Presbyterians, heartily sick of the Stuarts and their broken pledges, now warmly espoused the cause of the Prince of Orange, and felt the deepest interest in the second Lord Delamere's adhesion to it. Newcome manifests so much concern for one whose life was of great value to Nonconformists generally, and to the inhabitants of Bowdon especially, that we cannot forbear transcribing some passages from his

* Martindale's Autobiography, page 157. † Life, pages 175, 197.

‡ Newcome, page 256. Zachary Cawdrey, rector of Barthomley, preached a funeral sermon at Bowdon for Lord Delamere, which was published in 1684. It is entitled, *The Certainty of Salvation to them who Die in the Lord.*

life. Under date of November 24th, 1685, he says:—"The news came of the Parliament prorogation, which was unexpected. An instance of God's power and providence, who can put men beside their measures. But we may tremblingly wait for the issue of these things. I look upon it as a strange thing, if possible, to rescue the Lord Delamer, whom I prayed for. God changed the affairs of the nation to save his father in '59. God can save him by reason of state." December 1st. We heard of the bail of the Lord Delamere. A great mercy. Soon clapped up again."

For seven weary weeks they waited the issue of the trial; the dull and anxious Christmas passed, the New Year dawned without hope, but relief came at last, and we can fancy the joy in that little assembly at Dunham when on "Sabbath January 17th (1686), "It pleased God, "passed all expectation, to bring us the news of the Lord Delamere's "being cleared at his trial. I could do little all day for the thoughts "of the unexpected mercy. Whilst it was hot, I wrote something in "the evening of the use for God I would have him make of it. It "was honestly designed, and sent to London. But I never heard of "it, whether it was received or not."

Two years afterwards the nation was astir, nor were the Non-conformists without hope. October 7th (1688). "Now was the "amuseing (!) news of the Prince of Orange's design to come upon "us."* "16th. Things are dark and in great confusion. The Lord "be merciful to us." November 16th. "Lord Delamere came to town "soldierlike. I was affected with a great passion of tears to see him "ride by." 26th. "A great alarm in the evening about Dunham, as "if some were a coming to fire the house. The country generally "rose to relieve it." 28th. "The Lord Delamere, with his company, "went from Nottingham in a sad season." 30th. "We heard the "news, amazing and surprising, of the general revolt of most of the "great ones from King James."†

Shortly after this there was the rumour of a treaty, then of the King being taken. During the first week of the next year, Lord Delamere returned to Dunham, and very soon received from Parliament—what his friends most earnestly desired for him—some preferment. He was ere long created Earl of Warrington. This eventful life of only forty-one years was closed January 2nd, 169 $\frac{3}{4}$. He was

* Newcome, page 267.

† Pages 268, 269.

buried at Bowdon Church, in the Dunham chancel, where a monument was erected to his memory. A description is given in Ormerod's *Cheshire*.*

Nonconformity maintained a firm footing in Bowdon parish after the passing of the Toleration Act. There were three Nonconformist chapels within the boundary of the parish, namely, at Baguley, Partington, and Ringway. Bishop Gastrell mentions an Anabaptist meeting-house at Baguley.† In the year 1812 a small Baptist chapel was built here.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, PARTINGTON.

The village of Partington is distant some five miles to the north-west of Altrincham, and in the parish of Bowdon. It is situated near the banks of the Mersey, and in the neighbourhood of what not long ago were mosses, but have since been made good farm land. Nonconformity seems to have become rooted here early in the last century. In the year 1715 the Rev. WILLIAM HARDING settled here as minister, having one hundred hearers. In April of the previous year he "was examined, approved, and allowed to preach as a candidate, by Mr. Risley and Mr. Owen of Warrington, with whom he lived."‡ He was ordained on August 7th, 1716. "The evening before he exhibited his thesis and defended it. His question was *Quænam est consecratio Eucharistiæ et qualis consecratio sit necessaria?* The day following, namely August 7th, in a very numerous assembly of ministers and people, met together in the new chapel (at Knutsford), he was solemnly set apart to y^e office and work of y^e ministry. The minister of the place began with prayer and reading some portions of Scripture. Then Mr. Waterhouse prayed before y^e sermon, which was preached by Mr. Fletcher from Matthew v. 16. After sermon ended, Mr. Irlam called for a confession of his faith, which he made before y^e congregation; and then put the usual questions to him, to which he answered *verbis conceptis*: and so he was set apart by prayer and imposition of hands of Mr. Owen (who also prayed over him), Messrs. Irlam, Gardner, Fletcher, Waterhouse, and Lea. Then Mr. Owen gave y^e exhortation from 1 Timothy vi. 20, *O Timothy, keep that*

* Vol. i., page 395.

† Notitia Cestrienses, page 312.

‡ Cheshire MS. Minute Book.

which is committed to thy trust. So concluding with prayer, thanksgiving, singing, and pronouncing y^e blessing, y^e congregation was “dismissed.”*

Mr. Harding seems to have taken the advice given in the charge with such good result that a petition was sent to the ministers’ meeting in August 1721, requesting help, doubtless to raise funds for the proposed chapel; and at the meeting of May 1st, 1722, it was agreed “that each of the ministers will endeavour to procure something for them (the people at Partington), in their respective congregations, “with all convenient speed.”

During that year the plot of land on which the chapel stands was purchased for the sum of thirty shillings “from George Jones of Partington, yeoman, of a part of the moss field, containing about four roods of land, which was conveyed, for the term of ten thousand years, to John Gleave, John Barratt, and Edmund Irlam of Partington. Upon this land a meeting-house was erected by subscription, “which has been continued in the hands of trustees from that time “till the present.”† The trust deed was renewed in 1730, 1751, 1800, and 1858, and is now in the Lancashire College.

Mr. Harding’s services were wholly devoted to Partington till 1730, when it was determined that he should give one fourth of his time to the chapel at Cross-street (Sale old chapel). He was a regular attendant at the ministers’ meetings till August 1737, taking part at ordinations and other services of importance, and he appears to have been a man of acknowledged worth.

He was succeeded by Mr. GEORGE WHITELEGG, “on whose production of a request from the people at Partington for his ordination, “and at his own desire, and being examined and approved, it was “determined that he should be ordained at the next meeting, August “1738.”‡ This ordination does not seem to have taken place; there is no record of the event in the Minute Book, and Mr. Whitelegg died while very young: he was buried at Bowdon Church.

Mr. GABRIEL NICHOLS was the next minister, and remained at Partington for many years. He had been ordained by the Cheshire ministers, September 1st, 1730, when Mr. Gamaliel Jones of Hatherlow offered the ordination prayer, and Mr. Gardner of Chester preached

* Cheshire MS. Minute Book.

† Congregational Magazine, 1821, page 48. ‡ Cheshire MS. Minute Book.

from the appropriate words in 1 Corinthians ii. 2 : *For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.* Between the years 1755—1773 he preached at Partington and Cross-street alternately.

During his ministrations Mrs. Jane Hardman gave 100*l.* to be placed out at interest for the use of the minister of Partington Chapel. In 1768 this sum was expended in the purchase of one acre, two quarters, and twenty perches of land, Cheshire measure, being about 3*a.* 1*q.* 30*p.*, statute measure. “And as a consideration for the alternate use, with others, of a piece of land containing a quarter of an acre and twenty perches.” This land brings in 16*l.* a year, in addition to which the chapel receives yearly 5*l.* rent charge on Stretton estate, from Mr. Lyon of Appleton ; rent of cottage, &c., 7*l.* ; interest on 100*l.* at present in Altrincham Savings Bank, 3*l.* ; making altogether about 31*l.*

When Mr. Nicholls left Partington the chapel was supplied by students from the Warrington Academy, an institution founded by the Presbyterians in 1758, and of which Hugh, Lord Willoughby, was first president.

They were followed by a Mr. Tuffs, and the pulpit was successively filled by Mr. Corbishley, Mr. Clegg, Mr. W. Grindrod, Mr. W. Johns from Nantwich, Mr. Tellingham from Congleton, and Mr. R. Slater. Mr. BENJAMIN HOLMES from Park Chapel, Lancashire, came to Partington in 1811, under the auspices of the late Robert Spear, Esq., of Mill Bank, who fitted up a room in his house for Mr. Holmes to preach in ; the services were well attended, and he continued his work at Mill Bank till December 1815. For some time previous to this the cause at the old meeting house had languished. “It appears that for many years the trust had been in “the hands of gentlemen who were “professedly Unitarians, of which denomination were all the persons “named in the deed of 1800. (This must be an error, for it is certain “that the survivors in 1858 were not Unitarians).” Some of these gentlemen, however, observing that very “few hearers attended in 1814 “and 1815, and considering that no good could result to the neighbourhood from keeping the place open upon such terms, also that “many of the neighbours were desirous of a change, resolved, when “Mr. Holmes had completed his engagement with Mr. Spear, to “allow him to preach in the old meeting-house. An Unitarian “minister was at the same time invited to preach ; and when the

“opinions of the hearers were taken, a considerable majority, both
“of them and the trustees appeared to be in favour of Mr. Holmes,
“who, in consequence became the minister, the majority of the
“Unitarian trustees assisting to instal him. The total amount of
“the endowment attached to the place at that time was 18*l.* a year,
“exclusive of the sum of 10*l.* annually received from Lady Hewley’s
“fund. But although the trustees of Partington old meeting-house
“had manifested such laudable liberality in favour of Mr. Holmes,
“he did not obtain an equally favourable reception at Wakefield,
“where the trustees of the said fund refused to continue the annual
“payment; and the congregation at Partington not being able to raise
“a sufficiency for his support, he was compelled to remove to another
“situation.”*

Mr. Holmes was succeeded by the Rev. CHARLES LOWNDES, who continued with the people about eight years. He displayed much zeal, and enjoyed the reward of success. “The plain but serious
“addresses of Mr. Lowndes have been so acceptable that the con-
“gregation has greatly increased; a church has been formed consisting
“of thirty members (January 1821); a house has been erected by
“the people for the minister, also a Sunday-school at the end of the
“chapel, and a new gallery over the school. Such have been the
“beneficial results of a fair, honest, and candid administration of a
“trust which, it will be confessed, must have originally had respect
“to the propagation of the sentiments usually considered and desig-
“nated orthodox, and which could not, without a dereliction of the
“plainest duty, have been administered, as has been the case in some
“other instances, with a perverse feeling of hostility to those very
“sentiments.”† Mr. Lowndes removed to Mobberley, and accepted the charge of the church at Gatley. The interest at Partington was fully kept up whilst he remained with the people. He was succeeded by Mr. STEWART, during whose time the congregation fell away. This was also the case with his successor Mr. FIELDING, who died in the village. The pastorate was then accepted by the Rev. C. T. SEVIER of Bowdon, in the year 1843. Unhappily there was no improvement in the attendance, the people having joined the Methodists in such numbers as to induce them to rebuild their chapel. In the year 1858 some of the Bowdon friends began to take an

* Congregational Magazine, vol. iv, page 48.

† *Ibid.*

interest in the place ; a new trust deed was made, but for the time little good could be done. In the spring of 1861 Mr. Sevier retired from the ministry. The trustees then gave an invitation to Mr. H. BOND to take the oversight of the place. He consented, and shortly afterwards took up his residence among the people. The value of a resident minister was speedily felt and appreciated by those who needed words of counsel or of comfort. The result was soon manifested by the congregation increasing to 80 in the morning, and 150 in the evening. Unhappily Mr. Bond became very ill, and has been obliged to remove to Manchester for medical advice. When he left Partington his people accompanied him with much sorrow for his affliction, and now earnestly hope for his recovery. During his absence they have erected a handsome organ, which was opened by J. D. Morell, Esq., M.A., LL.D., and since the opening they have made further improvements to the instrument. It is devoutly hoped that Mr. Bond may be restored, and that much good may yet be done in a place which has no little interest attached to it.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, BOWDON.

In the year 1803,* an excellent minister of Christ, the Rev. JAMES TURNER of Knutsford, began occasionally, travelling to Manchester, to pass through the parish of Bowdon. During these journeys it occurred to him that some measures might be adopted, and ought not to be delayed, for the introduction to Altrincham or the neighbourhood of the doctrines and government of Independent churches. The usefulness and propriety of this course appeared the more unquestionable on account of the frequency with which the members of churches in Manchester, even then, were observed to visit and reside in the district. Mr. Turner, fully possessed with his project, applied to an aged and poor widow of the name of Cox, a member of the Independent Church at Gatley, but resident in Altrincham, and obtained her permission to preach, at intervals, in her little thatched cottage near the Market Place. The humble building has long since disappeared, but there, with very slender encouragement, this self-denying servant of the gospel first regularly preached the truth professed by the denomination to which he belonged. It should,

* Church Book, Bowdon Downs Congregational Chapel.

however, be recorded that other excellent ministers pursuing a similar "labour of love" were also received into the house by this same poor woman. These efforts of Mr. Turner were afterwards discontinued, for lack of local sympathy and support, and some time appears to have elapsed before a zealous person from Manchester, named Whitworth, began to visit the district, with the like object in view, but with hardly more success, although the assistance of the Chester County Union had been enlisted for the benefit of the neighbourhood.

A few years again passed away before anything permanent or regular was attempted towards the establishment of Independency at Bowdon. But, owing to the liberality of some Christian friends, a little chapel at the foot of the Downs, formerly occupied by the followers of a clergyman who had seceded from the Church of England, was purchased 6th May 1839, for 465*l.* The cost of alteration, deed of settlement, &c., raised this amount to 588*l.* The Revs. Dr. Raffles of Liverpool, S. Luke of Chester, and J. Turner of Knutsford, preached at the dedication of the building on July 4th, 1839. In April 1840, the Rev. JOHN EARNSHAW became the first minister of the church—the first Christian society consisting of ten members. In 1844 the Rev. FLAVEL STENNER became the second minister; the first deacons were chosen in August of that year. Mr. Stenner subsequently resigned the charge, when it devolved on the Rev. JOHN WILKINSON, who, in May of the following year, "in the youth of his days," was summoned away by death.

The increase of the population, and the growing importance of the neighbourhood, having rendered needful a larger and more commodious place of worship, many generous friends aided the church in the erection of a NEW CHAPEL—the building being opened in June 1848.

In April 1849 the office of pastor was accepted by the Rev. HENRY CHRISTOPHERSON from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. During Mr. Christopherson's pastorate the church increased both in numbers and energy, it was therefore, with great regret, that the church and congregation learned from him that he had accepted the invitation to take the oversight of New College Chapel, London. Mr. Christopherson bade farewell to his people at Christmas 1856.

In May 1857 the Rev. H. T. ROBJOHNS, B.A., Western College, Plymouth, accepted the pastorate. It had long been felt that the old chapel at the foot of the Downs was most unsuitable as a Day and

Sunday-school, the accommodation being wholly inadequate to the growth of the population, and the room being badly ventilated, small, and without classrooms, it was therefore determined to build new schools. After great difficulty a site of land was secured, and in January 1861 the present schools were opened, free of debt. Their total cost was 2,600*l.* In March of the same year Mr. Robjohns resigned his charge, having accepted a call to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. During Mr. Robjohns' pastorate the church began an evangelistic movement in the neighbourhood, which has borne good fruit. Mr. Robjohns also took considerable interest in the Sunday-schools, and the establishment of Bible classes. In the autumn of the year the choice of the church was unanimously in favour of the Rev. A. J. MORRIS of Holloway, who accepted the invitation. The church determined to welcome Mr. Morris by clearing off the debts on the chapel and school, which was done; the deeds of those buildings are now deposited in the Lancashire College. The church aids the preaching at Lymm, Partington, Hey Head, and Mobberley, all which stations will be noticed in their place. The new schools were at first opened for preaching, but were afterwards closed when the Rev. A. Dewar opened the old chapel at the foot of the Downs, where there is a good congregation and the chapel is Independent.

The Unitarians have a chapel in Shaw's Lane, which was opened in 1814. The Rev. W. JEVONS, from the Manchester College, York, was minister here from 1816 to 1819, when he was followed by the Rev. CHARLES WALLACE, who, while minister of Ringway, officiated here also.

RINGWAY.

(By the Rev. S. ELLIS.)

THIS place, called variously Rinhay, Ringay, Ringey, and Ringway, is a hamlet in the parish of Bowdon, on the road between Wilmslow and Altrincham, at nearly an equal distance from each of them. Little is on record respecting the chapel there; but there are circumstances which render its early history peculiarly interesting. There was formerly an inscription in it of the year 1515, in which prayers were desired for the soul of the Earl of Derby. It is also said that there is a bell there with the letters G. B. upon it, and the date 1627. These

are supposed to be the initials of Sir George Booth, an ancestor of the Sir George who was created Baron Delamere at the coronation of Charles the Second, and of whose predilections in favour of Presbyterianism there is abundant proof. But the interest we feel in Ringway Chapel centres in its Nonconformist associations. In this view it has a history of its own. Sir Peter Leycester, in his *Antiquities of Cheshire*, thus describes it:—"There is a hamlet in Hale called Ringey, wherein " is situated a chappel of ease, called Ringey Chappel, within the " parish of Bowdon, of which I have little to say, save that it was " much frequented in the late war by schismatical ministers, and, as " it were, a receptacle for Nonconformists; in which dissolute times " every pragmatistical, illiterate person, as the humour served him, stepp'd " into the pulpit without any lawful calling thereunto, or licence of " authority."

The ministrations of the Nonconformists, however, did not terminate with the "dissolute times" of the Civil war. The changes which affected many churches and chapels at the Restoration, and many more after the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity, seem not to have reached Ringway. Bishop Gastrell describes it in these words: " Ringhay, a hamlet in Hale township, certified that nothing belongs " to it now (1722), and a long time since in the hands of the Dissenters, " who have set up pews and galleries in it, and made an additional " building to it four yards square. But several clergymen have per- " formed Divine service in it since the Restoration, particularly Mr. " Yates of Lymn, now living, 1722." He also adds, "*Brereton*, " *minister, anno 1662.*" There is hardly room for a doubt that this was the Rev. JOHN BRERETON, who in 1660 was removed from the church at Wilmslow. How long he continued at Ringway, and who were his immediate successors, we cannot learn. But the place remained in the possession of the Dissenters for about sixty years after the recorded date of his ministry there. From the restraints so generally imposed on conscience, the congregation there happily continued free. During that protracted period it had flourished. The chapel had proved too small, and additional accommodation had been provided. These were signs of prosperity, which, according to the testimony of Bishop Gastrell, had appeared while the place was in the hands of the Dissenters.

The writer of a history of Hale and Altrincham chapels* states

* Christian Reformer for 1852, page 296.

that, among the MSS. belonging to Hale Chapel, there is a book containing a list of subscriptions towards the maintenance of the minister at Ringway, in the year 1719-20. The subscribers are said to have been persons ordinarily composing the congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Ringway Chapel, or claiming to have a right of seats therein. According to the original list, it appears that "there were at that time 107 subscribers, and that one quarter's contributions amounted to 5*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* The subscribers extended over several rural townships,—Hale, Mobberley, Ashley, and Northern EtcHELLS are specified." There are two points of interest in this subscription. One is, the relative largeness of the number of subscribers. On the reasonable assumption that they were, for the most part, heads of families, and that there were many who worshipped with them whose circumstances did not elevate them to the subscription point, we must regard them as representing a numerous village congregation. The other is, the extensive ground over which they were scattered. Like the chapel at Dean Row, Ringway Chapel was crowded on each returning Sabbath by devout worshippers, many of whom came from a considerable distance. Almost every village and hamlet within a few miles of the place, and many a solitary homestead, sent their little bands of loving followers of Christ to swell the assembly.

The Rev. ROBERT MOSELEY was one of the ministers who formed the Cheshire Association in 1691. He signed their agreement as minister of Ringway Chapel. And that he was a hard worker may be inferred from the circumstance that he applied for advice to the ministers assembled at Knutsford, on a question arising from the multiplicity of his labours. Like most of the Nonconformist ministers of the day, he performed a large amount of home missionary work. He preached at various places, and the idea seems to have been entertained that each preaching station should be a little centre of church fellowship, at which the communicants residing in the neighbourhood might have the ordinance of the Lord's Supper administered to them. It was on this subject that he consulted the brethren, who advised him to administer it at one fixed place, and "to desire his friends to resort thither, that were in a capacity for it, on supper days." The Cheshire Minute Book contains the following notices of Ringway ministers:—On May 29th, 1692, "Mr. Robert Moseley's removal from Ringway Chapel to Mellor Chapel was

“agreed to, on the condition that Mr. WILLIAM DEARNILEY, or some other approved person, would be ready to take his place.” On the 28th of June, “Ringhay case was further considered. Advice sent to the people to testify their choice of Mr. Dearniley. And dissenters required to give in their reasons, if any, thereto the next general meeting. A copy of the letter followeth:—

At our meeting at Macclesfield, in pursuit of what was formerly advised in reference to Ringhay Chapell, it is now further advised that forasmuch as the congregation there hath had tryal of Mr. Dearniley five Lord's Days, and it is presumed that they do generally consent to choose him for their pastor instead of Mr. R. Moseley. We therefore further advise that they give their hands to sign their consent, and that this be signified to the ministers at their next meeting. If any dissent, we desire they will shew their reasons, and we will endeavour to give them satisfaction.

“The above advice was consented to by the two ministers concerned.” Another minute under the date August 17th, 1692, states:—“According to advice given to the people at Ringhay, the preceding meeting, to testify the choice of Mr. Dearniley for their pastor, the letter to them was sent back with fifty hands affixed to it. And all the ministers were satisfied of the clearness of his call to that people.” These minutes shew the anxious care with which the ministers of that day watched over the interests of the Dissenting congregations, and provided, by their judicious counsel, for the continuance of the ministry among them.

Mr. Dearniley was ordained at Knutsford, September 27th, 1692. His thesis was, “*An obedientia Christi tollat Christianam obedientiam.*” Mr. Matthew Henry was present, and has recorded it as a good day. “The candidates,” he says, “gave good satisfaction; blessed be God for the rising generation, the Lord double his Spirit upon them.” But Mr. Dearniley's ministry was of brief duration. He died May 28th, 1701. Under that date the following entry occurs:—“Dyed Mr. W. Dearniley, minister of Ringey, a person of great worth. He was one of very good natural parts, and a considerable scholar, of sober and moderate principles, and a blameless and exemplary conversation. Polite and accurate in his composures and performances, but extraordinary for his humility, modesty, and fidelity in friendship. He chose two texts to be preached on after his decease, one at his funeral, Jeremiah xxiii. 6, *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness*; the other, the Lord's Day after to his

“people, Hebrews xiii. 1, *Let brotherly love continue.*” In addition to this testimony to Mr. Dearniley’s character by the associated brethren, Mr. Tong remarks that he was “greatly lamented by all that knew “how judicious, how humble, how serious, and how acceptable a “minister he was; his memory is fresh and precious in those parts to “this day.”*

Mr. Dearniley’s successor was the Rev. NICHOLAS WATERHOUSE. He was a young man and had preached for Mr. Dearniley during his sickness. He was ordained at Warrington, June 16th, 1702. Mr. Henry assisted at his ordination, and remarks in his diary: “I took “the confession and vows, and Mr. Risley concluded with a serious “exhortation; the work of the day was done to general satisfaction.”

Mr. Waterhouse continued to officiate till his death in 1724. During his ministry proof was given that the old spirit of persecution which had inflicted such grievous wrongs on the Nonconformists in the previous century was not dead. The fostering influence of the Crewes and the Booths, two families belonging to the county, whose Presbyterian principles at that time were indisputable, had no doubt been exerted in favour of this retired hamlet and of its Nonconformist congregation. They were suffered to hold the chapel in peace for more than half a century. At length this privilege, which they so much valued, was withdrawn. Mr. Waterhouse was ejected from the pulpit, and the congregation, who had no taste for the rites and ceremonies now rendered compulsory, were obliged to worship God elsewhere.

The tradition in the neighbourhood that Mr. Waterhouse was *forcibly* ejected is supported by satisfactory evidence. The writer of the article in the *Christian Reformer*, to which we have before referred, the late Rev. Charles Wallace of Hale, was at considerable pains to verify this tradition, and we give the substance of it almost in his own words. In 1721, John Crewe, Esq., of Crewe Hall, who inherited the lordship of Ringway, having outgrown the ancient predilections of his family for the Nonconformists, signified his intention of giving up the chapel to the Established Church. With this account a note by Canon Raines to Bishop Gastrell’s notice of Ringway is in substantial agreement. He says that the chapel was rebuilt and consecrated in 1720, shortly after the death of a

* Life of Matthew Henry, page 259.

female of the Crewe family who had been a Presbyterian and possessed the donative. Mr. Ashton of Ashley Hall, who is reputed to have been a man of dissolute morals, presuming on Mr. Crewe's approval of his proceedings, determined to interrupt the peace which the congregation at Ringway had so long enjoyed. One Sabbath morning Mr. Ashton went to the chapel, followed by a number of servants. Advancing up to the pulpit, he seized Mr. Waterhouse by the collar, dragged him down, turned him and the congregation out of the chapel and locked the doors. But this forcible ejection was not the final closing of the chapel against the Dissenters. During the following week they managed to regain possession of the building, and occupied it until the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty granted an augmentation, and made it an Episcopal chapel, by statute under George I. The appointment of a minister licensed by the bishop followed as a thing of course.

And now the time had come when the people must submit to what they felt to be a wrong. The new minister did not imitate Mr. Ashton in his employment of physical force. On the Sabbath when he first arrived to claim the pulpit, the congregation had assembled and the service begun. He desired them to proceed, and took his seat among them as a hearer. But in the afternoon the clergyman took formal possession of it, and they peaceably withdrew. Mr. Waterhouse, after his expulsion from Ringway Chapel, preached for some time in a barn at the Ashes Farm, in the immediate neighbourhood. But this was only a temporary expedient. A new meeting-house was erected at HALE, a mile and a half from Ringway Chapel, and nearer Bowdon.

HALE CHAPEL was opened in 1724, and Mr. Waterhouse and his friends removed to it. But his work was nearly done. He saw the people of his charge settled in their new religious abode, and in the following year he rested from his labours, and was buried in Bowdon Churchyard. Although the ministerial course of Mr. Waterhouse was stormy, it was not unsuccessful. At Ringway in 1715 he had four hundred hearers, twenty-seven of whom were gentlemen.

The next minister of Hale Chapel was the Rev. RATCLIFFE SCHOLEFIELD, who had previously been settled at Whitworth in Lancashire. His ministry at Hale was not very protracted, for in 1728 the Rev. SILAS SIDEBOTTOM was the pastor of the people, and continued to be so until his death. In the minutes of the Cheshire

Association, Mr. Sidebottom is frequently mentioned between the years 1706 and 1745. It is therein recorded that he "was ordained "at Knutsford, August 6th, 1706." Mr. Timothy Jollie was Mr. Sidebottom's tutor. He is mentioned as the minister of Wheelock in 1707, and he appears to have remained there until he removed to Hale. He took an active part in the business of the association. He preached before the Classis at Knutsford, May 5th, 1713, from 2 Corinthians v. 20. He was three times appointed moderator, and assisted at ordinations. In May 1719 he was one of the examiners of Mr. Braddock of Nantwich. At Mr. Thomas Woodcock's ordination at Knutsford, May 8th, 1721, he gave the exhortation from Numbers xxvii. 18, 19. He also gave the charge at Mr. Bond's ordination at Wheelock, October 27th, 1731. He died in 1747, and was buried in Brook-street Chapel, Knutsford, where his tombstone bears the following inscription:—"The Rev^d. Silas Sidebottom, V.D.M. "Interred Sept^r. 13th, 1747. Æ. 66." Judging from the memorials of him which remain, he must have been an active and diligent minister, who loved his work and was not given to change. He divided the forty years of his public ministry between Wheelock and Hale. There is one fact connected with his labours in the latter place which reflects honour on his memory. He founded a Day-school in the township, purchased land, and caused a schoolhouse to be erected upon it, and conveyed it to the trustees of Hale Chapel in 1740.

Mr. Sidebottom was succeeded by the Rev. HUGH WORTHINGTON, Junr., son of the Rev. Hugh Worthington of Dean Row, who is said to have been a preacher of popular talents. He ceased to be the minister of Hale Chapel in 1767, owing probably to the failure of health. The writer before referred to, had access to the private diary of Mr. John Worthington of Outwood, and found in it the following entry:—"August 1st, 1767. At Hale, to make Mr. "Worthington's will." This was about the time when he relinquished his connexion with Hale Chapel. Having removed first to Morley and then to Wilmslow, he died at the latter place, May 31st, 1773. If we may judge from the epitaph on his tombstone, which by some unaccountable mistake gives the date of his decease incorrectly, he must have been a man of many afflictions:—"Rev. Hugh Worthington "succeeded his father as minister of Dean Row in 1735, and, after "conflicting with many difficulties in the world, peaceably left it, "October 1st, 1773, aged 62."

After Mr. Worthington's resignation, the pulpit was supplied, in part at least, from the Dissenting Academy at Warrington. Mr. Ralph Harrison, a student from that institution, is mentioned as one of the occasional preachers. He was then a very young man, and became subsequently the minister of Cross-street Chapel, Manchester. From the general character of the academy from which the people at Hale derived their supplies, we may fairly infer that at that time they had ceased to entertain the doctrinal views of their Nonconformist forefathers. The Warrington Academy of that day was established in 1757. One of its first tutors was Dr. Taylor, the learned author of the Hebrew Concordance, who had abandoned the doctrine of Christ's deity and atonement. "John Seddon supplied Dr. Taylor's place as "resident classical tutor at the academy, till death removed him in "1769. He was equally distinguished for talents and for departure "from the principles of the first Dissenters; for he was zealous not "only for heterodoxy, but for the introduction of a liturgy into the "Dissenting worship."* Dr. Aikin, Dr. Joseph Priestley, and Dr. William Enfield were successively tutors. The academy was dissolved in 1783.

At length, after an interval of two years, the people at Hale Chapel again secured the services of a settled minister, the Rev. ROBERT HARROP, who had been educated at Daventry. He had first been minister of the chapels at Mill Brow and Greenacres near Oldham. He removed to Hale in 1769, and retained the pastorate during forty-six years. For thirty-seven years he held the chapel of Cross-street, Cheshire, together with that of Hale. In 1816 he resigned his charge, being then seventy years old. His life was prolonged twenty-one years after his resignation, and he finished his earthly course at the advanced age of ninety-one. A short time before Mr. Harrop retired from the ministry, he had relinquished his connexion with Cross-street, and had taken charge of a congregation at Altrincham conjointly with that of Hale. In 1816, the Rev. WILLIAM JEVONS, from the Dissenting College at York, succeeded Mr. Harrop as minister at both places. He remained until 1819, and had for his successor the Rev. CHARLES WALLACE, who resigned the charge on account of broken health in 1856, and died in the same year. The Rev. JAMES WHITEHEAD was then minister for a short time, and was followed by the Rev. Mr. GAMMEL. The Rev. A. CREARY has recently become the pastor.

* Bogue and Bennett's History of Dissenters, vol. iv., page 284.

At HEY HEAD, a village in the immediate neighbourhood of Ringway, the Independents have erected a commodious SCHOOLROOM, which was opened in November 1862, and where Sunday services are regularly held.

NORTHWICH.

(By the Rev. JAMES JOHNS, B.A.)

THE plain unsightly meeting-houses that are to be found in many English towns, approached by narrow streets, shut in by a mass of houses, and possessing none of those lines of beauty and grandeur that so often delight us in the buildings raised for the worship of God by our Catholic ancestors, are after all not without interest. Their very form is suggestive. It reminds us that their builders were solid, sturdy men, who could, whatever else they failed in, make a bold stand against the storms that raged about them. Round these old walls, too, float stories that cannot be forgotten without loss to the history of the church. Men have suffered on behalf of the principles, as a witness to which those chapels were built, and many a gentle life throws over them its rich soft light. It was, therefore, an exceedingly happy thought that we in Cheshire should gather together the histories of such places in our county, and with them raise a monument to the fathers into whose labours we have entered. The stone now brought may not be hewn and polished, and yet no doubt it has its place.

Northwich lies in the central part of Cheshire, and is built upon the banks of the River Weaver, at the extremity of the beautiful Vale Royal. It is one of the chief places for the production of salt, which is carried down the river to Liverpool in small vessels. About 347,000 tons are yearly sent from the salt works. The volumes of smoke that pour out from the chimneys connected with the works, and the stir of life upon the river, down which, in the year 1860-1, more than 800,000 tons of salt were carried, give it an air of some importance. The tottering appearance of a large number of the houses, however, caused by the subsidence of the ground, gives it no less an air of wretchedness. Rich pasture land spreads in all directions round the town, which is thus in the midst of the cheese

district. Presuming that our description of the place is sufficient to give it substantiality to the reader's mind, let us pass at once to the immediate purpose of the paper.

It appears that there were some people at Northwich inclined to Puritan doctrines as early as the year 1640, for Adam Martindale tells us that, before leaving Gorton, he had, amongst others, an invitation to settle down at Northwich. Whether this invitation refers to the Parish Church or not we cannot tell. If it does we may expect to find that the minister who officiated at the church at the Restoration leaned to the side of the Nonconformists. There are one or two passages in Adam Martindale's Diary that would lead us to suppose this was the fact. He tells us, for instance, that the minister of the church (Mr. Earle) befriended him at the sessions. The circumstances were as follows:—A magistrate in the neighbourhood sent forth a paper called a precept, in which all religious meetings "in any place whatever but in publick parish churches and chappells appointed for the same" were prohibited. All ministers were required to read this precept before the congregation. The minister of Rostherne, thinking that the magistrate's precept went further than the prohibition of the King, refused to do so, and it was thereupon determined to serve him with a warrant to appear at the Northwich sessions. The warrant was misconveyed, and though Mr. Martindale repaired to Northwich on hearing that he was to appear before the magistrates, he left the town again before his case was brought up, knowing that they could not legally examine him whilst the warrant had not been served. "The day following," he says, "when it grew late and no constable nor returned warrant yet appeared, the businesse was brought on against me with a great deal of furie: voted an high contempt, and *Mr. Earle, the minister of that place*, interposing a few words on my behalfe to sweeten them, had like to have been committed for his labours, as he soone after writ to me."* Later on, and after the great gulf had been made that separated Conformists and Nonconformists, the same friendly feeling existed between the minister of Witton and the ejected of Rostherne, as will appear by what follows. Speaking of his son, Adam Martindale writes, "About August 1679, the minister of Northwich writ to him to supply his place for a day, in order, as he said, to gain interest there in relation

* Adam Martindale's Autobiography, page 147.

“ to the schoole,* having a master at it that neither gave nor tooke control, and was lately begun to preach, with intent to leave it as “ was thought.”†

These notices shew that the preaching at the Parish Church was not very different from the preaching of the Nonconformists. Under such preaching some of the hearers would be trained to value gospel truth; and would, did any change of ministers bring with it a change of doctrine, be likely to make some efforts to secure a minister more in accordance with their own views.

Whether the Nonconformist congregation in this town actually took its rise from such an event no one can say. It is, perhaps, more probable that it entered in through another door. Surrounded as the town was by Nonconformist influence; lying as it did in a direct line between Chester and Knutsford—those two points from which Nonconformist light streamed with so rich a glory in the early part of the last century—we can hardly believe that some rays at least would not fall upon it. It was within an hour's ride, too, of the evangelist Machin. The position of the town was thus favourable. Yet the references to it in the diaries of the Nonconformists are few and unimportant. Like the spot of ground that lies midway between two lamps, the light seems to have been feebler here than elsewhere. At what time preaching was first commenced here by Nonconformists I cannot tell. The first notice of such occurs in an entry in the Minute Book of the Cheshire Classis for August 6th, 1700. “ At a meeting “ at Knutsford, it was then agreed also that the Reformation lecture “ should be carried on. Accordingly Gamaliel Jones of Chadkirk “ was appointed to preach at Northwich on Wednesday the 9th of “ October.” The first minister was Mr. PARTINGTON. He appears to have begun his ministry when there was no chapel, for, whilst one entry in the book before noticed informs us that “ at a meeting of the “ ministers at Knutsford, held August 9th, 1720, Mr. John Partington

* It may interest some to know that the mastership of Witton School was obtained by the younger Martindale. He entered upon his duties at Michaelmas 1679, and for a time there was much stir of life in the school. “ His scholars came “ well on, tablers began to come to towne, and divers more (whereof some were “ persons of quality) were about to send him their children.” Suddenly all was dashed. In 1680 a deadly fever raged in the town, and before one year had passed the dwellers in Witton stood about their doors, watching the master's funeral as it left the town, attended by a goodly number of gentlemen, and proceeded to Ro.therne.

† Martindale's Autobiography, page 216.

“ was examined, approved, and allowed to preach as a candidate,” another, and later entry, dated May 2nd, 1721, speaks of the desire of certain persons to have a chapel built at Northwich. “ Whereas “ some persons from Northwich applied to us for our assistance “ towards the building of a meeting-house there, we promised to “ make collections for them, on, at, or before our next meeting in “ August.” The chapel thus projected was built. Bishop Gastrell, who wrote about the year 1720, notices it in his *Notitia Cestriensis*. Mr. Partington appears to have been a man of ability. He was ordained at Knutsford on the 4th September 1722, having, on the previous evening, read a paper on the question, *Quis sensus sit dicti Apostoli Pauli: “ justificamur fide, sine operibus legis?”* There was a large gathering of ministers, and a Northwich Congregationalist strolling into the quaint old chapel at Knutsford may think with pleasure of that ordination service a hundred and forty years ago.

It was not long before the infant church was called to experience the changes that come upon Christian communities. Two years had scarcely passed from the time of his ordination when the first pastor removed to Coventry. Later on in his life he seems to have ministered in London, as will appear from the following entry in the Cheshire Minute Book. “ September 4th, 1744. Ministers met at “ Knutsford. Among those present Mr. Partington from London. “ Mr. Partington preacht from ix. Matthew, first part of 36th verse, “ and thanks of the brethren for his good sermon.” After Mr. Partington, came Mr. TURNER of Rivington, Lancashire. He stayed here for many years, there being reason to believe that he was still the pastor of the church in 1755. I do not think his ministry could have been greatly valued, for in the year 1759 it was declared, in a correspondence between Mr. R. Eaton of Liverpool and Mr. T. Norbury, one of the trustees of the chapel, “ that the meeting at Northwich “ is broken up.” And now came an interval of desolation. The chapel remained, but the service of God within its walls was silenced. We may hope that some faithful hearts at least mourned in solitude over the ruin. Three years passed on and still the doors were unopened. But, in 1762, certain persons who laboured in connection with John Wesley came with the message of mercy to the townspeople of Northwich. As was natural, they found their way to the Presbyterian Chapel, led thither, perhaps, by some of the old members, and once more the place became a house of prayer and exhortation. But

the zeal of these servants of God had overstept their prudence. The trustees of the chapel had not been consulted, and they at once determined upon taking legal proceedings to recover the chapel. Happily the disagreement was settled by an offer made by a gentleman at Little Leigh, named Daniel Barker. An annual rental of 6*l.* was to be paid for a lease of the chapel for eleven years; the lease to be avoidable upon payment of 20*l.*, "in case a minister of the " Presbyterian persuasion shall, before the expiration of the term, be " fixed upon and meet with proper encouragement to preach in the " chapel." A fresh difficulty now arose. Four miles from Northwich, at Allostock, or more properly Rudheath, there was a small Presbyterian chapel now held by the Unitarians of Knutsford. The minister of this chapel now commenced preaching at the Northwich Chapel, and his friends claimed its use for him. This led to further vexatious dispute, the end of which was that both parties retired from the building, and it was once more closed. Thus it remained till the end of the year 1765, or the beginning of 1766, when the Rev. J. GREEN became the minister. He continued at Northwich till 1784. In the spring of that year a Mr. DAVIES of Manchester was chosen as pastor. For a short time Mr. Davies excited attention, but his character not proving good, he was obliged to leave after little more than a year's stay. In 1786 Mr. JARVIS was elected to the pastorate, and remained here until 1794, when he went to Chorley in Lancashire.

Up to this time our history has been little better than a genealogical table. The ministers whose names have been recorded may have been men of worth, but, if they were so, the memory of that worth has passed away. We now come upon a more important period. Those who are acquainted with the history of the Dissenting interest in Cheshire are aware that, amongst the men who told most powerfully in its favour toward the close of the last century, a high place is due to the Rev.—or as he was usually called—Captain Scott. This gentleman, seeing the destitute condition of the county in spiritual things, applied to the Dissenting College at Northowram for a preacher to labour in Cheshire. There had just entered that college a young man of ardent disposition, who had been accustomed to an active life, and no doubt felt the confinement of a college to be out of harmony with his habits. To him the application was made, and by him it was gladly accepted. A year was spent in visiting different parts of the county. Macclesfield, Nantwich, Northwich, and other

places were thus visited, and the result was that in 1795 Mr. JOB WILSON came to Northwich with the intention of making it his home. He had come to no easy place. The chapel at which he was to preach was small and inconvenient. The town was at that time often visited with floods, the action of which on the chapel had very much injured it. A flight of steps had to be ascended to reach it. The people who worshipped there were few and poor; and so high did prejudice against the flock run at that time that when the shepherd passed along the streets few persons above the rank of pauper would deign to meet him. They crossed to the other side. It is not difficult to see how all this came about. We have seen in our rapid sketch that there had been no small amount of wrangling at the chapel doors; and that one of the ministers had not been careful to keep his garments unspotted from the world. The sure reward of all this came in the dislike felt by the people of the town to the congregation and the minister. From such a position many men—perhaps most men—would have retired. But so did not Mr. Wilson. Prayerfully and earnestly he began his work. Every Sunday saw him, for many years, travelling to Middlewich to preach after the service in his own chapel. In October 1797, he was ordained, the ministers present being Mr. Smith of Leek, Mr. Reece of Sheffield, Mr. Lewis of Wrexham, Mr. Scott of Matlock, Mr. Holmes of Holcome, and Mr. Roby of Manchester. Years passed on and the improvement was but small, as we may judge from the following passage in one of his letters to a friend:—"I was here twelve years before the people "at Northwich raised twenty pounds a year for everything."

At different times the work of a minister is different. In our day the springs of eternal life gush up on every side of us, and no villager in our neighbourhood need go far to drink of them. In the Church of England evangelical religion has in recent years greatly revived, so that in many parish churches the gospel is now preached in all its purity. The earnest sons of Wesley, belonging to different branches of the great Methodist body, have covered the county—at least this part of it—with a multitude of chapels; and our own communion has more or less hold on many of the larger towns. For a minister to occupy much of his time now in evangelistic work, unless he has a very special gift for such work, would plainly be superfluous. In Mr. Wilson's day the state of things was far different. Then the county was in dense darkness. Suiting his labours to the circumstances about

him, Mr. Wilson *went about* doing good. How earnest and laborious he was in this work the following extract from his diary will show:—

“ During the following three months I preached seventy-five sermons, and travelled about nine hundred miles, mostly on foot. August 21st, Northwich; 23rd and 24th, Tatenhall; 25th, Northwich; 26th, Over; 28th, home, and two following Sabbaths. September 5th, Sandbach; 6th, Schollow Green; 7th, Brook House Green; 8th, Over; 11th, home; 13th, Knutsford; 15th, home; 18th, Congleton; 19th, Sandbach; 20th, Schollow Green; 21st, Brook House Green; 22nd, Over; 25th, home. Week following preached at Knutsford, Pick Mere, and Northwich, on week days, and at Tatenhall on the Sabbath, three sermons. October 3rd, Bosley; 4th, Yew Tree; 5th, Tatenhall; 6th, Over; 7th, New Church; 9th (Sabbath), three times at home; 13th, Goose Tree; 16th, Leek; 17th, Schollow Green; 18th, Brook House Green; 19th, Sandbach; 20th, Over; 21st, New Church. This was my ordinary course for several years, and I have great reason to be thankful to God for the health and strength it pleased Him to grant to such an unworthy Rambler. I often long to have again some of those warm seasons. We certainly were at some of them favoured with times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.”

In 1806, things had so far improved at Northwich that Mr. Wilson entered on the labours connected with building a new chapel. Adjoining premises were purchased, by which the site was extended. No Congregational Chapel Building Society, nor Bicentenary Fund, existed then, and the penny post had not as yet made it easy to turn upon the country a flood of letters asking for, at least, six stamps in return. So Mr. Wilson had to travel far and wide, and expose himself to much vexation in order to procure the money. Whether it was gathered before the chapel was opened I cannot tell, but on the 25th of September 1806, the new chapel was opened, having been made to seat some three hundred persons. It was at that opening that the idea of a County Union was first suggested. And now the current had set in. Years of patient working and waiting had made Mr. Wilson a power in the town. The chapel was twice enlarged; first by the addition of a front, and afterwards by two side galleries. The people who came, too, were somewhat better able to bear the expenses necessary in a place of worship. We have seen that, for the first twelve years, they could scarcely raise for everything 20*l.* a

year. In a later period he records that, besides what they had contributed to his own support, they had raised in one year “ 10*l.* for “ books for the school, 12*l.* for lighting and cleaning the chapel and “ the school, and 52*l.* for the County Union and Missionary Society, “ making a total of 74*l.*” The prosperity continued. A great gathering into the church at one time, so far as I can ascertain, there never was. But increase there was, and no doubt much of the seed did not come up till the sower had passed away. That passing away came at last. In London, June 1838, there was great pomp and joy, for Queen Victoria was being crowned ; in Northwich the joy of loyal subjects was dashed with no little sorrow, for Job Wilson had breathed his last. In heaven there was gladness among the angels, and joy in the presence of the Father for the head that had grown grey in loving service was being crowned by the Master's own hand.

A great many of the tradesmen of the town attended Mr. Wilson's funeral. The resident clergymen joined in the procession, and one rector came some distance to show his respect for the deceased minister. His body was laid to rest in the chapel, and a tablet was afterwards placed in the chapel bearing the following inscription:—

“ Sacred to the memory of the Reverend Job Wilson, for the “ period of forty-one years the beloved and honoured pastor of this “ church. A man of primitive simplicity and apostolic zeal, of un- “ blemished reputation and unwearied benevolence. He lived, not “ for himself, but for the glory of God and the best interests of his “ fellow men. Of his persevering and successful labours this edifice, “ erected through his instrumentality, is a lasting monument ; whilst, “ not in this place only, but throughout the whole of the surrounding “ district, he has left behind him a fragrant name and a blessed “ memory. He was born at Sowerby in Yorkshire, February 16th, “ 1765, and entered into his rest June 28th, 1838.”

When the present chapel was built, the remains of Mr. Wilson were removed into it, as was also the tablet. The church, which when first formed by him in 1797 comprised twelve members, numbered at his death forty-two.

In 1839, the Rev. WILLIAM LAMB was chosen to succeed Mr. Wilson. Many persons were added to the church during his ministry, which was terminated by his acceptance of an invitation to Wakefield in 1842. He was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN HARRISON. In 1849 another change took place, and the Rev. D. G. WATT, M.A., became

the pastor of the church. In Mr. Watt's time it was deemed desirable to build a new chapel, on account of the increasing noise by which worship in the old chapel was interrupted. A suitable site having been obtained, the foundation stone was laid in October 1852, by Thomas Barnes, Esq., M.P., and the chapel, seating 320, was opened on the 8th June 1853. The cost of the building, which, together with expenses incurred by the alterations and repairs that have been made necessary by the sinking of the ground, amounted to more than 2,000*l.*, has been entirely paid off. Besides the chapel, the church still possesses the old schoolroom (the chapel itself having been sold), in which a Sabbath-school is conducted, and a building is rented at the upper end of the town, where a second school is carried on. An invitation to Dickson Green, near Farnworth, occasioned the resignation by Mr. Watt of his pastorate at Northwich. He left in 1860, carrying with him the esteem and affection of all the people; and was succeeded by the present minister, the Rev. James Johns, B.A., in June 1861. *Establish Thou O Lord the work of our hands, yea the work of our hands establish Thou it.*

GREAT BUDWORTH.

(*By the Rev. JAMES JOHNS, B.A.*)

THE district lying on either side of the straight line that joins Northwich and Warrington is all included, till within a mile of Warrington, in the parish of Great Budworth, which is accordingly some fifteen miles long. The width varies, but at many points is not less than five miles across. So large a parish makes many references to Great Budworth indistinct. The village itself lies to the north of Northwich, at about three miles distance. It is an old-fashioned place of the quietest kind possible, reached by a very steep road. The church, which is dedicated to All Saints, and is a fine Gothic structure built of stone, stands at the top of the village.

The vicars of Great Budworth, during the seventeenth century, were strong Puritans. Of these the first was Mr. EATON, who became vicar in the year 1604. The influence of his family in the cause of Puritanism was great and long-continued. The editor of Adam Martindale's Life, in speaking of them, says, "The Eatons were an old " Puritanical family in this neighbourhood, and some of them still

“remain.” Calamy enumerates six of that name as ministers ejected by the Bartholomew Act. Two of them resided in Lancashire and Cheshire, and one of them, Samuel (of Dukinfield and Stockport, a Congregationalist), was the son of Mr. Richard Eaton, vicar of Great Budworth. Ormerod tells us that the Eatons possessed property in this parish for several centuries.

On the death of Mr. Richard Eaton, in 1615, the Rev. JOHN LEY was appointed. Though born in Warwick, this gentleman was descended from the Leys of Cheshire. He became a student of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1601. He was presented by the dean and canons of Christ Church to the vicarage of Great Budworth (according to Ormerod in 1616), and continued there for several years a constant preacher. He was afterwards prebendary of the Cathedral Church at Chester, sub-dean thereof, and weekly lecturer at S. Peter's Church, Chester. He was once or twice elected as clerk of the convocation of clergy. Mr. Ley was always inclined to Puritanism, and when the struggle between the King and his Parliament commenced, in 1641, he sided with the Presbyterians, and took the Covenant. He carried into his new sphere all the energy and learning that had won for him so many honours as a clergyman of the Church of England, and they were rewarded with fresh distinctions. He was elected a member of the Assembly of Divines, and examiner in Latin to that assembly; rector of Ashfield in Cheshire, and, for a time, of Astbury in the same county; chairman of the Committee for the Examination of Ministers, and of the Committee for Printing; one of the ordainers of ministers according to the Presbyterian way, &c. In 1645 he became president of Sion College, and was minister successively of the parishes of Brightwell near Wallingford, Solyhull in Warwickshire, and Sutton Colfield in the same county.

Amid all these changes and engagements Mr. Ley found time for the abundant employment of his pen, as will be seen from the list of his published works given below.*

**An Apology in Defence of the Geneva Notes on the Bible*. This work was submitted to the judgment of Archbishop Usher, who greatly approved of it. Wood says that it was publicly discussed and severely handled by Dr. Howson, in S. Mary's Church, Oxford.—*Pattern of Piety; or, Religious Life and Death of Mrs. Ratcliff, Widow, and Citizen of Chester*. Lond. 1640, 8vo. Several sermons, as (1) Sermon on Ruth iii. 11. Lond. 1640. (2) *A Monitor of Mortality*. Lond. 1643, 4to. This consists of two funeral sermons, one on the death of Job Archer, son and heir of Sir Simon Archer of Warwickshire, Knight, the other on the death of Mrs. Harper

The list shows Mr. Ley to have been a friend of Archbishop Usher, and the fact that he was elected preacher on one occasion to the House of Parliament is a proof of his ability. So untiring and able a man must have done much to establish the parishioners of

of Chester, and her daughter. The texts of these sermons are James iv. 14. Gen. xlv. 3. (3) *Fury of War and Folly of Sin*. Lond. 1643, 4to. This was a fast sermon preached before the House of Commons. The text was Jer. iv. 21, 22. (4) *Sunday a Sabbath; or, a Preparative Discourse for Discussion of Sabbath Doubts*. Lond. 1641, 4to. In this work he was assisted by the MSS. and advice of Archbishop Usher.—*The Christian Sabbath Maintained*; being an answer to a book of Dr. Pocklington, styled *Sunday in Sabbath*.—A volume containing the three following works:—(1) *Defensive Doubts*; Hopes and Reasons for Refusal of the Oath imposed by the Sixth Canon of the Synod. Lond. 1641. (2) *Letter against Erecting an Altar*; written 29th June 1653, to John, Bishop of Chester. (3) *Case of Conscience concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*.—*Comparison of the Parliamentary Protestation with the late Canonical Oath and the Difference between them, as also the Opposition between the Doctrine of the Church of England and that of Rome*.—*A Discourse concerning Puritans*; a Vindication of those who unjustly Suffer by the mistake, abuse, and misapplication of that name, etc. 1641.—*Examination of John Saltmarsh's new Query*, and determination upon it, publicly to retard the establishment of the Presbyterian Government, etc. 1646.—Censure of what Mr. Saltmarsh hath produced, to the same purpose in his other and later books which he calleth *The Opening of Mr. Prynne's Vindication*.—Apologetical Narrative of the late Petition of the Common Council and Ministers of London to the Honourable Houses of Parliament, with a Justification of them from the Contumacy of the weekly pamphleteers.—*Light for Smoak*; or, a Clear and Distinct Reply to a Dark and Confused Answer in a book made and entitled *The Smoke in the Temple*, by John Saltmarsh, late preacher at Breasted in Kent, now revolted from his pastoral calling and charge, 1646. To this book is joined *Novella Mastix*; or, a Scourge for a Scurrilous Newsmonger, in answer to the Ignorant and Malevolent Aspersion cast upon that Reverend and learned divine Mr. John Ley, by the writer of a pamphlet called *The Perfect Passages*.—*An After-reckoning with Mr. Saltmarsh*; or, an Appeal to the Impartial and Conscientious Reader, etc., against his last paper called *An End of our Controversy*; or, an Answer; a letter to Mr. Ley's large book. 1646.—Mr. Ley also wrote some elaborate annotations on the Pentateuch, and a learned defence of the legality of tithes for the maintenance of gospel ministers. 1653.—*General Reasons, grounded on Equity, Piety, Charity, and Justice, against the Payment of a Fifth Part to Sequestered Ministers' Wives and Children*. 1654.—An acquittance or discharge from Dr. E. H. (Edward Hyde), his demand of a fifth part of the rectory of Brightwell in Berkshire, pleaded as in a court of equity and conscience. 1654.—Letter to Dr. Edward Hyde in answer to one of his, occasioned by the late insurrection at Salisbury, 1655.—Debate concerning the English Liturgy, etc., between E. H., D.D., and John Ley, 1656.—*Discourse on Disputations*, chiefly concerning matters of religion. 1658.—*Animadversions on Two Printed Books*, by John Onely, a lay preacher. *Equitable and Necessary Considerations* for the Association of Arms throughout England and Wales.—*Petition* to the Lord Protector by divers, for the establishment of themselves and others their brethren, for their own lives, and the places to which they are admitted to officiate as Ministers of the Gospel, without institution and induction by the Bishops.—*Comparison* of the oath of the Sixth Canon of the last Synod of Bishops, and the protestation set forth by the Parliament in answer to a letter of Pedroel Harlow, Gent.—*Attestation* of the ministers of Cheshire to the testimony of the ministers of the province of London, against Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies.—*Exceptions*, many and just; being an answer to two injurious petitions against tythes.

Budworth, during his residence among them, in the doctrines of his predecessor. Who succeeded him does not appear. The next information we meet with that relates to the vicars of Great Budworth is to be found in Adam Martindale's biography. Speaking of a proposition upon pastoral visitation and instruction that had been agreed to at a meeting of the Cheshire ministers, he says, "The minister of Great Budworth and I had such vast parishes to go through, that multitudes of the people would be dead, in all probability, ere we could goe once over them. He, poor man, was soon excused by falling into such weakness as tooke him off all his worke, public and private, and soon after put an end to his dayes."* The minister here spoken of seems to have been the Rev. JOHN HULME, whose name is found amongst the signatures to the Attestation of the Cheshire Ministers, the Testimony of the Westminster Assembly, and to the Solemn League and Covenant, in 1648. It appears that he had to resign his cure for refusing the Engagement, for in 1650 the parish was without a minister, and in 1653 we find him settled at Brereton in Cheshire. His successor at Great Budworth was the Rev. ARTHUR FRANCIS, as appears by the following extract from the minute book of the Manchester Classis. "A letter to be sent to Mr. Marbury, with other of the gentlemen and parishioners of Great Budworth, to signify unto them that Mr. Arthur Francis hath been before us and desired ordination. Your answers concerning his free and fair calling to Budworth desired. Dec. 10th, 1650." The next minister was the Rev. JAMES LIVESEY, M.A. From the will of George Chetham, Esquire (nephew of Humphrey Chetham, the founder of Chetham's Hospital in Manchester), whose daughter Mr. Livesey married, he appears to have been vicar of Great Budworth in 1661. On the passing of the Act of Uniformity he did not conform, and was consequently ejected from the living. He continued, however, to reside in the parish, and in 1680 preached at the funeral of Martindale's son. Mr. Livesey published two voluminous funeral discourses, one upon the death of his wife's half-brother, Humphrey Chetham, and the other upon that of James Atherlow of Atherlow. He also wrote *Jehoshaphat's Charge to his Judges*, on 2 Chronicles xix. 6. London, 1657; 8vo. *Discourse*. London, 1660; 12mo. *An Apology for the Power and Liberty of the Spirit*; in three sermons on Micah ii. 7. 1674. London, 1684; 8vo.

* Martindale's Autobiography, page 122.

A line of such vicars must have done much to nourish the parishioners of Budworth with Puritan doctrine, and the natural result was that a goodly number of Nonconformists were eventually to be found within its borders. Evidence of this appears in the fact that on the 28th of June 1692, before the Cheshire ministers assembled at Knutsford, "the case of the people about Great Budworth" was presented, who were not in a capacity to maintain a gospel ministry; yet very desirous to have one fixed among them, and it was recommended to the charitable persons in London in the ensuing form:—

"We whose names are subscribed do believe that the congregation at Great Budworth is unable to maintain a minister, though the auditors are very many yet y^e contributors are very few, inso- much that it is concluded they cannot raise 15*l.* per annum at present, which is likely to be less if some aged persons be removed. Their opposition from the public place is more than usual. We desire the contents may be well considered by those that are both able and willing to forward gospel work."*

It would appear from this that the Nonconformists in Budworth had not many persons of substance amongst them. At Wincham, which is adjacent to Budworth, the respected Colonel Venables resided. He was a well known Presbyterian. Mr. Thomas Lee of Darnall, also a Presbyterian, married the co-heiress of Colonel Venables, and from him are descended the Townshends of Wincham. The colonel, however, does not appear to have worshipped with his co-religionists in Budworth, or they would have been equal to greater things than 15*l.* per annum. The aid solicited seems to have been rendered. One or two entries in the Minute Book speak of a settled minister at Great Budworth.

In 1691, Mr. BURNHAM resided there, and his name occurs in the list of ministers. Reference is afterwards made to an investigation into the character of a minister named MARSH, whom the people had invited to become their pastor, but round whose name some ill odour had gathered. The ministers do not appear to have been satisfied with the case, for they requested the Warrington Class to undertake the responsibility of ordaining him, pleading their inferiority of age and the singularity of his case as reasons for their exemption from the work.

* Minute Book of the Cheshire Ministers, page 7.

For some years subsequent to this, Dissent maintained a footing in the parish. Bishop Gastrell speaks of four Dissenting meeting-houses in his time. Of these, two were "private houses certified for "the Presbyterians, where persons seldom met." One Quakers' meeting, of about sixty persons; and one Anabaptist meeting of about the same number. The bishop does not define the position of these Dissenting chapels. In what part of the parish the Presbyterian houses were situated it is not possible to say. One of them must have been on the side adjoining Warrington, for in the case of Mr. Marsh, already referred to, one reason given for his being ordained by the Warrington rather than by the Knutsford Classis was that his sphere of labour was in the neighbourhood of Warrington.

The FRIENDS' MEETING-HOUSE still stands, and the congregation is made up from a wide district round.

The BAPTIST CHAPEL is a very interesting place. It is in the township of Appleton, about two miles from Warrington. The origin of the church cannot be ascertained. The traditions of the place give it a history prior to the Reformation. This is perhaps an exaggeration, but stones lying in the yard attest the existence of the *burying ground* in the sixteenth century. One stone bears the date 1599, another 1577, whilst a third carries us back to the year 1523. It certainly is one of the oldest Baptist churches. In the middle of the seventeenth century it was known (among members of the Baptist denomination most probably) as "the Church of Cheshire," then as that of Warrington, afterwards of Stockton. It is now known as the chapel at Hill Cliffe. The neighbourhood in which it stands was the scene of many battles in the great Civil War, in some of which Cromwell was present. He is said to have worshipped in the chapel at Hill Cliffe, whilst one of his officers occupied the pulpit. The first minister of whom anything is known was a Mr. Weyerburton, who is supposed to have been a member of the Warburton family. A Mr. Turner was minister in the early part of the last century, and seems to have been very useful. In his day, preachers were sent out in all directions, and the Baptist churches of Liverpool have to look up to Hill Cliffe as their mother—the first Baptist church in Liverpool having been originated from Hill Cliffe in 1700. The author of *Dialogues of Devils* (Mr. Macgowan) was once settled over this church. He left in 1759 for Bridgnorth. The old chapel, which had many doors of escape, has now disappeared. A new building has been erected, and all Nonconformists must trust

that it will stand long enough to see the full triumph of religious liberty and equality.

WHITLEY.

WHITLEY is a township and chapelry in the parish of Great Budworth, about five miles from Northwich. Gastrell mentions that "one Thomas Pierson, minister of Brampton, Herefordshire, born at Weverham, Cheshire, and brought up at Mr. Touchet's school of Nether Whitley, did by will 15th October 1633, give 250*l.* to maintain a minister at Whitley, and 50*l.* for ditto at Witton. '250*l.* in money by Mr. Pierson, minister of Brumpton Brian, Herefordshire (for or towards the perpetual maintenance of a preacher at Whitley Chapel).' These are the words of the will dated October 15th, 1633. The money is now in the hands of Sir J. Chetwood."* Possessing a chapel and a minister, Whitley still needed a school, and this was supplied by a member of the Eaton family. The schoolroom was built in the year 1645, by means of funds gathered in the town and neighbourhood, and the school was endowed by W. Eaton, a resident of the town. The payment of sixpence per quarter entitled anyone to admission. It was here that Adam Martindale settled on leaving the army of the Parliament. He says, "When I was at last set at liberty, 1644, a free school was vacant, and, as it were, waiting for me, in Over Whitley, in Cheshire, with which I closed when I lacked a few weeks of twenty-one years old, and this was a perfect manumission from the hated life I had lived about two years among the souldiers, though mine office was all along to employ my penne, not my sword, and to spend inke not spill blood."† In Martindale's time the schoolhouse was built, and his name was over the door. Alterations have since been made, and his name no longer graces the building. Here he passed in quiet industry some years of his life. The school was full, having amongst its scholars "a prettie store of rich men's sons." Mr. Eaton's endowment of 100*l.* brought eight per cent interest, which, though a small income, was, we are told, regularly paid, and was increased by the payments of the pupils and the earnings of the master's pen in drawing up writings for the neighbours around.

* Gastrell's *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i., page 326.

† *Autobiography*, page 41.

The chief interest of Whitley to a Nonconformist, however, lies in the fact of its having been the residence of that holy man JOHN MACHIN. His friend and neighbour Henry Newcome wrote a short memoir of him, from which I have made the following abridgment.

He was born at Seabridge near Newcastle, in the county of Stafford, on the 2nd of October 1624. His father was a substantial yeoman, whose ancestors had possessed the estate of Seabridge from the reign of Henry VIII. Being an only son, much care was bestowed on his early education, and an intention was formed of bringing him up to the law. But, when the time for his leaving home came, his parents found their hearts so bound up in him that parting was impossible, and for several years he remained at Seabridge engaged on his father's farm. During this time he took deep interest in the coarse sports of that age, delighting greatly in cock fighting, &c., and although his father told him in after years that his name ought to be Samuel, because, he said, "I begged thee of Him in thy mother's straits," there is reason to believe that the father was by no means so mindful of his promise as was the meek and gentle Hannah, and knew too little of God himself to instruct his son in His ways. At the age of twenty-one young Machin went to Cambridge, not so much to improve his mind as to acquire the polish of a gentleman. He entered Jesus College, and the first year of his stay proved the turning point in his character and history. Two sermons preached in the chapel of Jesus College—one by Dr. Hill on Ephesians vi. 12, 13, 14; the other by a stranger on 1 Corinthians xvi. 22—were blessed to his conversion. The time and place of his conversion were distinctly known to him, and he would often show his friends the place where he sat when he first felt the power of the gospel. He loved the very sight of the seat, and would always, if it was in any way practicable, crush into it. The change that had taken place within, soon showed itself. His letters home became full of earnest expostulation with his parents and his three sisters, to all of whom there is ground to hope his message was made the power of God unto salvation.

The influence of the gospel does not flow merely in one channel, but is poured into many, and brings into action all the wheels of life. It was eminently thus with Mr. Machin, so that, after his conversion, he studied with such conscientiousness (his diligence being well aided by his natural quickness) that, on leaving Cambridge, his learning was inferior to none in the college. At the same time his loving

biographer assures us that he had good sense enough not to torture his hearers, as did many of the preachers in his day, with perpetual quotations in Latin and Greek. He gave them the results of study without its show; allowed his hearers to eat the pleasant fruit without making them push their way through the concealing branches. His consecration to the ministry was not purposed by him close upon the time of his conversion. More than a year passed away before he resolved upon taking this step; the immediate occasion being a dangerous illness, which threatened to end his life in the year 1647. During this illness his mind was powerfully impressed with the thought of serving God in the ministry of His Son, should life be spared. On his recovery the vow was neither forgotten nor delayed. Remaining at the university to fit himself more fully for the high work to which he had now put his hand, he waited not for better opportunities or more urgent need of work, but began at once to employ his powers in the service of Christ. He commenced a religious meeting among the students, which flourished for many years, and was made a blessing to many. The following letters, written to him after his leaving Cambridge, witness to the usefulness of this gathering of students.

“Dear Friend,—I received your loving letter, which breathed
 “ nothing but piety and good affection. The next companion to him
 “ who is both *Fundator*, *Socius*, and *Præses* of the College of Graces
 “ is he whom God hath warmed with the same principles, to be in-
 “ strumental for the enlivening them in others. I bless God the
 “ society you were the founder of in the college do grow *numero et*
 “ *mensura*, and you have here my real thanks in that you have been
 “ instrumental in setting religious meetings on foot, wherein you reap
 “ much of the answer of your prayers, in that they carry it so prudently
 “ yet, as I hear of nothing but what malice and guile tax them withal.
 “ In all my serious thoughts I see you represented to me either as a
 “ pattern of strict walking, or an upbraiding of my little serviceable-
 “ ness, but always a blessing and a comfort in this, that I have known
 “ you and the manner of your life, and that I reap the benefit of your
 “ prayers and best affections, which is a treasure I always desire to
 “ prize above all the jewels in the world.” Another writes to him
 thus:—“ My dear and precious friend, I received yours. Your lines
 “ sweetly refresh me. Oh that I could hear oftener from you. It
 “ glads my soul to see your constancy. O that your example might
 “ be a motive and incentive to me to be more steady, settled, and

“fixed upon God, in the way of God.” Tender and true must have been the life, in all its details (for none know each other so well as do fellow-students), to which college companions refer so lovingly.

In 1649, Mr. Machin took the degree of Bachelor of Arts. In February of the same year he was ordained to the ministry at Whitchurch in Shropshire, on which occasion he was very earnest in asking the prayers of all his friends that God’s blessing might rest on his ministry. The months immediately following his ordination were spent in labours amongst his own friends and neighbours, in which he was so earnest that one of his relatives said he “liked his cousin Machin well, but that he made his house a chapel when he came to him.” In the early part of the year 1650, Mr. Machin settled at Ashbourne in Derbyshire. The neighbourhood around was in great darkness, and Mr. Machin at once devised plans for its enlightenment. He himself was constantly preaching, and, through his influence, a number of ministers would sometimes spend three or four days together preaching at several places in the same neighbourhood. Large numbers attended these meetings, which were made very useful.

It is often said that, whilst the early Nonconformists clung tenaciously to their first charges, and so cultivated them that even the rockiest ground became fruitful under their skilful and painstaking husbandry, the ministers of the present day are so often changing as very greatly to hinder the progress of churches. There is much truth in the statement. Yet there are many instances of ministers amongst the first Nonconformists who moved from place to place, and were very useful in their day. Mr. Machin was one of these. Perhaps his ardent desire that all men should hear the gospel made him almost too ready to accept a fresh charge. His plan evidently was to make his home the centre of his workfield. He went out from it in all directions, and as soon as he had fairly and fully declared the gospel in that neighbourhood he was ready to begin elsewhere. When Mr. Newcome was in some perplexity whether he should leave his parish for another to which he had been invited, Mr. Machin, whom, as a bosom friend, he consulted, prayed that he “might be alike a ploughman, who, when he had finished one field went to another, and set in his plough as if it were all one furrow.” The simile gives us a key to Mr. Machin’s own life. Looking upon the whole world as one field, he was never troubled about leaving one part of it for another. After staying two years at Ashbourne, he removed to Atherstone in

Warwickshire, where he had a lecturer's place. Here he continued for eighteen months, busily and successfully employed in his Lord's service, comforting himself in the midst of difficulties, which he regarded as the work of Satan, that the more the devil hated him the more his God loved him.

It has been the fashion in certain circles to talk of the Puritans as unlearned men. A greater mistake could scarcely be made. There were, doubtless, minor sects that decried learning, but the men with whom the name Puritan is usually associated paid great deference to scholarship, and were usually well educated. To those in our own day (they are but few) who delight in speaking ill of learning, the fact that Nonconformity had most power in the nation when its ministry was distinguished for breadth and thoroughness of learning, as well as for deep-toned piety, ought to suggest some doubt as to the wisdom of their opposition to a regular college training. We have seen that Mr. Machin was a diligent student whilst he was at Cambridge, and his biographer assures us that his sense of the value of learning was never diminished. To show his regard for it, he was much inclined to take the degree of Master of Arts whilst he was at Atherstone, and only relinquished the idea on account of the expense. But, though he abandoned the idea of taking a higher degree, he remained a diligent student, taking philosophy, the classics, history, doctrinal and practical theology, as his main subjects of study. His biographer, however, tells us that with him there was *nihil in pompam, omne in usum*.

In the spring of 1652, Mr. Machin removed to Astbury in Cheshire. Whilst there he married Mrs. Jane Butler, whom he describes as a humble, gracious woman, whose price was above rubies. The incidents of the marriage, which took place at Uttoxeter, are very characteristic of him. He made arrangements with two of his ministerial brethren to be present on the occasion, and to preach to the people; and he himself was soon employed in his favourite work. Speaking of his marriage, Mr. Newcome, in his Autobiography, says, "He, good man, "with me, was as ready for the work of the Lord as if it had been "another's wedding and not his own that he had been at. He "preached the next day at Macclesfield." Two or three days after the marriage he started on a preaching tour of some length. Nothing was allowed to interfere with the one thing to which he had consecrated every talent he possessed. Another proof of this all-embracing

consecration is to be found in the employment of his property for the spread of the gospel. Some months before his marriage he instituted a monthly lecture, to be preached in some of the large towns of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, and to the support of this lecture he left, in his first will, which was made a short time before his marriage, a large portion of his property. Two lectures were to be preached every month at different towns, the ministers being selected from the most eminent men of the time. For five years this scheme was rigidly carried out, under the superintendence of Mr. Machin, who, during all this time, kept an exact account of the day of the month, the place, the preachers, and their texts, together with his own observations on the number and behaviour of the congregation. The troubled times that came with the Restoration broke up Mr. Machin's plans, and forced him to make a new will, in which his property was otherwise disposed of.

In May 1661, Mr. Machin removed to Whitley. Here he seems to have been very successful. He himself says, "After some time I found that God was with me in ordinances to make conversion work; and in providences to prevent evils and to reach good things to us." Little more than a year had passed, however, before the pleasant labour at Whitley was brought to a close by the passing of the Act of Uniformity. Mr. Machin did not, however, leave Whitley, nor did he entirely cease from his work. The gentry of the neighbourhood respected him so greatly that they gave him no molestation, and he continued to do much good in the neighbourhood. Indeed, as we shall presently see, there is ground to believe that Nonconformists were somewhat in favour at Whitley. But, though the holy man whose life we are recording took meekly the blow dealt to him and his brethren, there is reason to believe that it was the prime cause of his death. When some of his old neighbours went to see him, he significantly told them that he had "never lived since he had died." He died on the 6th of September 1664, at the age of forty. Speaking of his death, Philip Henry says, "Mr. John Machin was buried at Newcastle, September 8th, 1664. A worthy minister in gospel work; laborious, faithful, and successful above his fellows; taken away in the midst of his days; the first candle I have heard of put out by God, among the many hundreds put under a bushel by man."*

* Philip Henry's Life, chapter xi.

Enough has been said already to show that John Machin was verily a man of God. But, as there are not wanting men who speak of the ejected ministers in language deplorably ignorant and wicked, it may be well to add a few words on his character. I am the more anxious to do so because, his name not ranking with the grand leaders of the Nonconformists, we may look upon him as affording us an example of what the unknown men, the rank and file of that army of martyrs, were. His private character is represented as being amiable to a degree. He dwelt in love. Hence he was not found mingling in the theological controversies of that time. That was not his work. His nature led him rather to the quiet fields of meditation. As a man of prayer he seems to have risen to a distinguished place even amongst those men of prayer. It was a great point with him to have some *one special* thing for which to pray. He was also very anxious to secure the prayers of his friends, and was exceedingly hearty in praying for them. "Always think of your friends with a praying thought," was a remark of his. Besides the ordinary times of devotion, he often set apart a day for fasting and prayer, and he never entered a house without immediately praying; publicly, if that was possible, if not, then alone in his own chamber. The Scriptures were well and constantly used by him. Newcome says, in his life of Machin, that "his Bible was his constant companion "by day, and usually his pillow at night."* Besides prolonged study of it, his habit was to take it up in every pause from labour, and whenever his eye fell on a passage that promised refreshment, the corner of that page was turned down, and the new found spring was again and again visited until the soul of the thirsty man was satisfied. His mind being thus saturated with Scripture, he was always pouring it forth again to others. Rarely did he part from a friend without giving him some passage suitable to his circumstances to think upon. His letters were usually full of allusions to the Word of Life. Trees and walls often bore silent testimony for Christ through the texts which he wrote upon them. Indeed so fond was he of this method of publishing the gospel that his friends knew where he had been by these marks. As a preacher he was in labours abundant. As a pastor he was most diligent and watchful. As a friend his counsel was wise, his heart loving, his hand liberal. Few beggars left his door unfed,

* Newcome's Life of Machin, page 67.

and many poor ministers were benefited by his gifts. As a wayside evangelist he appears to have been particularly useful; scathing the bold sinner with vivid rebuke, and leading into profitable and delightful conversation those who had tasted, with him, that the Lord is gracious. The following testimonies to his worth have been recorded. One intimate friend of his says, "Never man more watchful against relapses, nor more jealous to maintain his first love to the height. I have sometimes told him that it was not usual for converts to retain that land-flood of comfort, that intention of zeal, and extension of affection which flourished in him, and was preserved to the height; he must expect an abatement in time, and the current thereof to be contracted and settled in a narrower channel."* A minister says, "I have admired at the constant frame of his spirit; he was not subject to that deadness and indisposedness as other good men seem to be; his heart was continually burning with a holy zeal." One who afterwards rose to some distinction in the church said of him, after his death, "I am so well satisfied as to his extraordinary piety in general, that I wish my everlasting portion may be with him. I never knew one more public spirited, more sensible of men's spiritual necessities, and more ready, according to his ability, to supply them; more zealous for God's glory; more delighted, incessant, importunate, and successful in prayer, and more thankfully sensible of the returns thereof than this holy person was, of whom this degenerate world was not worthy, and therefore, having been abundant in the work of the Lord, God hath satisfied him with never-ending experiences that his labours, from which he now rests, shall not be in vain in the Lord."† This was one of the men who was expelled from the ministry of the Church of England in 1662. It is cheering to know that his work, though hindered, was not entirely broken up. As has been already said, he continued at Whitley doing much good.

Some leading men in Whitley must have had strong leanings to the Nonconformists. The successor of Mr. Machin, Mr. KYNASTON, senior, never conformed. In Tong's *Life of Henry*, we meet with the following passage:—"Mr. Kynaston (of Knutsford) was son to a very good and faithful minister, who, though he could never thoroughly conform to the Church of England, yet was satisfied to read some of

* Newcome's *Life of Machin*, page 62. † Palmer's *Nonconformist Memorial*.

“ the prayers; and by the favour of Mr. Chetwood of Whitley (father to Sir John Chetwood), exercised his ministry at Whitley Chapel without disturbance. He was an acceptable and useful preacher, his ministry was much frequented, and attended with very good success; he died in the midst of his days.*” Mr. Kynaston was followed by the Rev. RALPH AINSWORTH as minister at Whitley, who mingled freely with the neighbouring Nonconformist ministers, and subscribed the Agreement of the Cheshire ministers at Knutsford, in 1691. He is mentioned also as taking part in ordinations at Knutsford and Chester. Upon the appointment of a Conformist as curate of Whitley, Mr. Ainsworth removed to Brombro’ in Wirral, and afterwards to Rivington in Lancashire, where he died in May 1716.

ALLOSTOCK.

THE Nonconformist chapel at Allstock has a history that runs back to within a few years of the Act of Uniformity. It lies upon the highway leading from Knutsford to Church Hulme, being about five miles distant from the former place. No village or large cluster of houses is grouped around it, though it is probably in a central and advantageous site. The origin of the congregation is seen from the following memorandum taken out of the Church Book:—

“ The Church of the Word gathered in order, March 2nd, 1689. That wee, whose names are subscribed, being (through grace) made sensible of our want of gospell order and priviledges, doe unanimously agree to joyn together (the Lord assisting) for the enjoyment of gospell order and priviledges.”

Then follow the names of sixteen men and seven women—in all twenty-three. At the same time a church agreement was drawn up, of which the following is a copy:—

“ Those that joyn to the church were in these wordes. Wee doe declare and promise to give ourselves to Christ as Lord and Law-giver, Husband and Head, and to this pticular. (particular) church to walk orderly with them in all Gospell ordinances.

Signed, { ROBERT BURV, pastor.
 { ROBERT HOLLAND.”

* Tong’s Life of Matthew Henry, page 274.

This purely voluntary agreement, in which no reference is made to any human authority outside of the church itself, and which is signed by two ministers, the one *pastor*, the other probably *teacher*, indicates that the church was formed on Congregational principles. It appears from the above memorandum that the first pastor was ROBERT BURY. Mr. ROBERT HOLLAND, whose name is coupled with Mr. Bury's in the church agreement, was among the first to sign the Agreement of the Cheshire Ministers in 1691. During his ministry the first chapel was built. Mr. Richard Wheshaw, whose name occurs among the signatures of the members of the congregation, gave the ground for the term of five hundred years. Mr. Holland's death occurred in the year 1705. Matthew Henry thus refers to him:—"This good friend of mine, after nine or ten weeks' illness, finished his course last Lord's Day, and was buried in his own meeting place on Wednesday. He was an honest plain man, happily familiar in speaking to ordinary people; aged between fifty and sixty, as I suppose; educated to a trade, but strongly inclined to the ministry; had a good acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue, and was very useful."* In 1706, the Rev. SAMUEL GARSIDE, son of the ejected minister at Bosley, became pastor. His interest in Allostock induced him to give a small estate near Macclesfield to the perpetual maintenance of a minister at Allostock Chapel. He is the only minister of whom any record is to be found on the walls of the chapel, and the inscription to his memory is severely brief, we might indeed call it cold. "Here lyeth the body of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Garside, who died May 9th, 1716." That is all. One touch of sorrow or affection would have made it more human, and might have quickened the heart of succeeding pastors. Another inscription, chiselled we should suppose by the same Spartan hand, tells us that "Here lyeth the body of Mrs. Mary Garside, widow, who died May 6th, 1718." This was Mr. Garside's mother.

The next minister was the Rev. WILLIAM VAWDREY. Of his ordination the following notice occurs in the Cheshire Minute Book:—

"May 6th, 1718. The evening before, he read his thesis, and dis-cussed it. His quest [ion] was, *An Christus vere existebat priusquam in utero Virginis conceptus fuerit.* Affirmative. He was also examined in divinity, having been before examined in y^e languages and in

* Tong's Life, page 281.

“ philosophy, when he was allowed to preach as candidate. He also
 “ read his confession of faith before y^e ministers then present, who like-
 “ wise made triall of his knowledge in y^e Scriptures, being asked by them
 “ the meaning of severall texts. The day following (May 6th), in a
 “ very numerous assembly of ministers and people met together in
 “ y^e new chappel, he was solemnly set apart to y^e office and worke of
 “ y^e ministry. The minister of y^e place began with prayer and reading
 “ some portions of Scripture; then Mr. Mottershed prayed before
 “ y^e sermon, w^{ch} was preached by Mr. Gardner from Ephesians iii. 8.
 “ After sermon ended, Mr. Owen called for a confession of his faith,
 “ w^{ch} he made before y^e congregation, and then he put y^e usuall ques-
 “ tions to him, to w^{ch} he answered *verbis conceptis*, and then he was
 “ set apart by prayer and imposition of hands of Mr. Irlam (who
 “ pray’d over him), Mr. Owen, Gardner, Waterhouse, Sydebottom,
 “ Worthington, Cooper, Holland, Lea. Afterwards Mr. Worthington
 “ gave y^e exhortation from 2 Timothy iv. 1, 2.”

Mr. Vaudrey removed to Nantwich in 1719, and was succeeded by the Rev. JOHN LIGHTBOWN, who remained until his death in the year 1728. He had during his ministry 220 hearers, twenty-eight of whom had votes for the county. Mr. SAMUEL EATON next came to Allostock. He was ordained at the ministers’ meeting at Knutsford, September 2nd, 1729. In addition to his pastoral duties, he kept a school, which prospered greatly, and included among its scholars some who rose to high distinction. Lord Clive, the great founder of British rule in India, was one of Mr. Eaton’s scholars. The fact, however, that Clive was sent from schoolmaster to schoolmaster, and at last shipped off to India with the character of a stupid and headstrong boy, will not allow us to attribute to Mr. Eaton much of the honour connected with his pupil’s subsequent magnificent career.* It is said that General Wolfe, the conqueror of Quebec, was also at this school. In 1737 Mr. Eaton being about to remove to Nottingham, resigned his charge, both of the church and of the school, to the Rev. WILLIAM TURNER. This gentleman had been approved and allowed to preach as a candidate by the ministers assembled at Knutsford on August 2nd,

* It is said that on his return to England Lord Clive, in a letter to Mrs. Eaton, complained that although as a boy he relished her barn puddings, he could not now enjoy the daintiest dishes. Mrs. Eaton replied that she did not wonder at his boyish appetite, for she well remembered the terror to which he put her by climbing up one side of the barn and descending the other side. She feared he had no such exercise now.

1737. By them he was ordained to the work of the ministry on August 7th, 1739. Mr. Turner was lax in his theological views, and from his time the succession of ministers has been more or less unorthodox. He was a friend of Dr. Priestley, and in after years rose to some eminence as an Unitarian minister at Wakefield.

After Mr. Turner's removal, which took place in 1746, the pastorate of the church was for six years unoccupied. During this time the duties of the office were to a great extent discharged by Mr. JOHN HOLLAND, of Mobberley. This gentleman belonged to the old Nonconformist family, of whom the present eminent physician, Sir Henry Holland, is a member. Judging from an extract in her diary, his mother was a woman of deep piety, and the employment of his talents in the service of the sanctuary met with her heartiest approval. The extract may teach Nonconformist mothers of the wealthier class a lesson too slowly learnt by many. "June 8th, 1744. My son John began to preach at Ormskirk. We have an account. His performances were acceptable. May they be so to Thee; I will give Thee all the glory, oh my God. I am sure it is Thy due. May he be humble, and encrease in and be furnished for whatever may best honour Thee."

Mr. Holland published two volumes of sermons, some of which, on such subjects as drunkenness, have been republished within the last few years. From these sermons it is clear that he was decidedly opposed to some of the doctrines generally considered Scriptural. He preached at Allstock for the last time on the 15th December 1751. On the 28th of the same month he died, and was buried in the graveyard of Brook-street Chapel, Knutsford. After Mr. Holland's death the pulpit was occupied by Mr. GEORGE BUXTON until the year 1754. In 1755 the Rev. JOHN HOLLAND of Wem, settled over the church at Allstock, remaining there till the year 1763. He afterwards conformed to the Established Church. For one year, namely from 1763 to 1764, Mr. JOHN PALMER was minister. He was an intimate friend of Dr. Priestley, and removed hence to the Unitarian Chapel at Macclesfield. Mr. Palmer is said to have been an exceedingly gifted, but ludicrously eccentric man.*

* The following amusing story was related to the writer concerning Mr. Palmer, by the Rev. Henry Green of Knutsford. On Mr. Green's first settlement at Knutsford there was an old lady in his congregation who, in her childhood, was placed under Mr. Palmer's care at Macclesfield. She told Mr. Green that one of

The Rev. BENJAMIN SLAP was minister at Allstock from 1764 to 1766, when he removed to Shrewsbury.

Mr. MARTIN LAWTON and Mr. TAYLOR supplied up to 1768. Mr. JAMES GREEN of Northwich from 1768 to 1787. When Mr. Green left he delivered the keys into the hands of a Mr. GLOVER, who was a trustee of the chapel, and resided in the neighbourhood. He officiated until the year 1822, when the chapel was brought under the care of Mr. ASHTON, the minister of the Unitarian Chapel, Knutsford. His successor, the Rev. HENRY GREEN, is the present minister. In Mr. Green's time the old chapel has been taken down, and a very neat building has been erected on its site. The congregation having dwindled down to a very few, it was thought to be desirable so to arrange the chapel as to accommodate a school during the week. By this means a very great boon seems to have been conferred upon the neighbourhood, as the religious connections of the children are in no way interfered with, whilst the secular training appears to be needed. A Sabbath service is held monthly.

The story of Allstock Chapel resembles, in its leading features, that which might be told of many chapels in Cheshire, and the opponents of free churches have found in the history an argument against voluntarism. It is scarcely needful to point out that the possibility of declining from the truth is not peculiar to non-established churches. The Church of England in the present day includes theologians of the most opposite views, nor does it seem able to free itself from any of them, however dangerous their tenets may be considered even by the heads of the church. Nonconformist churches have no greater tendency to error than state churches. There is, however, an important difference between them. A free church addresses itself to the individual judgment, and if its teaching is not consistent with the word of God it is shorn of all its power. A state church, after its departure from the gospel, is still supported by forced contributions, and may, accordingly,

her guardian's grotesque doctrines of education was that young people should be trained to bear disappointment. One fine Saturday afternoon he told her that she should ride over to see her parents, who were living at some five miles distance. Very joyfully did she lift herself into the pillion behind the servant-man, but when her young heart was quickened into the strongest excitement by the sight of her father's house, the horse's head was turned round, and she learnt from the servant that orders had been given him to return as soon as they came within sight of the house. Thus she was to learn to bear disappointment!

continue to poison the springs of truth. To argue against the principles of our churches because, in some instances they have denied the faith, and in others have scarcely left their names to posterity, is to argue against the Scriptural foundation of the first churches, since of them also the same facts may be stated.

Dr. Owen has compared the different churches of Christ to the branches of a tree. They belong to the same great whole. They drink in nourishment from one trunk. The storms of earth may rudely drive them against each other, but the time will come when, in the serene atmosphere of heaven (not indeed as distinct churches, but as individuals gathered out of them), they shall peacefully abide in Christ and bring forth fruit.

ROSTHERNE.

(By JOSEPH THOMPSON, *Esq.*)

THE pretty little village of Rostherne is situated about three miles south of Bowdon; it lies a little to the east of the old Roman Watling-street, and is approached from the modern turnpike running from Chester to the North, by a lane that would rival those of Devonshire in picturesque beauty.

Rostherne has many claims to the favour bestowed upon it: for the antiquary there is the effigy in chain armour wrought in stone, so long a puzzle as to whether it represents a Manwaring, a Brereton, or a Venables, also the monuments of former representatives of neighbouring families; for the lover of art there is Westmacott's beautiful statue of Miss Egerton; for the Rambler and student of nature there is the glorious view from the church yard of meadow, trees, and mere, with Bowdon crowning the hill in the distance; and for the Cheshire Nonconformist there is to be found, in the life of a former vicar of this parish, one of the most valuable insights into the manners and customs of Dissenters prior to the Restoration which can be obtained anywhere. The life of Adam Martindale is so full of interest that we cannot forbear giving it from its commencement.*

* This sketch of Adam Martindale's life is taken chiefly from his *Autobiography*, edited by the late Canon Parkinson, B.D., for the Chetham Society. It is impossible to read this volume without bearing testimony to the great interest Canon Parkinson has given to it by his valuable notes, and to the playful manner in which he sometimes exposes his hero's foibles; although differing from Martindale so thoroughly upon church polity, there is no bitterness displayed, but an amount of fair dealing most creditable to the editor both as a Christian and as a gentleman.

ADAM MARTINDALE was born at Prescot in Lancashire, in the month of September 1623. His father was a yeoman of some substance. During his childhood various events of interest occurred to him. He says he was "welcomed into the world by a great losse," which resulted from his father becoming surety for another man, and as the man could not pay, Adam's father had to do so, "having been taken " by the bayliffes, whom nothing would satisfie but either paying " downe the money or going to prison ; the latter was very unpleasant " to be thought of, and tended to crack his credit, which he highly " valued," so he had to let some land on lease which he had lately marled, whereby was great loss. Adam speaks of various "remarkable providences" which occurred during his childhood ; when he fell and cut his head, escaped from drowning, and was rescued from falling down a coalpit. These deliverances left an impression on the child's mind which were doubtless of use in later years. When six years old he had a primer given to him by his godmother, and took delight in learning its contents. Before he was seven years old he read the Bible "and any other English booke" with so much delight that he could almost have read a day together without play or meat.

Shortly after this time troubles fell upon the family. Adam was sent to the Free School at S. Helens. The poor little fellow—he was only seven years old—had not a happy time of it. He was being prepared for the trials of an eventful life. He complains of the frequent change of teachers, and they none of the best ; of the tedious method of teaching practised ; of the dulness of some of his school-mates, who kept back the others ; and, lastly, of the distance he had to travel to school. From S. Helens he was removed to Rainford, and progressed under a better master, whom he followed to S. Helens on his transference thither. More troubles beset the family, sickness and death invaded it, nor did Adam escape a serious illness. When he was fourteen years old the father took him from school, at the earnest solicitation of friends, and he was set to his father's calling, most probably as a stonemason. The father fortunately saw that his son was better fitted to become a scholar than a builder, so Adam was sent back to school, where he remained two years more and then finally left, having made sufficient progress as to fit him for the university.

This project of an university education was not carried out. The

country had become thoroughly roused and dissatisfied. Then was the upheaving which was so soon to end in rebellion, for who could place reliance in Charles's often broken promises? Martindale summarises these events so admirably that his words must be quoted:—

“But the worst was, the University was not so readie for me; warres being coming on that soone after turned Oxford (whither I was designed) into a garrison, and many scholars into souldiers. It is true things were not then come to such an height, but working fast that way. The Scots had invaded England and entered Newcastle, and though a pacification followed that seemed onelie to remove the seate of warre into our owne quarters, great animosities were set on foote concerning monopolies and ship money. Great ministers of state, such as the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Keeper Finch, and Secretary Windebanke, almost everywhere publickly complained of; Archbishop Laud and several bishops and their chaplains taxed with innovations, licensing Popish and Socinian bookes, and persecuting many godly ministers to deprivation itselfe. The censures also and deep sufferings of Prynne, Bastwick, Burton, Layton, Lilbourne and others were much ventilated; some saying these Boutefeus (agitators) deserved more than they had, others that they were honest men and used barbarously. Shortly, it was generally thought that if a Parliament did not heale us we should breake all to pieces, as accordingly it proved.”

During this interval Martindale was occupied as a tutor to the family of a Mr. Shevington, in Eccles parish. His connexion with the family was not a happy one. His employer appears to have been an exacting man, and his pupils, not corrected by their parents, were insolent to him, so that, he says, “I would almost as soone have led beares as take the charge of such ungovernable creatures; and yet it was expected at my hands they should profit highly.”

The country was in so distracted a state that Adam wisely thought it better to endure than to seek a change. Manchester was within six miles of his residence, and against that town Lord Strange, afterwards the unfortunate Earl of Derby who was beheaded at Bolton, comes with an army, besiegeth, and assaults it, but goes away without taking of it.* The defeated party then ranged about the county,

* This appearance of Lord Strange strook a great terrour and amazement into the country, so that instantly, for their safety and defence, the townsmen of Manchester put themselves into arms, and many of the parts adjacent came voluntarily in unto them for their assistance.—*Ormerod's Civil War Tracts—Chetham Society, page 16.*

spreading terror at their approach. They afterwards garrisoned Bolton, which caused Adam's employer to fortify his house; he afterwards abandoned this plan, broke up his house, and retired to Wigan, a stronghold of the King's.

Adam returned to his father's house at Christmas 1641. He was kindly welcomed; but he found things woefully altered, the "great trade" which his father and brothers had hitherto carried on "was quite dead, for who would either build or reparaire a house when he could not sleep a night in it with quiet and safetie?" The country was made the more lawless by the practices of the Royalist troops. Lord Derby's officers summoned the younger men, upon pain of death, to appear at general musters, from which they were frequently forced into the service with such weapons as they possessed. These levies were escorted by a guard, who had orders to shoot any stragglers; nor did their misery end here, as they incurred the enmity of the Parliamentarians for taking up the royal cause.

Adam had a wholesome horror of being summoned to "general muster," so he sought out a school and obtained one at Up-Holland in Lancashire. He soon found that the parents scarcely liked to send their children from home in those days of constant alarms; moreover he had to hold his school in a public-house, and had to share his beds and rooms with Papists, drunkards, and soldiers, who did not fail to taunt him and embitter his life to such an extent that he removed to Rainford. At Rainford he had promise of a good attendance of the children of substantial yeomen, with his commons to be found. The children were sent, but not the commons; nor did he escape his enemies, nor his warning to attend musters. He excused himself as "a piece of a clergy-man," and stayed away, and subsequently accepted service under Colonel Moore, then newly arrived at Liverpool for the defence of that town under Prince Rupert.*

During these dark times a ray of brightest light shone upon Martindale, and influenced him through life. He heard Mr. Smith (probably the minister of Bowdon) preach, whose earnest words roused him to enquiry. They proved "like a sharp needle, drawing after a silken thread of comfort in due season." He honoured Mr. Smith as his spiritual father until death.

* For an account of this see *Civil War Tracts*, Chetham Society, pages 198, 201—207.

He accepted a clerk's place under Colonel Moore, for which he received good pay, but much discomfort; he then became chief clerk and deputy quarter-master to the regiment, with exemption from military duty. Whilst in this service he subscribed the Covenant.

Martindale held these offices till Liverpool surrendered to Prince Rupert, June 26th, 1644. The besieged were offered free quarter, and surrendered on those terms; nevertheless some 360 were cruelly slaughtered by the Royalists. Martindale suffered imprisonment for nine weeks, and became very anxious to return to the peaceful occupation of schoolmaster. His prospects were gloomy in the extreme. His brother Thomas and his family, left to the mercy of their enemies, lost nearly all their property; his aged father saw his house plundered of everything worth taking, and then was led a prisoner to Bolton. He was made to walk without shoes, and the barbarous soldiers snapped his ears with the locks of their pistols. For himself, he had no occupation. He found all the clergy "to a man, except only two, "tippling boone companions," and all serious Christians on the Parliament side, to which he allied himself. He had escaped many dangers, for which he was very thankful, and Providence still watched over him. Shortly after his release he obtained the mastership of the Free School at Over Whitley. For this providence he wrote, with gratitude, "When God so times his mercies that they are given us "when we greatly need them, and so soon as we are capable of them, "they are more than ordinarily sweet." But he was not to lie idle in his nest: a Lancashire minister pointed out the great need of spiritual teachers, and urged him to prepare for a charge. He began to study Hebrew, logic, and theology with vigour, and hoped to obtain an entrance to one of the colleges at Oxford or Cambridge.

During this time of preparation Manchester was visited by the plague, and so numerous were the deaths—there were 310 during August, and 266 during September 1645—that business was stopped, the ministers died during their work, and Martindale was more strongly urged to prepare for the ministry. He was pressed by his friend to preach for him at one of three places; feeling that he could not refuse, he consented to preach at Middleton, taking for his text Ephesians ii. 4, 5, *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved).* The two sermons were favourably received. He was offered the place of assistant to the

rector, but, finding it already filled by a former master of his, he declined to accept it.

Shortly afterwards he was invited to preach at Gorton near Manchester. He found the people very civil, and most anxious to secure him as their minister. He would not consent to this till he found that he was the choice of the people, and till he could obtain the consent of the committee of ministers. The people speedily gave their welcome, and the ministers approved him at his first appearance among them. He took the charge in April 1646.

But even here difficulties followed him. The war was changed from the military to the ecclesiastical camp. The Presbyterians were then in power. They had propounded a scheme for a grand National and Presbyterian Church government. Two years before this settlement of Martindale's, Parliament had summoned the Assembly of Divines. The Presbyterians had it all their own way, and the Independents, finding they had no voice in the assembly, changed their tactics, and speedily gained an influence through the press. The soldiers very generally adopted Independency, and it received the hearty patronage of Cromwell. Martindale entered the ministry at Gorton in the midst of this controversy. The Presbyterians had gained great hold upon Lancashire, and the accomplished warden of Manchester Collegiate Church, Mr. Heyrick, determined to stop the advance of the Sectaries. He got up a petition to Parliament, which was signed by many thousands, praying for the immediate establishment of the Presbyterian scheme as recommended by the Westminster Assembly. The effort was successful. An Act, dated October 2nd, 1646, was passed, in which the recommendation was sanctioned that the county of Lancaster should be formed into an ecclesiastical province; that the spiritual affairs of each congregation should be managed by its own presbytery; that the province should be partitioned into nine classical districts, each to be governed by a monthly assembly of its own congregational presbyteries; and that each classical assembly should meet as synods at stated periods to legislate for the whole.* The Presbyterian scheme in its fulness was that, "Wherever there was an established congregation with a pastor, whether in a church to which tithes of common right belonged, or one in which a vicar was established, or a mere chapel to which

* Hibbert's Foundations of Manchester, vol. i., page 245.

“ no tithe belonged, persons called *ruling elders* were to be chosen by the votes of the congregation, whose duty it was to assist the pastor or minister by their information, advice, and service, and to exercise a superintendence over all the other persons composing the congregation. These formed the *congregational eldership*. The minister and some of the more discreet of the ruling elders in districts containing about twenty or thirty congregations, were to meet once a month as a *classical presbytery*; the number of elders sent by each congregation not to be more than four nor less than two. One of the ministers was to act as moderator or chairman. Great power was to be given to these presbyteries. They might redress any abuse of any kind that could be construed into an offence against ecclesiastical discipline. They were the examiners of candidates for the ministry, and with them it lay to give or refuse ordination. An appeal, however, lay from them to the *Provincial Assembly*, which was to meet twice a year, and to consist of two ministers and four ruling elders sent from each classical presbytery in the province. Above all was to be a *National Assembly*, composed of two ministers and four ruling elders sent from each provincial assembly, together with five godly persons from each of the universities. This was the court of final appeal, but it could meet only when summoned by Parliament.”*

The Independents did not like this assumption of power. They could not believe in the divine right assumed by the Presbyterians, nor did they believe in one universal church governed by men, so as to form a *national church*; on the contrary, they held that Christ alone is the Head of the Church; that wherever a number of professing Christians—be their number large or small—unite for worship, with a pastor and deacons, they constitute a church, capable of maintaining itself, and responsible to no other church for its acts; they are without any connection or dependency on or with any other similar community, except such as might be agreed upon for purposes of friendly communication or spiritual assistance and advice. It was sufficient with them that a pastor should be the choice of the church after earnest prayer and deliberation; they needed not the laying on of hands of any kingly appointed bishop; they acknowledged the efficacy of the preaching of “gifted” or lay “brethren.”

* Hunter's Life of Oliver Heywood, page 55.

Martindale settled at Gorton in the midst of these controversies. Mr. Samuel Eaton of Dukinfield had lately arrived from New England; he strongly urged his Independency, and was supported by Mr. Timothy Taylor and Mr. Root. Independency was not new; it had been urged and suffered for by Robert Brown of Northamptonshire during Elizabeth's reign, it had its firm adherents during the reigns of James and Charles, and sought freedom from persecution in North America, and now it rose to be a recognised power.

The controversy was unhappily a bitter one. Martindale found that he could not associate with either party without provoking the suspicion of the other, and when he was desirous of seeking kindly feeling and intercourse with some who were of the Congregational way, such as Mr. Eaton and Mr. Taylor, he found his way beset with difficulties. He possessed one zealous friend who was most anxious for his ordination, and showed great kindness to him, but his urgency for the ordination brought about troubles he had not foreseen. On the whole Martindale disagreed with Congregationalism, still he found some things in the system to admire, and retained an affection for its advocates in his neighbourhood; he entertained strong doubts also upon some points in the Presbyterian scheme, and whilst these doubts remained he did not wish for ordination, the more especially as his church did not appear to suffer by letting things remain as they were; then again he found several of his congregation in favour of Congregationalism, and he hoped by silence and kindness to keep them in the church.

In his perplexity he sought the advice of "holy and peaceable" Mr. Angier, who considered the matter with great kindness, and imparted it to Mr. Heyrick; the latter advised time to be given, so that Adam might satisfy himself or be dismissed. Mr. Angier also wished for time to be given, but on no account for him to leave Gorton. The case was brought before the Manchester Classis June 8th, 1647, when a schedule of rules was agreed to and signed by the members of the Classis and by Martindale. He did not, however, attend the meetings of the Classis, for an entry is made a month after this agreement to the effect that "Mr. Angier is desired to speak to Mr. Martindale to know the reason of his not coming, seeing he hath professed to have received satisfaction." And again, on September 1st, "Mr. Ad. Martindale to be warned to appear at the next meeting."

Adam's remissness was doubtless occasioned by his engaging in the work urged upon him by Mr. Angier, namely, to read over "endways" all the considerable authors for and against Presbyterianism and Independency. This gigantic work he undertook, transcribing the best arguments of each side; and so voluminous were his notes that he was afraid to publish them, yet upon "great importunity of friends and insultation of enemies" he gave an epitome to the world, which won the praise of Richard Baxter, and at his solicitation an enlarged edition was prepared in 1659, "when moderation was grown in fashion." Meanwhile, Adam had resolved his own doubts. During this controversy he married Elizabeth Hall, the daughter of a substantial yeoman at Droylsden, 31st December 1646.

For various reasons Martindale determined to leave Gorton. His popularity appears to have been great, for he received "calls" from no less than five places in Cheshire and six in Yorkshire. He was led to choose the invitation from Rostherne, the vicarage of which place was *vacant by the death* of the former vicar.* The "call" was very generally subscribed; "the whole parish,† in a manner, including three gentlemen and all that made any eminent profession of religion, to a man joyned in an engagement to pay me ten pounds for a quarter then commencing, and some of them declared their resolution to do their best to settle me in the vicarage." The desire of the people was marred by two or three circumstances. The Baron of Kinderton, who was patron of the living, had to be asked. He had recently appointed a man whom the people did not accept; opposition from him was feared. "Some gentlemen of the parish,‡

* The living was at this time vacant by the death of the late vicar, Mr. Shenton, as the following entry still exists in the parish Register:—"Sepulturæ 1647. Gulielmus Shenton, vicarius de Rostherne, Sepultus erat, 3 Feb."—*Note to "Life," page 77.*

† The parish of Rostherne, in Martindale's time, was much larger than it is now; it then contained sixteen villages and towns, including Knutsford and Peover. The advowson remained with the barons of Kinderton till the end of last century, when it was purchased by Mr. Egerton. Christ Church, Oxon, is the impropiator. The present church was rebuilt 1743 (*Note to Gastrell's Notitia Cestriensis*, page 339, by Canon Raines). In Gastrell's time there were in the parish sixty-six Dissenting families, and an Anabaptist meeting-house, but these were most probably resident at Knutsford.

‡ Mr. Hunter, in his *Life of Oliver Heywood*, page 94, says, with his usual bitterness against the Independents, "but when his *Si quis* was placed on the church door, eleven persons of his parish, where Independent principles had found their way, and brought with them, as usual, cavilling and dissention, objected." Martindale does not say that the objectors were Independents; his statements shew that they were high Presbyterians.

“thinking themselves undervalued, and not liking a man of my “kidney,” attempted to introduce others, but the design failed; they then tried to persuade old Sir George Booth, a very old man, that Martindale was unfit for the living, as he had not been ordained. The case came before him, Mr. Marbury of Marbury, and Mr. Leigh of Bootes; but it failed, as Martindale was able to prove that he had been approved by a committee of ministers at Manchester. At length his friends, quickened by the opposition, sent up a petition very numerously signed, to the Committee for Plundered Ministers, who by their order of March 26th, 1649, freely gave him the vicarage with all its appurtenances.

He then sought ordination from the Manchester Classis; but meeting with opposition from some of his neighbours, he went to London and there obtained what he sought. Whatever objections may be made about the cruelty of the Nonconformists in ejecting the Episcopal clergy from their livings, no such charge can be brought in the case of Martindale. It has been noticed that the living was vacant through the death of the former vicar, and that Adam was the choice of the people; further, his biography testifies that he paid the late vicar's widow most liberally for the improvements her husband had made to the property; she also enjoyed the occupancy of the vicarage for more than two years after Adam's acceptance of the pulpit.

A new perplexity now disturbed him; it arose from doubts which he felt concerning the legality of Cromwell's position. He questioned whether it was right to serve one whom he thought did not reign lawfully. The subject was not immediately dropped; it led to some disputation and not a few pamphlets; it was, however, soon merged into the more important matter of subscription to the “Engagement “to be true and faithful to the Commonwealth as then established, “without a King or House of Lords.”

Adam was greatly troubled with this question, and sought the advice of others; abundance of pamphlets were issued, much controversy both by the press and by speech followed, and as is usual with abstruse questions, men who could agree upon most points disagreed upon this. Adam did not stop to enquire so much about the usurpation of power, but power having been assumed ought he to obey it? He found that “all the ministers of any account for ability and good “conversation in the neighbourhood that I used to converse with “were for subscribing it.” So also were his parishioners. On the

other hand, when the Classis met at Warrington, the "great knockers" of debate" with others were against it. Martindale argued in favour of subscription with considerable power, and was unconvinced by the replies of his brethren. He afterwards subscribed, but he was frequently troubled with doubts as to the rightness of the step.

Martindale now settled down to work, of which there was plenty, and in doing which he was well pleased. He preached twice on the Sunday to a large congregation; his week-days were spent in visiting the sick of a large parish, and in attending to the numerous duties which fall to the lot of a conscientious minister. He now enjoyed a period of comparative peace; sons and daughters were added to him; his quiet pastoral work was broken by no formidable trouble. During this period he undertook to dispute with the "Separatists of Bowdon parish." These appear to have been both numerous and troublesome. It has been conjectured that they were Independents, but this is not very clear. Adam had "another partie to engage with," members of Mr. Eaton's Congregational church, who conceived they were "gifted persons," and began to preach at Tabley. This was a source of great annoyance to Martindale. The able editor of the *Life* says such persons "have always been found thorns in the sides" of establishments." Martindale speedily shewed his parishioners that their conduct in listening to these men was objectionable.

He was shortly to be engaged in a work of great importance to the county. On September 14th, 1653, the minister at their meeting at Wilmslow moved that a letter should be drawn up, to invite many other ministers to give them the meeting at Knutsford on 20th October, being the exercise day; "and there they agreed upon a *Voluntary Association* of themselves and their churches, for mutual advice and "strengthening of one another." Here we have a forerunner of our County Union, whose meetings are so beneficial to the churches when they are properly conducted and carried out. Martindale quickly joined the society, from which he derived "much comfort and assistance." He thus excuses himself for taking part in this association when he could not conscientiously join the Classis at Manchester:—"The case was not the same. Here was only a voluntary association "of such as were desirous to advise and assist one another; nor did "we look upon ourselves as having any pastoral inspection over one "another's congregations, but only to be helpful to them in a charitable "way. We pretended not to any power to convert any before us, or

“suppresse any minister because dwelling in such a place, within such a verge, and differing from us in practice.”

The Classis speedily began its work, approving elders and ordaining ministers. The church at Rostherne was somewhat backward in accepting the rules laid down by their minister; at length, in July 1655, six ruling elders were chosen by the church, three of whom served the office. On the whole Martindale enjoyed much peace during his ministry at Rostherne; it was probably the happiest period of his life. In spite of the peevishness which Mr. Hunter thinks is always introduced with Independency, there was great accord between the two sections of the congregation. Martindale gives a clear view of the working of his method of church government at this time. He says:—

“We agreed in our Classis, by mutuall consent, upon such rules for the administration of Baptisme and the Lord’s Supper, as also of the solemnization of matrimonie, as my religious neighbours seemed well pleased with. And as for transactions among ourselves, we never disputed about the power of church guides, nor libertie of the brethren. For smaller matters, that came of course, they were willing enough the officers should dispatch without troubling the societie. And for those that were weightier, as receiving in new communicants, or suspending any from the communion that had been before admitted (which I think was but twice used, and that in cleare cases of scandall, and with good success), we allwayes tooke their consent along with us, which we used to ask after the sacrament or at a week-day confirmer. And so unanimous we were that, though most of all the communicants that were accounted the chiefe for parts and pietie leaned much towards the Congregationall way of church government, and some of them for their naturall tempers peevish enough, and great admirers, not onely of Mr. Eaton, but of divers of his gifted members, yet I cannot remember that so much as one of them forsooke us, *or that we had any breach or considerable controversie among us, but we went sweetly and comfortably so long as libertie continued.*”

Time had done much to reduce the asperities between the two great religious parties of the country. The Independents had no reason to change their opinion that any sect allied to, and recognizing the government as its head, is apt to become tyrannical and overbearing. Numerous cases did not lead them to change their opinion

with regard to the position of Presbyterianism; still they felt they had so many points of contact with the dominant sect that they willingly listened to any overtures of a brotherly and spiritual alliance. On the 13th July* 1659, a meeting of Presbyterians and Congregationalists was held in Manchester College, when certain resolutions tending to the increase of brotherly love were agreed upon; but, alas! the agreement came too late, the lion-hearted Protector had been dead some nine months, and his son Richard had feebly reigned in his stead. The country was growing into order under the wisdom and energy of Oliver Cromwell—it could not endure a weak successor. Various disturbances arose, the most formidable being that under Sir George Booth of Dunham, who attempted to take Chester, but was defeated by Lambert. Lambert showed mercy to the vanquished, and allowed many of the insurgents to escape. The Cheshire ministers were afterwards accused of being privy to this rising, of which most of them were, Martindale among the number. Sir William Brereton “had much ado to stay the furie” of Parliament against them. He succeeded; the Cheshire ministers sent up a petition to the effect that they might not suffer through surmises or false suggestions; they went further and petitioned in favour of Sir George Booth and Mr. Peter Brooke of Mere, and as Adam says, “This, Sir Peter Brooke doth still remember, and hath thankfully acknowledged “many a time.”

Upon the Restoration, Martindale, in common with other ministers, began to suffer. A gentleman and neighbour to whom he had shewn great kindness during the recent troubles became his enemy. When the proclamation forbidding “unlawful assemblies” was sent down to Martindale, as vicar of Rostherne, to read aloud in church, he refused; for, though it bore the names of the three deputy-lieutenants of the county, it was not signed by them. Its nature was so different from that given under most solemn pledges at Breda that it appeared to be a forgery; its restrictions were such that even Martindale, who had been confirmed as vicar of Rostherne for life, by the Act for Confirming and Restoring of Ministers, was not allowed to preach in unconsecrated chapels; he could not pray with a sick person at home, nor baptize a child in its father’s house. He gives very full reasons for his refusal, and determined to bear the brunt of his insubordination.†

* Newcome’s Autobiography, page 108. Martindale’s Life, page 128.

† Autobiography, page 143.

He had not long to wait. A warrant was sent him to attend the sessions at Northwich; it miscarried and was sent to Mere. Hearing of this, he attended the sessions with sundry substantial neighbours whom he took as witnesses. The case did not come on, and having to preach at Knutsford exercise, he returned home. The following day the case came forward, and, as Adam was absent, the justices were very wroth, and voted his absence a "high contempt."

In a few days a second warrant was issued. Adam heard of it, and not wishing to be carried with force, appeared, in company with his neighbours. One of the justices was very abusive to him, and appeared to take a delight in tormenting him to the utmost; his language was insulting and his conduct brutal. For the present Martindale escaped by putting in sureties, and a warning that he was to read the precept on the next Sunday.

Martindale refused to read the precept, but read the proclamation instead. The justice charged him to tell him, in writing, whether he had acted up to his instructions. Martindale answered characteristically with the acknowledgment that he had not read it on the day appointed, and with the excuse, "But if I read it upon the day first appointed there was no reason I should do it again; and if I had not, I desired it might be made out against me by evidence before I suffered upon such an accusation." The justice cut the matter short by committing him to Chester, where he was kept close prisoner at the Feathers Inn—his spiteful neighbour having the satisfaction of attending as captain of his body guard. Adam was dreadfully plucked, what with his diet at the inn, his costs for law, and the extortion of his protectors; at last, through the interference of Lady Gamul, he was released upon giving a bond of 1,000*l.* His trouble did not end here; his persecutor sent up his name to the Privy Council, but in this overshot his mark. Just then Clarendon and the court were trying to further sell the Presbyterians by the offer of the bishopric of Hereford to Baxter.* The Chancellor was only too willing to grant any favour, and the case having been laid before Baxter he obtained the protection needed. During these troubles Martindale was cheered by the kindness of his parishioners—who testified to his loyalty—and by the birth of a "gallant boy."

Divers of the lowest class annoyed him by setting up a maypole

* Sir J. Stephen's Essays, article—Baxter.—Autobiography, page 152.

near the church ; but this was a small thing compared with what was to follow. On the 28th May a Prayer Book was handed to him, with instructions from the Baron of Kinderton—his enemy—that he was to read it in church on the following day, the anniversary of the restoration of the “most religious King.” Neighbours were invited to attend as witnesses to the work being done, among them his old enemy the cornet, who religiously spent his morning in setting up the broken maypole, and his evening in getting drunk. During the day, when the prayer ought to have been read he was called out of church to see his dying horse, so Adam escaped for that time as there was no one who would witness against him.

His respite was but brief. Early in the winter of 1661 he was indicted to the assizes for refusing to read the Book of Common Prayer.* The witnesses when called could only prove that he had not read from the book, not that he ever refused to read it. The grand jury cut the bill, whereon the foreman—the persecuting justice—obtained a new jury, who were pressed in the judge’s chamber to find a bill. Martindale secured counsel, who pointed out so many glaring faults in the indictment that the judges—only too anxious to punish him—turned counsel and refused to “quash” the bill. Adam hoped that by gaining time he might reduce the virulence of his enemies, and also secure his Lady Day rents ; he sought for a “traverse” for the winter assizes, which was granted.

“And now came out that fatall Act of Uniformitie† that threw off “many hundreds of us out of our places.” Martindale received the Act with notice on the 22nd August ; two days later he was to give his unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained in the revised Prayer Book. He complains of the short time allowed for the study of the book ; but he knew sufficient of its contents to enable him to make up his mind on the subject. He had already resolved not to subscribe. He took leave of his people on the previous Sunday (17th), taking for his text Acts xx. 32, *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.* The words were full of meaning both to his people and to himself ;

* For a list of the objections by the Presbyterians to the Prayer Book, see *Documents, &c.*, page III.

† See *Documents, &c.*, and the Introduction to this Volume. Martindale gives the Bishops’ Order in full, page 166 *Life, &c.*

he needed consolation, for his was a hard case. It has been shewn that he displaced no man when he took the living; he had the strong support of his parishioners; he was a loyal subject, and served the royal cause during the Cheshire Rising, he was confirmed in his incumbency. But all these things were as valueless as the royal word. No time was lost in serving the churchwardens with an ejection. On the 29th August the Bishop of Chester issued his order forbidding Martindale the use of the pulpit, from which he had preached so faithfully for many years. The order is given at length in the *Life*, page 166.

Martindale had heard from his friend Newcome that the King did not really wish to be so hard upon the Nonconformists, and that he would take it unkindly if they threw up their livings unforced. Accordingly on the next Sunday, a day ever memorable in England, he found the church doors open as usual; the soft music of the bells floated over meadow, wood, and mere as before; there was no change outside the church, and inside a great congregation was gathered, "but there was no man to break the bread of life to their hungry souls," so he officiated once more. He told his people he had come there in opposition to no man, but solely for the King's pleasure. He preached from Psalm cvi. 4, *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people.* But all this was a mistake; the King's pleasure might be judged by his sanctioning the unjust Act; the patron of the living had caused the bells to be rung in mockery, and had left the congregation without a preacher that he might be petitioned to procure one.

And now Martindale, with a large family, had to face the world to seek for his daily bread. His successor speedily took possession of the vicarage, and did not give him what salary was due. He suffered loss of property in various ways, but with his noble mind determined to make his living conform to his limited income. He removed to Camp Green, where he lived for three and a half years, and during this time remained a hearer of his successor, Mr. Benjamin Crosse, frequently repeating the vicar's sermons, with an addition of his own, to a few friends on the Sabbath evening. Adam manfully fought against poverty and turned schoolmaster, but in this employment he was not to be let alone. The Bishop of Chester "preached fiercely against Nonconformists at Bowdon;" Sir Job Charleton, when upon the bench at Chester, gave a severe charge against Noncon-

formists being entertained as tutors in great families, or teaching private schools. These remarks were highly approved by Sir P. Leycester and the other justices. They had their effect; Adam lost the sons of a neighbouring gentleman, who could not face ecclesiastical threats. Martindale found he must turn to something else; he thought of medicine, but was too conscientious to kill his patients, so he took to mathematics, and found a great helper in Lord Delamer, who on this and other occasions proved to be his good friend.

Whilst he profited by Lord Delamer's kindness, who lent him books and instruments, and who frequently gave a stimulus to their use by his own discourse upon them—Martindale did not neglect his people; many of them were Nonconformists, and he regularly preached to them, but this exercise was greatly hindered by the appearance of the Conventicle Act. He had to break up his congregation into small knots to prevent its coming within the limits of that Act. His labour was greatly increased, as he sometimes preached four or five times a day. He had also to break up his school; but in all this he found help. Lord Delamer commanded him to his school at Warrington, where he perfected his scholars so far in land surveying as to bring down the praise of all those who saw their exploits. He was also well received at Preston; and both there and at Warrington he had "the happiness of spiritual libertie and employment among the Christians of most eminence." In addition to these engagements he became the tutor of Mr. Charles and Mr. Benjamin Hoghton of Hoghton Tower, "where Sir Richard, my ladie, and indeed all the family, shewed me great respect; and for libertie to preach there was more than I desired, for they had an able and godly chaplaine of their owne that I delighted to heare." But, though these temptations to remain were very great, he would not leave his own people, wishing rather to do good. He had other advantageous offers, among them one from Mr. Banks of Wigan, but the Five Mile Act forbade his going there. During the next seven years Martindale continued to teach mathematics at Manchester and elsewhere; he also preached as opportunity afforded, sometimes running risk of apprehension. During the time when the first Conventicle Act had run out, and before the second was passed, he preached in Bury parish, and found the house surrounded. He was brought before Dean Bridgman, who reproved him and indicted him to the sessions at Manchester, but by his legal ingenuity and the

perjury of the witnesses against him he escaped. His old enemy Bishop Hall meanwhile had died, and Bishop Wilkins filled the see of Chester in his stead. Dr. Wilkins had married Cromwell's sister, and was much beloved. He wished to encourage moderate Nonconformists, and among them made an overture to Martindale, which would have been gladly accepted had not the Archbishop of York stopped these liberal practices.

The connexion between Martindale and Lord Delamer was to be made closer; during September 1671 he accepted an engagement to become chaplain and tutor to his lordship's family. Martindale gratefully bears testimony to the kindness which was so admirable a feature in the conduct of one who had been so exalted as Lord Delamer. In return, Martindale educated a son, who afterwards contributed in no small degree to the establishment of England's liberty, and to the toleration which was granted to Nonconformists by William and Mary. Martindale says of his engagement:—"When I was first invited to officiate as chaplain at Dunham, it was only for three weeks or a month; but this proved to be fourteen years, and probably would have been more if my lord's death had not put an end to my attendance there. All this while I had the same liberties among my own people of Rotherston parish as before. Mine employment there (besides accompanying my lord oft abroad) was family duty twice a day; which before dinner was a short prayer, a chapter, and a more solemn prayer, and before supper the like, with a psalm. . . . When we kept at home I officiated; and when, on the Lord's Day, we went to Bowdon, I catechized in the evening, and expounded the catechism in a doctrinal and practical way."

Martindale's sufferings did not make him tolerant of some other Dissenters. It is sad to hear him say, "that if the King had offered me my liberty, upon condition that I would consent that Papists, Quakers, and all other wicked sects should have theirs also, I think I should never have agreed to it." He profited by the King's short-lived Declaration of Indulgence, issued March 1671-2, "which of all the many unpopular steps taken by the government was the most unpopular."* He took out a licence and preached twice each Sunday; on one of these occasions he called upon his successor, whom he found in his last illness, and who desired his prayers. Adam did not hesitate to speak faithfully to him.

* Macaulay, vol. i., page 220.

Several years passed quietly away, during which Martindale published various works, such as his *Country Survey Book*, his *Almanacks*, &c., which gained the approval of the Royal Society.* Nor was

* The following is a list of Adam Martindale's works; most of them are very rare, not to be found even in the British Museum. Not one of them is mentioned by Lowndes, *Bibliographer's Manual*, edit. 1861:—1. *Summary of Arguments for and against Presbyterianism and Independencie*. London, 1650. 2. *Divinity Knots unloosed*. London, 1649. 3. *An Antidote against the Poyson of the Times*. London, 1653. 4. *Almanacks*. London, 1675-6-7. 5. *Country Survey Booke*. London, 1681. 6. *Truth and Peace Promoted*. London, 1682. 7. *Animadversion upon the new booke called Julian the Apostate*, 1682. 8. *Whether kneeling in receiving the Lord's Supper be lawful*, 1682. 9. *A Token for Ship-Boyes*, 1683. 10. *The Patriarchal Sabbath*.

Of the above, numbers 7 and 8 were circulated in MS. No. 10 was not printed, owing to a quarrel between the publisher in London and one Philip Burton of Warrington, who had procured the MS.

During 1683 Mr. John Houghton, F.R.S., published some papers concerning husbandry and trade, among them were the following by Martindale:—Vol. i. No. 6, May 18th, 1682. A Letter from the ingenious Mr. Adam Martindale of Cheshire, about improving Land by Marle. No. 11, December 16th, 1682. A further account of the same. Vol. ii., No. 4, December 11th, 1683. An account of a great improvement of Mossie land, by burning and liming.

There is also in the *Philosophical Transactions*, Abr. 1. 539, 1670, "Extracts of Two Letters written from Rotherston in Cheshire, by the ingenious Mr. Adam Martindale, concerning the Discovery of a Rock of Natural Salt in that county."

The title page of "Divinity Knots," with a few extracts from the work, are given below: they were taken from a copy in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin:—

"Divinity Knots Unloosed, or a cleare Discovery of Truth, by dissolving many doubts, according to Scripture, orthodox Divines, and sound reason, so as weak capacities may receive satisfaction therein. To which purpose a number of points are explained by familiar Similes. A treatise intended specially for the instruction of young Christians in Rothstorne parish in Cheshire, but published for a further extent of the benefit thereof to the Israel of God. By Adam Martindale, one of the meanest labourers in the Lord's harvest. 1649." (In some copies there is another title-page.)

Dedication.—"To my dear and precious Father, Captain James Jollie, and to my present and quondam hearers at Rothstorne in Cheshire, and Gorton in Lancashire." "Strethill, Aprill the 9th, 1649."

EXTRACTS.

Martindale's views on Inspiration.—"We freely confess that in the characters and printing there may be error. And without the Spirit of God to assure us, no knowledge of the original is sufficient to give us full assurance that it is God's Word (1 Cor. ii. 14); but by the help of the Holy Spirit (1 John ii. 20, 27) the Scriptures may sufficiently inform an illiterate man for his salvation."

The Authority of Conscience.—"Doubt. If my conscience be erroneous what course can I take? If I go against the truth, I sin (2 Thes. ii. 10); and if I go against my conscience, I sin also (Romans xiv. ult.)?—Resolve. It is true: and therefore the way is to pray and seek for satisfaction, that your conscience may comply and close with the truth."—Page 48.

On free will; (an example of his similes).—"You know a blind man followeth his leader *freely* (that is, he is not haled or dragged away forcibly), which notwithstanding, I hope no man will say that a blind man, who relyeth wholly on the guidance of his leader, can go whither he will, and escape all dangerous places of himself; but according to his guide so is his going. So the will of man acts *freely*, but it seeth not by its own eyes but is guided by the

theology neglected; he was much engaged in the controversy touching kneeling at the sacrament. The confidence of Lord Delamer in his chaplain is manifested by his lordship sending him into Northumberland to arrange a marriage between his daughter and Sir Ralph Delaval, Bart. Troubles came thick and fast upon him shortly after this. He had already mourned over sons and daughters; he now suffered from fire and fever, and above all from the "unspeakable losse of my deare and faithful friend, my noble " Lord Delamer, together with all hopes of employment at Dunham." The loving intimacy of many years was broken, the counsellor, patron, and friend was dead, and Adam, weak in body and with broken health, had once more to face the world! To face the world and find a prison. Monmouth's rebellion in the west, and its subsequent failure, gave another plea for persecuting the Nonconformists. Orders were sent down to the deputy-lieutenants to secure all the Nonconformist ministers in the county; some were sent to Knutsford, some to Chester; Martindale to the latter place—weak, weary, and so ill as to be compelled to lie down twice on the journey he was compelled to go, though perfectly innocent. He was confined in jail for eighteen days, and then liberated on bail.

Soon after his return home he heard of the death of his fellow-prisoner, Mr. Briscowe.* It was followed by the deaths of many others who had suffered for conscience sake. One by one his friends passed away; the past had been full of trouble, the future looked gloomy, causing him to write, as the last sentence of his Diary, "When God " is housing his sheep (or rather sheep-herds) so fast, it is a dangerous " prognosticke of a storme ere long to ensue."

The reader may sometimes have wandered on the high cliffs by the sea shore: deep down below, the tide breaks with a hoarse roar upon the beach: the sun has been hidden ever and anon by clouds,

" understanding, which because of corruption is a false guide to it; and therefore " until God by His Spirit sanctify the understanding to be a faithful guide to the " will, it must needs act perversely though freely."

* Michael Briscowe was a student in Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards became pastor of a Congregationalist church at Walmesley in Lancashire. Thence he removed to Toxteth Park, where he preached in the chapel jointly with Mr. Thomas Crompton, and continued there till his death in September 1685, at the advanced age of ninety-six. Martindale calls him "a solid, able scholar, and a " singular good preacher. We were not," he adds, "directly of the same persuasion (for he was thoroughly Congregational), but that bred no dissension " among us."

and as he sets huge banks of cloud rise up as if to overwhelm his power, but through them beam forth streams of ruby light, and when at length the monarch of the day has sunk he lightens up the western sky with golden glory. So, too, the Christian life is sometimes chequered; peculiarly so was it with Martindale. From his cradle to his grave he encountered trouble, privation, and sorrow; but as we now stand, far removed from the tumult of the age in which he lived, we can review his course and feel that from amid the cloud beamed out bright light, leaving its blessing behind, and giving promise of a brighter rising on another scene.

Canon Parkinson thus concludes the Diary:—"He seems to have commenced, and probably concluded, this journal in the year 1685; and in the Parish Register of the Church of Rotherston is found this simple record of his death:—'Sepulturæ Anno Dom. 1686. 'Mr. Adam Martindale of Leigh, bur. Septem. 21.' Thus he was buried (as he himself would not have failed to remark) on the very day of his Baptism, and when he had just completed his sixty-third year. He has left behind him no descendants to hand down his name, no portrait to represent his features and habit, to posterity. 'After life's *fitful fever* he sleeps well,'—without a stone or an epitaph, in the chancel of that beautiful church which was the scene of so many of his labours and sorrows; and he is gone silently to that bourne where his faith and hope, his indomitable perseverance, and his steady devotion to his Master's service will not be forgotten."

The history of Nonconformity at Rostherne from this time is briefly told—it may be said to have migrated to Knutsford—it does not now exist in the village, or if it do it does not shew itself. A small chapel exists at Bucklow Hill; the interest was begun some twenty years ago in a barn, but now occupies a larger place. Mr. SIDEBOTTOM is the recently appointed minister.

KNUTSFORD.

(By the late Rev. J. TURNER.)

As to the town of Knutsford itself, from the account given by Tong, in his *Life, &c., of Matthew Henry*, it appears to have been in a very anomalous state as to ecclesiastical matters from the time of the

passing of the Act of Uniformity, and for more than twenty years afterwards. There were a number of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood who were Dissenters in principle ; but there was an aged minister in the church, a Mr. Turner, who had so much of the Puritan in his spirit and method of proceeding that they were unwilling to leave him. How he came to be endured in those times by the High Church party seems unaccountable. But it appears that, up to that time, the inhabitants generally had claimed the right of choosing their own minister, and part of the time good Dr. Wilkins, whose wife was sister to Oliver Cromwell, was Bishop of Chester, and was much blamed for showing so much favour towards Dissenters. This is stated in his funeral sermon, preached by Bishop Lloyd, who apologises for him. Dr. Calamy also mentions Dr. Wilkins's "soft" "interpretation of the terms of Conformity," which, he says, brought several into the church.

But, upon the death of Mr. Turner, his successor was a person in judgment "for a very rigorous Conformity," and then a time of much violence seems to have arisen. The Dissenters separated and others joined them, so that a strong body appears to have been formed, to whom Mr. TONG became the first pastor ; and then, about the time of King William's revolution, the venerable chapel was built now occupied by the Unitarians, and Knutsford frequently became the place for the meetings of the Dissenters and their ministers, among whom Matthew Henry was the most distinguished individual.

After the introduction of anti-Trinitarian doctrines (about 1740) into the old chapel, an interval of sixty or eighty years must have elapsed in which there was no preaching of the pure gospel at Knutsford in connexion with Nonconformity, except what was procured occasionally by individuals, of whom some from time to time seem to have been raised, who were lovers of "the truth as it is in Jesus." But, in 1803, the students from the Rev. W. Roby's very useful institution at Manchester visited Knutsford ; and to their labours, under the Divine blessing, the present public Independent interest there is to be ascribed. I was the first student who came thither, and a powerful effect at the time seemed to be produced. In 1808 I was induced to settle there, Mr. Roby's institution being discontinued, and no other means of supplying the place being known ; and there I have continued to the present time, encountering many difficulties of which it is useless and it would be sinful to complain. About a

year and a half ago infirmities obliged me to resign my pastorate. The place is at present served by supplies, and what may be in reserve "the Lord only knoweth."

It will be seen from the above that there happened, in 1662, no ejection at Knutsford itself, but adjacent places and parishes supplied cases of this kind in every direction. Rostherne, Mobberley, Over Peover, and Budworth may be mentioned as instances. Of the ministers ejected from these places, besides their names, Dr. Calamy gives an excellent character, particularly of Mr. Robert Norbury of Over Peover. But the most remarkable man among them was Adam Martindale of Rostherne. The Autobiography which he wrote of himself was lying silently in the British Museum until a few years ago; but it has been printed latterly by the Chetham Society, and makes a considerable volume. It is much to be regretted that it is not in general circulation, as perhaps nothing else would give to the public so curious and incomparable a picture of the times to which it relates. But it is the rule of that society to supply copies of the works they print from old manuscripts to none but their own members, who are limited to a certain number.

Mr. Martindale, with many others, complained that he had not opportunity given him to see the newly-modelled Prayer Book to which his "assent and consent" were required before the time limited by the Act of Parliament had expired; so that, if he had approved of every word in the book, he could not, he said, as an honest man have conformed to it. After his ejection he was received as chaplain into the establishment of the first Lord Delamer, by whom he was greatly esteemed. He was a great mathematician, as well as a judicious divine. He kept a mathematical school at Warrington, and afterwards at Dunham in Cheshire. He published several useful works on mathematical subjects, some of which were much esteemed by members of the Royal Society; and in theology he was author of *Divinity Knots Unloosed*, and *Truth and Peace Promoted*. He was buried at Rostherne, the scene of his former labours, in September 1686. The respectable clerical editor of his Autobiography, himself now deceased, treats his memory with great tenderness and respect, on account of the uprightness and transparency of his Christian character.

Among these Nonconformist worthies in Cheshire, an incident, which occurred to me more than fifty years ago, leads me to refer to

the case of Mr. John Machin, whose labours in the ministry are recorded to have been very abundant and useful both in Staffordshire and Cheshire. An aged and very poor woman presented me with a mutilated copy of Newcome's *Life of Mr. Machin*, which she had preserved for many years as a relic of him, knowing herself to be a descendant of his. She could not, of course, have any remembrance of himself; but she gave me a very interesting account of his daughter, who was her grandmother, as well as of the religious character of her grandfather, and of the godly order observed in their family. Mr. Machin was for some years minister at Astbury in this county; but, not long before the passing of the Act of Uniformity, he had removed to Whitley, also in Cheshire, from which place he was ejected. Mr. Philip Henry has given him a leading place among the good men known to him, whose memories he has recorded. "Mr. John Machin," he says, "was buried at Newcastle, September 4th, 1664, a worthy "instrument of gospel work, laborious, faithful, and successful above "his fellows, taken away in the midst of his days; the first candle I "have heard of put out by God among the many hundreds put under "a bushel by man."*

Upon such an occasion as this it is worthy of being mentioned that the two grandfathers of the Rev. John Wesley, both paternal and maternal, were included in the number of the two thousand ministers cast out, and were men of note among them. The manner in which this is referred to by Dr. Adam Clarke, in his *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, is worthy of notice. It is well known that Dr. Clarke was sufficiently liberal, in his day and among his connections, on the point of Conformity to the Established Church; but, after giving an abstract of the Act of Uniformity, and of the circumstances in which the Nonconforming ministers were placed by it, he says, "For my "own part, so far from being surprised that so great a number as two "thousand and twenty-five, according to Mr. Palmer's reckoning, "were cast out of the church in one day, I am surprised that one "learned or conscientious minister was found, on the requisitions of "the Act, to retain the living."†

In another place Dr. Clarke says:—"But this (full and fair discussion) was the farthest thing from the minds of the bishops. They "were determined to yield nothing, but carry everything their own

* Life, page 284.

† Memoirs, &c., page 14.

“ way; and the easy King, intent on nothing but his sinful pleasures, made no remonstrance, but permitted them to act as they pleased. The consequence was the true pastors of the flock were expelled from the fold, and hirelings, who cared more for the place and the pay than for the sheep, climbed over the wall and seized on flocks to which they had no right, either divine or human, and the people of God were either starved or scattered.”

To the foregoing sketch but little remains to be added.* The ancient town of Knutsford became the usual place of assembly for the Cheshire Association of Presbyterian and Congregational ministers, in the latter half of the seventeenth and the early part of the eighteenth century. Unusual interest, therefore, attaches to our memorials of this town. But, inasmuch as the Introduction to this volume gives a full account of this Association in its collective capacity, it will not be necessary to allude to these ministerial meetings here. We shall simply attempt to fill up the preceding outline of the growth of the Nonconformist places of worship at Knutsford.†

The parish of Rostherne originally included within itself the chapelry of Knutsford; but in 1741 this last mentioned place was made a separate parish. In the year 1777 Knutsford numbered 375 families, and 1,674 inhabitants. In 1722 Bishop Gastrell computed that there were 338 families resident here; of which seventy-four formed the congregation at the Presbyterian meeting-house.

The ancient parochial chapel of Knutsford‡ had three Conformist ministers, who were, more or less, Puritans and Presbyterians. Of these ministers the first dates from 1640. He is thus described—“ Mr. EDWARD BOLD—chosen ‘minister of God’s worde.’” To him succeeded, in 1665, Mr. ROBERT HUNTER, “minister of God’s worde.”

*The following supplement to the late Rev. J. Turner’s sketch has been furnished by the Rev. S. W. McAll, M.A., of Macclesfield.

† For some particulars that immediately follow we are indebted to an interesting little volume—*Knutsford, its Traditions and History*: by the Rev. H. Green, M.A.; as well as to some MS. notes Mr. Green has kindly furnished.

‡ Bishop Bridgman suspended this chapel under the following circumstances. A gentleman of Knutsford, being fond of sport, caused a bear passing along the street to be led into the chapel. The bishop no sooner heard of the chapel being thus profaned by the bear, than he suspended it from being used for public worship, and it remained long under this ecclesiastical censure.—*Brook’s Lives of the Puritans—Thomas Paget*. See also *Paget’s Defence*.

In 1662, Mr. Hunter at first refused to subscribe to the Book of Common Prayer; but at length he conformed, and remained in office till 1667, when he removed to Macclesfield. Calamy says that he died at Liverpool. In an ode composed by him in honour of Sir Peter Leycester, and quoted by Mr. Green in his volume on Knutsford, this Mr. Hunter signs himself—"Robertus Hunter, Knutsfordiensis "Ecclesiæ Pastor in Agro Cestrensi; Postea vero Maxfeldensis." On Mr. Hunter's removal, Mr. KETTLEBY TURNER was chosen minister of the parochial chapel. He died in 1687.

Here we interrupt our narrative for a moment to revert to the year 1646-7. In that year the following minute was passed relating to the maintenance of the minister of Knutsford, who at that date was probably Mr. RALPH HALL. "Att the Comittee for Plundered Ministers: "Januarii 13^{tho} Anno Dni. 1646. By vertue of an Order of both houses "of Parliament of the second of May last, it is ordered that y^e yearly "summe of fforty pounds bee allowed and payd out of the Improprate "tythe corne of the rectory of Ffrodsham, in the county of Chester, "sequestred from John, Earle Rivers, delinquent, to and for increase "of the maintenance of such minister as this committ^{ee} shall approve "off to officiate in the chappell of Knottesford, within the p^{ish} of "Rosterne in the said county: the present maintenance belonging "to the said chappell being but a stipend of ffive pounds sixe shil- "lings eight pence p. ann.; the towne of Knottesford being an ancient "markett towne, and the said chappellry consisting of above two "hundred families. And the sequestrators of the premises are "required to allowe and pay the same accordingly, att such tymes "and seasons of the yeare as the said tythe corne shall grow due and "payable. "HAR. GRIMSTONE."*

That Mr. RALPH HALL was pastor of Knutsford in 1648 is evident from his signature to the Cheshire Attestation. Whether or not he immediately succeeded Mr. Bold does not appear. He removed to a church in Staffordshire, at Mear, from which he was ejected in 1662; and subsequently he resided in Chester, in the account of which city, in this volume, a further reference to him will be found.† We have also to notice that, previously to the death of Mr. Turner, there was another Nonconformist minister resident at Knutsford, Mr. PETER LEE (or *Leigh*), who had been removed from his living in Chester. Of him, too, notice will be found elsewhere.‡

* Record Office, Domestic Interregnum No. 287. † See Page 27. ‡ Page 13.

Up to the year 1687 the inhabitants of this town had the right of choosing their own minister, as we learn, in part, from a remark of Gastrell's, "minister chosen by the inhabitants, anno 1662." Mr. Turner was thus elected, and while he lived he united in one the various religious parties in the town. The Nonconformist section of the community, unwilling to forsake him, continued to attend on his ministry until he died. He is said to have been "a man of great simplicity and godly sincerity," one who "used to keep days of prayer with some of his hearers, inviting them to pray as well as himself, according to the way of the good old Puritans."

Upon the decease of Mr. Turner dissensions occurred as to the choice of a successor. Mr. Tong writes:—"Upon the death of Mr. Turner, which I think was not long before Mr. Henry came to Chester, the town of Knutsford was divided very much about the choice of another minister. Though there be a chapel in the town, and a church about half a mile out of town, they are in the parish of Rostherne. However, the inhabitants had been used to choose their own minister, and thought they had a legal as well as a Scripture right to do so; but some of the inhabitants that were for a greater strictness in the rituals of religion, and a greater liberty in morals than Mr. Turner had approved of, were very industrious to have a minister of their own temper, and rather than fail of their design they chose to give up all pretensions to the right of electing their minister, and applied themselves to the Bishop's Court about it. The case was somewhat intricate where the right of presentation lay, but at length the High Church party prevailed, and Mr. Holmes, who was chaplain to Lord Delamere, was fixed with them. He was a person of very good learning, and of sober conversation. His parents were Dissenters, but his judgment was for a very rigorous Conformity."*

From this point the Nonconformity of Knutsford has a history of its own. We shall allow Mr. Tong still to speak for himself, as the first minister of the Nonconformist congregation. Speaking still of Mr. Holmes, he says, "Many of the inhabitants that had never been Dissenters refused to own him as their minister, and joined with others that had been always Dissenters in judgment, to set up a meeting and invite a Dissenting minister to come and preach to

* Life of Henry, page 254.

“ them. In this they were encouraged by several eminent Christians
 “ that lived near that place, such as the pious widow of Colonel
 “ Venables of Wincham, Mr. Lee of Oughterton and his son at
 “ Ollerton, Mr. Brooks and Mr. Low of Chelford, Mr. Colthurst,
 “ Mrs. Ward of Caperthorne, Mr. Holland of Mobberley, Mr. Philip
 “ Wright and Mr. Randal Merrill of Pever, Mr. Robert Kell, and
 “ several others, most of whom had been hearers of the Rev. Mr.
 “ Edge at Withington, and were some of the most eminent persons
 “ for religious knowledge and wisdom, for a spirit of prayer, for a
 “ true Christian temper and regular conversation that ever I had the
 “ happiness to be acquainted with. In this design of theirs to set
 “ up a meeting at Knutsford, they consulted the ministers of their
 “ acquaintance, and I received an invitation from them; and by the
 “ advice of both Mr. Henrys—father and son—and Mr. Hervey of
 “ Chester, and particularly my kind friend Mr. Henthorn, who knew
 “ the place well and many of the people, and did not a little encourage
 “ their design, I adventured upon the work, though under some dis-
 “ couragements in my own mind from the great contentions there had
 “ been, and still were, in the town, in which I was loath to engage
 “ myself. I feared lest those that had not been Dissenters till on this
 “ occasion would not prove so steady or so regular as those that had
 “ been better instructed in the principles of Nonconformity; but in
 “ all these things God was pleased to prevent us and to encourage us.
 “ We met with less opposition than we had expected, and with more
 “ success and comfort than we could promise ourselves; we had a full
 “ congregation; many young persons came in; we had great peace
 “ and love and unanimity amongst ourselves. The effects of former
 “ contentions began to cease, and the prejudices of the other side to
 “ abate; and I hope the valuable interests, not of party but of practical
 “ religion were promoted, and continue to be so to this day.”*

The first Nonconformist chapel was opened in 1689. Mr. WILLIAM
 TONG did not remain long as its pastor. He left Knutsford in 1690,
 and removed to Coventry. From there he removed again to London,
 and became the intimate associate of Matthew Henry in the metro-
 polis. Of his own subsequent history we have but scanty knowledge.
 This most excellent man has rendered himself chiefly known by his
Life of Matthew Henry; a book written with remarkable judgment

* *Life of Henry*, page 255.

and good taste. The biographer obtrudes himself and his opinions as little as possible, and leaves us longing to know more of him, as a man of true Christian worth. On the occasion of Mr. Henry's visiting London, in May 1698, Mr. Tong seems to have embraced the opportunity of Henry's passing through Sutton Colefield to request him to preach at the meeting-house in this place. Here many ministers from Birmingham and Coventry met him; and after the service that day Henry went on to Coventry, and thence the next day "his friend " Mr. T. went along with him to London." Who this friend was there is no reasonable doubt; and this appears to have been the commencement of Tong's residence in London. On February 14th, 1704, Henry received a letter from "Mr. T.," earnestly inviting him to make a journey to London that spring; a request that the good man complied with.

Mr. Tong's name appears, along with that of the Rev. James Shower, appended to the "recommendation" that prefaced the first volume of Matthew Henry's *Commentary*. The preface to the work bears date "Chester, October 2nd, 1706;" and the recommendation, or "epistle to the reader," bears date "London, 31st October 1706." At this time Mr. Tong was settled in the metropolis; and when in 1714 Henry set out from London for Chester, on his last journey there, his biographer accompanied him, also on a journey to Coventry; and parted with his much loved friend at S. Albans. They never met again. The year 1716 still found Mr. Tong in London; for his *Life of Matthew Henry* is dated thence, and was published in the year just named.*

Reverting now to Knutsford, the vacant pulpit there was supplied by the Rev. THOMAS KYNASTON, who died, however, after a pastorate of only five years. "January 10th, 1693. It pleased God to remove " by death the worthy Mr. Thomas Kynaston of Knutsford, at whose " house we were wont to meet. He had not quite completed the " thirtieth year of his age. He was one of very good parts, solid

* William Tong was born on the 24th June 1662, at Eccles in Lancashire, and was educated for the law. He first met Matthew Henry at Gray's Inn, when the friendship was formed which lasted through life. He entered Mr. Frankland's academy at Natland March 2nd, 1680-1. When he left Knutsford he became the successor of Dr. Grew at Coventry. In 1704 he succeeded the Rev. Nathanael Taylor as minister of Salter's Hall, London. He was one of the "Subscribers" in the controversy regarding the Trinity at Salter's Hall, and wrote an introduction to the work by them published, entitled *The Doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity stated and defended*. He died March 21st, 1727, aged sixty-five years.

“ judgment, a very profitable preacher, and of eminent humility, “ modesty, and sweetness of temper, and had been instrumental of “ much good at Knutsford, where he had been about five years.” Such is the allusion to his death in the Minute Book of the Classis. Matthew Henry records, with unfeigned grief, his receiving of the news of Mr. Kynaston’s death; “ a man younger than I (he says), but “ fitter for heaven.” He was the son of Mr. Kynaston, minister of Whitley Chapel, who, dying a young man, left his son Thomas a mere child; but friends were kind to the widow and her children, and, after educating them, sent the eldest son—Thomas—to Dr. Frankland’s academy at Natland, near Kendal, in 1681. After being there for some years, Mr. Kynaston returned to Manchester and enjoyed the ministry of Mr. Newcome for some time. “ God gave him a humble, “ meek, honest disposition of soul, which, together with his ministerial “ gifts, made him a very acceptable person, beloved by his people, by “ his brethren in the ministry, and well spoken of by all men.” He died—“ not full of days, but full of faith”—giving upon his deathbed his hearty consent to that gospel covenant which he made the great subject of his ministry. Such is the testimony to his character of one who knew him well.

Upon Mr. Kynaston’s death the church gave an invitation to the Rev. SAMUEL LOW, then settled at Chorlton. Being comfortably fixed with his people, and doing much good, he was reluctant to leave them, the more so as they were very unwilling to part with him. He, however, took the advice of the ministerial association with which he was connected, and upon their recommendation he accepted the invitation he had received. These brethren ground their recommendation upon the fact that there was a larger sphere of usefulness at Knutsford than at Chorlton; and they advise that in three months they should remove. He died of a fever at Knutsford on April 19th, 1709. He seems to have been a good scholar and an excellent preacher. His funeral sermon was preached by Matthew Henry, who thus refers to the service:—“ On the 21st [April], I went early to “ Knutsford, to Mr. Low’s funeral; a faithful minister, aged about “ thirty-nine, of whom the world was not worthy. He had been “ about thirteen years at Knutsford. I find him universally lamented. “ He greatly recommended himself by a dispassionate temper of “ mind. He was buried in the meeting-place. I preached on the “ sad occasion from John xii. 35, *Yet a little while is the light with “ you. Walk while ye have the light.*”

In May 1709, the Rev. THOMAS LEA, then at Upton, was chosen as Mr. Low's successor. He commenced his ministry in August of the same year. Mr. Tong, referring to Knutsford as the place of meeting of the Classis, adds these words—"where, after two worthy young ministers, Mr. Kynaston and Mr. Low, their present minister, Mr. Lee, is, with faithfulness and diligence, watching for their souls." From other references to Mr. Lea we may gather that he was much respected—a useful and consistent minister of the gospel. In 1715 he had five hundred hearers, of whom eighteen were gentlemen and seventy-seven had votes for the county. Mr. Lea died May 17th, 1733.*

During the next two years the church invited to the pastorate, first, Mr. Chorley, and then Dr. Clegg; but both of these gentlemen declined the invitation they had received. In 1735 we find the name of the Rev. JOHN TURNER as minister of this chapel. Before coming to Knutsford, Mr. Turner lived at Preston. When there, he and many of his congregation joined the army under General Willis, on the occasion of the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1715. On November 13th in that year, Generals Willis and Carpenter met the forces of the Pretender at Preston, and obliged them to surrender at discretion. Mr. Turner was firmly attached to the principles of the Revolution; and on this occasion rendered such material service to General Willis that he was publicly thanked by the general, in the presence of the whole army. This we learn upon the authority of a notice of Mr. Turner in the *Congregational Magazine*, in October 1820.

Of this good man's ministry in Cheshire we know nothing. He died on October 12th, 1737. His successor was the Rev. THOMAS COLTHURST. He died January 27th, 1738. We find a passing allusion to him in the diary of Mrs. Savage, the sister of Matthew Henry:—"1739, Monday, February 12. I hear of the death of Mr. Colthurst, minister at Knutsford. Surely a public loss. An upright, charitable man."

In 1739, the Rev. ROBERT LORD was chosen pastor of the now vacant church. He retained his position for about fifty years, removing at length to Nottingham. Mr. Lord was in sentiment a Socinian. Under his ministry the Association of Presbyterian and Independent Ministers was broken up. The succession of ministers from his day

* See page 88.

to the present time at the old chapel—now held by the Unitarian congregation—is as follows :—

1790-1795. Rev. THEOPHILUS HARRIS—emigrated to the United States.

1795-1809. Rev. PHILIP GEORGE DAVIS—died April 5th, 1809.

1810-1819. Rev. JOHN SMETHURST—removed from Knutsford.

1820-1826. Rev. JOSEPH ASHTON—removed to Halifax.

In 1827 the Rev. HENRY GREEN, M.A., the present minister, entered upon the pastorate of the church.

KNUTSFORD INDEPENDENT CHAPEL.

The Independent Chapel at Knutsford originated in 1770 ; when persons attached to Evangelical truth met together in private houses and read sermons on the Sabbath Day. At length, through the exertions of Captain Scott, meetings for worship were held more stately ; and in 1803 a small chapel was erected by a friend at his own expense. This place was soon enlarged ; and from the first the church formed in this new place of worship has enjoyed the pastoral oversight of the venerable and much honoured man who has, in the preceding pages, given his personal reminiscences of his early ministry.

And now, since a large portion of the present volume has been in the press, the Rev. JAMES TURNER himself has, “in a good old age,” been “gathered to His people.” Faithful to the ministry which he had “received in the Lord,” he has entered into the promised rest ; whilst we, whom he has left behind, and who have watched his manner of life, and how he was ever “serving the Lord with all humility of “mind,” would glorify God on his behalf.

So far as Mr. Turner's life—quiet and unobtrusive as it was—supplies the materials for a biographical sketch, we cannot do better than reproduce here, with some slight changes, a notice of the late minister of the Independent Church at Knutsford, which appeared in the *Macclesfield Courier* of May 30, 1863.

“When for the long period of sixty years a minister has been
 “before the same congregation, in earnestness and integrity of purpose
 “fulfilling the duties of his station—death alone terminating his service
 “in his blessed Master's cause—it is with more than common feelings
 “of respect we take note of his departure from this earthly scene.
 “His sphere of usefulness may not have been wide, nor his talents

“commanding, nor his outward success remarkable ; yet the unobtrusive and steady carrying out of the true purposes of the Christian ministry, where Divine Providence first placed him, has a record in the hearts of those who knew him, and a far nobler record on high. He has done good work from morning dawn until evening shade ; though he has observed, to the very letter, the resolution of the Shunamite, ‘ I dwell among mine own people.’

“How many changes has he not seen and experienced even in the small community among whom his life has been spent ? Probably there is not one remaining of those who, in 1802, heard his first sermon, in Knutsford, declaring the Gospel of the grace of God. The people who then gathered around him have departed to the keeping of the righteous Creator, many of them supported by the consolations which he well knew how to administer. His own turn, in God’s appointment, has come for descending into the dark valley of the shadow of death ; where, we doubt not, he found the same refuge and solace which he had so faithfully set before others.

“Mr. Turner was born at Shaw, near Oldham, in March, 1782 ; and his first occupation in life was as an apprentice to a bookseller in Manchester. His fondness for study, and his decidedly religious turn of mind, led him, before his apprenticeship was over, to place himself under the care of the Rev. William Roby, of Manchester, who conducted a very useful Institution for preparing young men for the Christian ministry. While a student here, in December 1802, he preached his first sermon in Knutsford ; and the Independent interest was kept up for five or six years in the town by himself and his fellow students. Mr. Roby’s academy was discontinued ere long, and Mr. Turner became a student at Rotherham College, under Dr. Williams and the Rev. Maurice Phillips. Whilst at Rotherham, he received an invitation to Carlisle, which he declined, and one to Knutsford, which he accepted.

“He entered on his stated ministry in 1808 ; from which time Knutsford continued to be the centre of his labours. During the same period, also, he had charge of the Independent congregation in Mobberley : and, until increased infirmities prevented him, he was regular in the discharge of his duties. A year or two previous to his death, he nominally resigned the pastorate ; but as no successor had been chosen, he may be regarded as really the pastor of these churches till death gave him release.

“ For twenty-four years he was the local secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society ; and for upwards of twenty years, secretary to the Cheshire Union of Independent Ministers and Churches. He also continued almost to the last to be one of the managers of the Knutsford Savings Bank. His judgment and clearness of mind were not unfrequently made use of in private business ; and great confidence was, on this ground, reposed in him.

“ He died on Friday May 22nd, 1863, after a few weeks' illness— if illness that can be called in which nature's powers have gradually decayed from eighty-one years of exercise. The boundary of this human life had been reached, and God's servant sank to his rest. May we be as uncomplaining and hopeful as he was under many difficulties, and, like him, find joy and peace in believing.”

Mr. Turner was buried at the parish church at Knutsford, on Thursday, May 28th, amidst demonstrations of respect from all classes of society. The Rev. RICHARD ALLIOTT, B.A., is the present minister.

BAPTIST CHAPEL, MILLINGTON.

A chapel was erected here for the Particular Baptists in 1759. The first minister who officiated here was Mr. THOMASON, who left in 1766 ; he was succeeded by Mr. ISAAC CHEETHAM. He remained till his death, in 1800. After this the congregation depended upon the occasional ministrations of Mr. THOMAS AKED, of Halifax, who came a distance of forty miles, once a month, to preach and administer the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Mr. JOHN CHETHAM occupied the pulpit on the intermediate Sundays. In course of time he was invited to become the settled minister of the place. This offer was accepted, and Mr. Chetham remained with his people till his death, in 1819. The chapel has been supplied with some irregularity since then ; preaching is still carried on there, and the chapel is kept in good order.

FRODSHAM.

WALKER names Rowland Haywood, D.D., as “ persecuted, harrassed, and thereby driven from this living,” about the year 1645. “ He lived to see the Restoration, but did not return to his parish. His first

“ successor was a Presbyterian, and the next an Anabaptist, one *James Cockayne*, who quitted it at the Restoration, leaving most of the parish “ either of his own persuasion or the Quakers.”* The name of the Presbyterian who was appointed in place of Dr. Haywood, was SAMUEL BOWDEN, who signed the *Attestation* of Cheshire Ministers in 1648. He was ejected for refusing the Engagement, and was succeeded by JAMES COCKAYNE, a Baptist minister, who was ejected in 1660. Dr. Rowland Haywood was then reinstated, but resigned in favour of Theophilus Cooke, A.M., who was instituted to the rectory May 20th, 1661.

During the Interregnum this living was sequestered from Earl Rivers, in whose possession it had been ; and in the minutes of the Committee for Plundered Ministers there is an entry to the effect that “ 25*l.* from Frodsham, sequestered from Earl Rivers, be paid to the “ maintenance of John Pemberton the younger, minister of the parish “ church of Whitegate.”† The castle of Frodsham was destroyed by fire in 1654, the dead body of John Earl of Rivers then lying in it.

In the year 1648, Henry Newcome preached at Alvandley Chapel, in this parish, for several weeks together, probably through the influence of the Ardern's, who then resided there.‡ The Quakers were numerous in the parish, and George Fox occasionally visited them. Bishop Gastrell notes two Dissenting meeting-houses in Frodsham parish : one belonging to the Quakers, the other to the Presbyterians.

GENERAL BAPTIST CHAPEL, KINGSLEY.

Matthew Henry, while minister of Crook-street Chapel, Chester, was wont occasionally to preach a reformation sermon at Frodsham. He notes in his Diary: “ August 9, 1709. Went to Frodsham, preached “ on Ecclesiastes ix. 10; an encouraging auditory; dined at Mrs. “ Banner's. March 14, 1710. Preached the lecture at Frodsham on “ Psalm iv. 1. September 12. Preached the lecture at Frodsham on “ Psalm iv. 2; expounded Matthew xii.; called of Sam. Bennet, not “ well; complaints of Mr. John Wood, their minister. August 14, “ 1711. Went to Frodsham, preached on Psalm iv. 5; met with Mr. “ Dutton. October 9. Went to Frodsham, expounded John v.;

* Sufferings of the Clergy, part ii., *in loc.*

† Record Office, Domestic Interregnum, 286.

‡ Newcome's Autobiography, page 11.

“preached on Psalm iv. 6, 7.” These entries indicate the existence of a Nonconformist congregation in this place, with a stated minister; and it is probable that this was the beginning of the church at Kingsley, which is in Frodsham parish. Mr. JOSEPH MOTTERSLED, afterwards minister at Nantwich, preached at Kingsley, while a candidate for the ministry, from 1710 to 1712. He was succeeded by Mr. THOMAS HOLLAND, son of Mr. John Holland, of Mobberley, who had been educated by the Rev. Mr. Cunningham, of Manchester, and who was examined, approved, and allowed to preach as a candidate by Matthew Henry and Mr. Murrey of Chester, in 1711. Mr. T. Holland was ordained in August 1714, and in 1715 he had one hundred hearers at Kingsley, thirty of whom had votes for the county.* He removed to Ware in Shropshire, in 1717, and was succeeded at Kingsley by the Rev. THOMAS VALENTINE. Mr. Valentine was ordained at Knutsford 5th May, 1719, together with Mr. Edward Thornton. The evening before, they read their *theses*. Mr. Thornton’s question was, *An reatus primae transgressionis in se posteris Adami imputatur?* Affirmative. Mr. Valentine’s was, *An justitia quae coram Deo subsistimus sit justitia Christi Mediatoris?* Affirmative. Afterwards in a numerous assembly of ministers and people, met together in the new chapel, they were both solemnly set apart for the office and work of the ministry.† Mr. Valentine continued at Kingsley till 1731, when he removed to Blackley Chapel, Lancashire, where he laboured in the midst of poverty till his death, in 1755.‡ DAVID HERBERT, the next minister, was ordained in 1732, and remained at Kingsley six years, when a severe censure was passed upon him by the Cheshire ministers, who for a time excluded him from their society. In 1738, Mr. JOHN PHILLIPS was ordained as minister of Kingsley. He died January 18th, 1761, aged forty-eight years. JOHN FOREST, from Warrington Academy, followed; but he died here, very young, in 1762. The next minister was the Rev. JAMES GREEN, who removed to Northwich, in 1764, and was followed here by the Rev. JOHN CLOUGH. He is said to have kept a school. After him came EDWARD ASTBURY, who, in 1808, collected 82*l.* to rebuild the chapel, and was still the minister in 1820, since which date we have no account of the place.

* Josiah Thompson’s MSS., Dr. Williams’s Library.

† Cheshire Minute Book. ‡ Booker’s History of Blackley Chapel, page 97.

GRAPPENHALL.*

GRAPPENHALL is situated some two miles from Warrington, and was the property of the same Osbern who owned one moiety of Lymm at the Conquest. The Rev. *William Seddon*, M.A., a Royalist clergyman, who had been obliged to leave Chester and Eastham,† obtained the presentation of this living—vacant by the death of the former rector, the Rev. Ralph Richardson—through Mr. Brotherton of Lancashire, who “freely tendered it to him, and persuaded him with all secrecy and expedition to post up to the Commissioners, or Triers, or ministers, which accordingly my father did;”—the account purports to be his son’s—“and upon examination was by them approved and recommended to the rectory of Grapenhall, a parsonage worth about 120*l.* per annum.‡ Here he settled and fixed himself, well accepted and beloved by his parishioners, so that he had time to re-collect his dispersed family and enjoy a calm. But this could not be durable; he was soon haunted with the old rumours of a dangerous delinquent, a malignant, &c., and at last with a moral assurance that one Major Brooks, a Parliament officer (whose malice he had formerly experienced), intended shortly to seize and apprehend him; which caused him for a time to abscond, and afterwards (upon overt attempt made upon him) to fly into Lancashire. A new rector, one Mr. BRADSHAW, a rigid Presbyterian, was put in; whether appointed by the commissioners or usurpation I know not. Presently, upon the Restoration, he ejected Bradshaw again, who, though a rigid Presbyterian, yet then trimmed, and got another benefice called *Lym*, in Cheshire, where I think he died.§ And my father, being restored to the rectory of Grapnall, re-settled himself and his family in the Parsonage House there, where he and my mother—the constant partner of his sufferings—aged each of them about seventy, departed this life in one month, and lie buried both in one grave in the chancel there, 1671.”

* The notices of Grappenhall, Lymm, and Warburton, are furnished by Joseph Thompson, Esq., of Bowdon.

† See page 70.

‡ The same value is set upon it by Bishop Gastrell, in *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i., page 333; the able editor, Canon Raines, gives its value in 1834 at 542*l.*

§ Ormerod places Bradshaw among the rectors of Lymm, but without date; he takes no notice of him as rector of Grappenhall.

With the close of this chequered life Nonconformist history almost ended in Grappenhall. Ormerod does not mention Seddon's early installation to the living, but at the close of his predecessor's career, states that William Seddon became rector, the living having been presented by the King "by lapse," 18th September 1661. He held it till his death in 1671.

In 1712 a school was built by the town, and endowed by Mr. Thomas Johnson, *anno* 1627, with lands at Appleton of the value of 12*l.* 12*s.* per annum.* Gastrell's account differs somewhat from this. "Here is a school, built at y^e expense of y^e town, *an.* 1715, and not yet endowed, only 3*l.* per annum, which was given some time ago to a school when there should be any other provision, and in y^e mean- time to y^e Parish Church."

Of the sixty families in Gastrell's time,† three only were Nonconformists.

LYMM.

THE village of Lymm lies about equi-distant between Altrincham—six miles to the east—and Warrington to the west. It possesses considerable natural beauty, being situated on an elevation of sandstone, from which extensive views can be obtained. The river Dane, banked up at the entrance to the village, has quite the appearance of a lake; from this point it is frequently broken into pretty cascades, and takes its course between lofty sandstone rocks, covered with moss, lichen, and fern, till it has passed through the village, and meanders among the meadows on its way to the Mersey.

The parish church is of ancient origin, "a very ancient parish church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary," says Sir P. Leycester, who also adds, "here hath been a church before the Norman Conquest." The parish is divided into two moieties, one of which was held by Gilbert Venables, and the other by Osborne, son of Tezzon. The singular custom prevails still of two rectors being appointed by the lords of the manor: "So that either lord had one-half of the church; and so at this day are two parsons presented to Limme, who supply the ministry there *alternis vicibus*, one one Sunday and the other the next Sunday after, and so by course.‡ The notices of Nonconformity

* Lyson's Cheshire, page 665.

† Vol. i., page 333.

‡ Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. i., page 433.

at Lymm are but few. Calamy says that the Rev. JOHN SHAW, M.A., afterwards Nonconformist minister of Hull, was presented to this living by Sir W. Brereton in 1643, and held it two years. Walker, in his *Sufferings of the Clergy*, alludes to THOMAS BRADSHAW, a Presbyterian, who, under the influence of the ruling powers, ejected the rector of Grappenhall, and, being dispossessed in turn at the Restoration, conformed, and retired to Lymm. His name is given by Ormerod as rector under the Leigh moiety, somewhere between 1662—1670; but no precise date is mentioned, nor the name of the patron.

Nonconformity continued after this; for Bishop Gastrell† records a Presbyterian meeting-house as being there, also a Presbyterian family.

In November 1819 the Baptist meeting-house in Cherry Lane was opened. In September 1850 the pretty stone Baptist chapel, situated on the Altrincham Road, was opened. This chapel owes its erection mainly to the late Thomas Ridgway, Esq., of Beechwood, who gave the land and building materials, and also a large sum of money towards the erection. The Rev. ISAAC RIDGWAY is the present minister.

CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, LYMM.

In April 1859 the Cheshire Congregational Union held its annual meeting at Macclesfield, when a small committee was formed, consisting of the ministers at Bowdon and Sale, and half-a-dozen laymen; and it was determined to begin preaching at Lymm, both on account of the present large population in the neighbourhood, and because it was expected that the locality would ultimately become a fashionable place of residence. In August of the same year, a large upper room, kindly lent by G. C. Dewhurst, Esq., was opened for preaching by Professor Newth, of the Lancashire Independent College. The cause progressed, and the Rev. R. BERTRAM was chosen as pastor of the place. He resigned in the spring of 1863, and in the December following the Rev. JOSEPH KIGHTLEY accepted the pastorate. After considerable delay, a most eligible site of land was secured from Mr. Dewhurst (to whom the committee were indebted for many acts of kindness), in the best part of Lymm. Mr. Walters of Manchester was called in as architect, and the present beautiful chapel, built of

† *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i., page 335.

stone, in the early English style, was opened May 21st, 1863, when the Rev. H. Stowell Brown of Liverpool preached in the morning, from Romans i. 14—17, and the Rev. Professor Newth preached at night.

The chapel, with heating, gas, railing, &c., cost 2,500*l.* It is expected that the schools (not yet commenced) will cost 800*l.*, and half the chief rent, 400*l.*, making a total of 3,700*l.* Towards this 500*l.* have been received as the proceeds of the sale of Park Gate Chapel to the Presbyterians; 600*l.* from the Bicentenary Committee; and 342*l.* raised by friends. The amounts promised on the day of opening reached 640*l.*, and it is fully expected that the remaining debt upon the chapel will be wiped off.

WARBURTON.

THE only notice of Warburton, as a centre of Nonconformity, is that given by Calamy,* where he says:—"The Rev. Joshua Barnet, "ejected from Rockadym (Wrockwardine) in Shropshire, after his "ejection, removed into Cheshire some years before his death, and "preached publicly in the Parish Church of Warburton, but he never "conformed; that place being exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. "He was a personable man, of considerable abilities, and a pleasing "preacher. He died very much lamented."

During the summer of 1861 some of the Congregationalists of Bowdon began to preach here on Sabbath evenings. "The common "people heard them gladly," and were anxious for them to continue; they were, however, afraid to let their cottages for preaching, and the effort had to be discontinued.

RUNCORN.

EPHRAIM ELCOCK signed the Cheshire Attestation as pastor of Runcorn in 1648. He was probably father of the person of the same name who was a pupil of Adam Martindale's son,† and who was afterwards master of the Free School at Tarvin, and curate to Dr.

* Vol. iii., page 150.

† Martindale's Autobiography, page 192.

Arderne at Thornton. Ephraim Elcock did not hold the living of Runcorn till the Restoration. He was succeeded by THOMAS BRECK, who was probably ejected in 1662, and the living was presented to William Finmore, archdeacon of Chester.

Bishop Gastrell tells us that in his time there were seven families of Dissenters in this parish—two Presbyterian, two Quaker, and three Anabaptist.

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, RUNCORN.*

Some time during the year 1829, about six persons assembled together in a house in Runcorn for prayer and other religious exercises. In a short time their number increased, and attracted the observation of a person named Mr. William Pennington, who had property in the neighbourhood, and who offered to build a chapel for them if they would undertake the instruction of the children in that part of the town on the Sabbath Day. His kind offer was gratefully accepted, and soon after the chapel called S. Luke's was erected in Pennington's Row, with the schoolrooms attached to it, and the whole, together with a piece of land opposite—originally designed for a burial ground—was given over in trust. The neighbouring ministers encouraged the little flock by occasionally preaching for them. Pecuniary aid was also rendered by the County Unions, and especially by John Tomkinson, Esq., then of Liverpool, who had quarries in the vicinity of Runcorn, and was engaged in large building operations, having been contractor for the erection of the Liverpool Custom House, S. George's Hall, &c.

The Rev. J. ROBINSON, from Airedale College, commenced his ministry in this chapel on the 1st of January 1832. A church, according to the views of the Independent denomination of Protestant Dissenters, was formed on the 27th of the following June. The ministers named as having taken part in the services on the occasion are the Revs. Job Wilson of Northwich, J. Kelly and J. Widows of Liverpool, and Millard of Wigan. Mr. Tomkinson afterwards purchased a very eligible site in High-street, on which he reared an excellent chapel for the congregation, capable of conveniently accommodating seven hundred persons, at an expense to himself of nearly 6,000*l.* To this, which was named Bethesda Chapel, the

* Furnished by the Rev. A. Howson of Runcorn.

congregation removed on the 29th of September 1835, when the ordination of Mr. Robinson to the pastorate took place. The ministers who officiated were the same as had been engaged at the formation of the church, with the exception of Mr. Millard, and the addition of the Revs. Dr. Raffles of Liverpool, John Ely of Leeds, and G. B. Kidd of Macclesfield. Mr. Robinson resigned in the summer of 1839, and became pastor of a church at West Haughton in Lancashire. The next minister chosen was the Rev. S. HILLYARD, then of Elstead, Surrey. He commenced his stated labours at Run-corn on the 29th of March 1840, and resigned in July 1843. In course of time he settled at Bedworth in Warwickshire, where he still resides. The Rev. R. B. BLAKEHURST of Rotherham College, was next chosen. He soon displayed a leaning to the Established Church, and after a pastorate of about a year he left in February 1845, and subsequently became a minister in the Establishment. In the following June the Rev. ANDREW THOMAS of Glasgow University accepted an invitation to the pastorate. He was ordained on July 2nd, 1845, resigned in October 1846, and afterwards went to America. These frequent changes were unfavourable to the advancement of the church and congregation.

On January 3rd, 1847, the Rev. J. I. JESSON, who had been driven by French persecution from the island of Tahiti, South Pacific, entered on his charge as pastor. Within a year and a half a change took place in Mr. Tomkinson's affairs, and the chapel not having been placed in trust, as he had fully intended, a demand of 1,200*l.* was made upon the property, which, ere it could be met, by the accumulation of interest and other expenses, had increased to more than 1,500*l.* The committee of the Lancashire Chapel Building Society having been made acquainted with the state of matters, offered 700*l.* toward the liquidation of this sum on condition that the congregation would exert themselves to raise the rest. Meanwhile Mr. Jesson continued his ministry for about six years and a half, and resigned it in June 1853. Although there had been a considerable increase in members during the former part of his pastorate, yet, in consequence of some unpleasant circumstances which occurred towards its close, there was a serious falling off, and the church remained without a pastor for about two years; then the Rev. W. H. MANN, of the Lancashire Independent College, having been invited, commenced his ministry on July 21st, 1855. In the spring of 1857 the

long continued efforts of the congregation to remove the incumbrance on the chapel, and to have it properly placed in trust, were crowned with success. On the 17th November 1858 Mr. Mann resigned his charge, being about to remove to the pastorate of Mill Hill Chapel, Blackburn.

The following year the Rev. A. Howson, then of Hartlepool, Durham, accepted an invitation, and began his stated ministry November 6th, 1859. Towards the close of 1860 the erection of a new schoolroom upon a piece of land behind the chapel, which had been reserved for that purpose, was projected. The contract was taken for 400*l.* The room was opened in October 1861, when, through the liberality of friends, the pastor had the gratification to announce the receipt of a sufficient amount to cover the expenditure, and a considerable surplus toward the expense of furnishing. The next year the schoolrooms at S. Luke's Chapel were converted into a comfortable cottage, and the chapel itself, which had become much delapidated, was refloored and otherwise improved. It is regarded as an out-station. Sabbath school is held in it, and meetings for worship on Sunday and Thursday evenings. Both chapels are registered as the property of the Independents, and the deeds are deposited in the muniment room of the Lancashire Independent College.

HILL CLIFFE.

(By the Rev. JOSEPH PYWELL of Stockport.)

THE oldest Baptist church in the county, and probably the oldest in England, is that at Hill Cliffe, about two miles from Warrington. Whether this church was actually the first organised body of Baptists in the country it is impossible to affirm, for so early as 1457 there were articles of indictment brought against persons reported to have been members of the church at Chesterton near Cambridge, in which they are charged with the "heresy" of believing that "a child does "not need and ought not to be baptized." But whether there was a church at that early date at Chesterton is doubtful, or rather it is not yet proved. If there were it has long since disappeared, and but little now is known of such a body beyond some vague floating traditions. But it is different with the church at Hill Cliffe, which has

maintained a continuous existence from a very early date, and is the mother church of the Baptists in Liverpool, Warrington, Little Leigh, and Cherry Lane, in the parish of Lymm. Tradition gives it an existence prior to the Reformation, and it is ascertained that a Mr. WEYERBURTON, a person of property and a devoted man, was its recognized minister; that he remained with the people to the end of his days; and that he died in the year 1594. This fact being beyond doubt, there is at least a probability that the church was, at any rate, coeval with the Reformation, which may be said to have taken place in 1529.* The Rev. FRANCIS TURNER was minister somewhat more than a century ago. During his ministry the Baptist Church at Liverpool was formed; the members of which had till that time been members at Hill Cliffe, whence they were regularly dismissed to Liverpool. The next name, which occurs without date, is that of the Rev. JOHN HEYES, to whom succeeded Mr. HALL, and to him Mr. HARPER, who, becoming erroneous in his sentiments, was ejected at a very considerable expense to the people. The place was shut up about seven years after Mr. Harper's removal, but was re-opened in August 1792, by the Rev. JOHN THOMPSON, who continued in the pastoral office at Hill Cliffe from that time till the year 1820, when, on account of his advanced age and increasing infirmities, JOHN SWINTON and JAMES BRADFORD were ordained co-pastors. John Thompson died November 1825. John Swinton died October 1825. James Bradford died February 1830. ENOCH LLOYD became pastor of the church in 1830, and left in 1834, and the church was much unsettled for several years after his removal, though the people did not remain long without a successor to their last minister, for, in 1835, the Rev. WILLIAM JONES succeeded to the pastorate, but left in September 1838. The present pastor, the Rev. A. KENWORTHY, settled at Hill Cliffe in 1839. The church consists of about one hundred members. The original place of worship was long and narrow, measuring forty-eight feet by eighteen, but in 1801 it was widened twelve feet. The freehold, which was purchased at a very early date, is about four hundred yards in depth, and one hundred yards wide in the broadest part, and comprehends altogether the meeting-house, a burying-ground eighty-four yards by twenty-five, occupied with tombs and gravestones, and a large plot of pasture land. Some of the

* History of the Midland Association, page 163. See also *ant.*, page 403.

tombstones are dated as far back as 1523. A few years ago the present minister had a pulpit Bible and the pastor's walking-stick, alike bearing the date 1638. They are now in the possession of Dr. Kendrick of Warrington. In earlier times Hill Cliffe was a very secluded spot, and probably this was the reason why it was selected by the Baptists, for it offered a retreat from the observation of enemies where they could worship God in agreement with their own principles; yet much persecution at times was endured by them, and some even suffered death itself.

DARESBUURY.

THIS is a chapelry in Runcorn parish, wherein the Rev. ROBERT EATON* laboured during the Commonwealth, and whence he was ejected in the year 1662. He was a son of the Rev. Robert Eaton of Great Budworth, and was educated at Cambridge, and lived after his ejection in Manchester, and preached to a congregation in Prestwich parish, where they built him a handsome chapel. He was a solid divine, a good scholar, and a judicious Christian, of great moderation and exemplary in his behaviour. He died at Manchester in August 1701.

Regarding Thelwall Chapel, in the same parish, Bishop Gastrell says that it was "domestic to the family of the Pickerings. No service in it for twenty years past (1717). Uncertain report of some legacy left to it. Presbyterians endeavoured to get it, but Mr. Pickering would not suffer them."† Gastrell also mentions a Quaker meeting-house at Daresbury, with about twenty-three meeters. George Fox was wont to visit this neighbourhood in his travels, and had some warm friends here.

WEAVERHAM.

IN 1641 the rectory of Weaverham was in the possession of Peter Warburton, Esq., of Cheshire, and worth 140*l.* per annum.‡ Hefferston Grange, the residence of the Warburtons, was close by. Matthew

*The name is given *Roger Eaton* in the Morrice MSS., Red Cross-street Library, London.

† *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. i., page 358.

‡ Lambeth MSS.

Henry, having married Mary, daughter of Robert Warburton, Esq., and granddaughter of Peter Warburton, Esq., chief-justice of Chester,* was a frequent visitor at Grange. Tong gives the following account of the Warburton family:—"The family of Grange was very eminent for religion—Mr. Warburton's father was that learned and religious gentleman Peter Warburton, Esq., a person of eminent wisdom and integrity, who chose for his motto *Christ is the Christian's all*; which being deeply inscribed in his heart, was put up in almost every room in his house, and ordered to be engraven upon the rings given at his funeral. This religious Judge Warburton of Helperstone [Hefferston] Grange (so I find it called) considerably improved both the estate and virtue of the family, and his son (whose daughter Mr. Henry married) built upon that good foundation; he was the third son, but the two eldest died in infancy. He married Elizabeth, the daughter of Alderman Barkley of London, a very strict and serious Christian. Mr. Warburton was a gentleman that greatly affected retirement and privacy, especially in the latter part of his life; the Bible and Mr. Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest* used to lie daily before him on the table in his parlour; he spent the greatest part of his time in reading and prayer; his house was a little sanctuary to the silenced ministers and those that adhered to them; the cause of Nonconformity he fully approved, and never deserted it to his dying day."† Henry Newcome also frequently visited Grange, preaching and administering the Lord's Supper in the family.

Mr. JOHN HOLLAND was ordained in Manchester July 9th, 1656, and had testimonials in the usual form appointing him to the work of the ministry in the church of Weaverham, Cheshire.‡ He was probably ejected in 1662, and was followed in the rectory by the Rev. John Barber, Conformist.

OVER PEOVER.

WE find the following mention of this chapelry in the minutes of the Committee for Plundered Ministers:—"September 26th, 1646. Ordered that 25*l.* per annum be allowed out of the profits of the

* Williams's *Life of Matthew Henry*, pages 57, 58.

† Tong's *Life of Matthew Henry*, pages 107, 108.

‡ Minute Book of Manchester Classis, Chetham Library, Manchester.

“impropriate rectory of Waverham, sequestered from the Bishop of Chester, and 25*l.* out of the profits of the rectory of Middlewich, sequestered from Lord Brereton, towards the maintenance of such minister as this committee shall appoint to officiate in the parochial chapel of OVER PEOVER; the present maintenance being but 8*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.* a year.” Who the minister of Over Peover was at the date of this order we are not informed; but during the Commonwealth the Rev. ROBERT NORBURY, M.A., a man of learning and piety laboured here, and was ejected for his Nonconformity in 1662. Calamy gives the following account of him:—“He was a serious, humble man; blameless in conversation and acceptable in his ministry. He was educated in the college of Dublin, of which he was made a Fellow. He was ordained by some Dublin ministers, and while he was in the college preached in a place near that city, to the great satisfaction of his auditors. But alterations being made in the kingdom and college, he was obliged to leave his place and fellowship, and return to his friends in Cheshire; where he preached in divers places, and particularly at Upper Peover, before Bartholomew Day 1662. He went afterwards to Ireland, with a design speedily to return; but breaking a vein and vomiting blood, he fell into a consumption which quickly carried him off. He died with great peace and comfort, and a satisfying hope of a better life.”

Mr. Norbury's name may still be seen in the list of the Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin.

NETHER PEOVER.

WE have no direct intimation that there was ever a Puritan minister at Nether Peover; but there is some reason to think that Mr. JOHN GARSIDE was deprived of his living in this place under the Act of Uniformity.

In the *Notitia Cestriensis*, we have this record in the Bishop's notes about Nether Peover: “Left by Mr. Garside, Presbyterian teacher, 5*l.* 5*s.* per annum; out of which 10*l.* to be raised for buying Bibles to be given to the poor by his trustees; afterwards the estate to go to the maintenance of a Presbyterian teacher, while the toleration continues, and when it is taken away to be kept and enjoyed by his trustees.”

Calamy, however, says that Mr. Garside was preaching somewhere in Derbyshire when the Act of Uniformity passed, but was best known in Cheshire, where he chiefly lived. In this uncertainty as to Nether Peover itself, we are in no want of information as to its Presbyterian teacher. He was well known to Matthew Henry, whose biographer has this record concerning him : “ The next year, 1707, May 7, there “ was another ordination at Knutsford. The candidates were Mr. “ Twemlow and Mr. Garside, son to that good, aged, humble minister, “ that lived and died near Macclesfield, several years ago, greatly “ esteemed by all that knew him, and especially by the good people “ at Chester, to whom he used to preach very privately in the times “ of persecution. [He was] a person of uncommon learning and “ judgment, and gifts in preaching and prayer; and of great simplicity “ and godly sincerity—affecting plainness in his garb and way of “ living beneath what his friends thought was due to his station as a “ minister; but he was contented and best pleased with it. It was a “ great satisfaction to those of his friends that were alive to see his “ son so well qualified for the ministry, and solemnly engaged in it.”* Turning again to the *Nonconformist’s Memorial*,† we find that Mr. Garside was a great sufferer for Nonconformity. “ He was once “ pulled out of the pulpit in Bosley Chapel by Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, “ in 1669; and the next day was carried to Chester, where he suffered “ imprisonment, according to law. Another time he was taken up in “ Derbyshire, for the same crime of preaching, and carried to Derby. “ He was bold in hazarding himself to preach the gospel, and feared “ no dangers. . . . When he found his end draw near, he “ expressed his hope that he had done something for God which, “ through Christ, would find acceptance; and he blessed God he was “ not afraid to die.”

In this chapel is the monument of Sir Geoffrey Shakerley, appointed governor of Chester Castle by Charles II. at the Restoration, who in that capacity relentlessly persecuted the Nonconformists, and with the severest rigour executed the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts against them.

* Tong, page 265.

† Vol. i., page 346.

NOTES.

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Page 5.

BISHOP DOWNHAM had two sons who afterwards became distinguished men. George Downham became Bishop of Londonderry, and John Downham became an eminent Nonconformist minister. John was born in Chester, educated in Christ's College, Cambridge, and afterwards a laborious and useful preacher in London. He was the first who delivered and afterwards promoted the famous lecture at Bartholomew's Church. In the year 1640 he united with his Puritan brethren, the ministers of the city, in presenting their petition to the Privy Council, against Laud's Book of Canons. In 1643 he was appointed one of the licensers of the press, and in 1644 he was chosen one of the London ministers to examine and ordain public preachers. He was a venerable and celebrated divine, and he died at a very great age about the close of 1644. Fuller, who classed him among the learned writers of Christ's College, Cambridge, styles him "a grave divine, and memorable to posterity for "his excellent work, entitled the *Christian Warfare*."—*Brook's Puritans*, vol. ii., page 496.

Page 13.

Ormerod is in error in naming Philip Wilson as minister of S. John Baptist. Pemberton was followed by Peter Leigh. Samuel Eaton preached a sermon in S. John's, on his return from New England in 1640, which excited much attention.—See "*Remonstrance against Presbytery*," by Sir T. Aston, 1641.

Page 16.—JOHN KNOWLES.

Mr. Knowles afterwards became minister at Pershore in Leicestershire, where he was apprehended by Lord Windsor, and imprisoned on April 25th, 1665. His dwelling was searched and his papers were seized; among these were the following: "Articles of Faith to be enquired into in reference to these times. 1. What is "believed concerning y^e Doctrine of y^e Trinity. 2. Concerning y^e Deity of y^e "Son and y^e Spirit. 3. Concerning y^e first Sin and y^e Propagation of Sin 4. "Concerning Election, Redemption, Reconciliation, y^e Moral Law." "A refutation of certain reasons against Laymen's preaching of y^e Word." Also letters from his friends, with animadversions evidently noted down for the purpose of establishing against him the charge both of heresy and rebellion—*e.g.* "Now to "thy desire of Mr. Biddle's reading of y^e first chapter of John. . . . Et verbum,

“aut potius sermo, erat apud Deum; ergo non ipse ille Deus. ‘By which it appears that Mr. Knowles is a Socinian and denies the Godhead of Christ; that he is so doth more largely appear in his book, and by his communication he hath with Mr. Biddle and the use of his blasphemous writings, with which his study is well furnished.’” Another letter evidently bearing only on religion is described as “a very strong invitation to sedition and to alter ye constitution of government, in dark terms, wherein Mr. Knowles is expected to be very instrumental.”—*Record Office, Domestic, Charles II.*, 119, 125.

The following letter, praying for release, shows how great must have been Mr. Knowles's sufferings while in prison:—“To his Grace the Duke of Albemarle. My Lord, I humbly beseech your grace to suffer this paper to have access to you to inform you of my sad and deplorable condition here in ye prison of ye Gatehouse, where I have lyen now about two months upon a bare suspicion, through ye misinformation of some. . . . I beseech your grace, and now ye more earnestly considering ye great increase of that contagious disease wherewith Almighty God hath now visited us, that you will be pleased to speak to my lord Arlington, that bayle may be accepted for me. JOHN KNOWLES. July, 1665.” *Record Office, Domestic, Charles II.*, 127, 135.

Page 29.

For Wybunbury read Worthenbury.

Page 37.—The Rev. JOSEPH MURREY.

He assisted Matthew Henry in his ministerial labours in Chester for some years, supplying his pulpit in his absence and preaching also in the neighbouring villages. There are several references indicating this in Matthew Henry's Diary (now in the possession of Joshua Wilson, Esq., of Tunbridge Wells). Mr. Murrey published “Closet Devotions,” which Mr. Henry was “wonderfully pleased with,” and “The Example of S. Paul represented to Ministers and private Christians, out of the Acts of the Apostles and his own Divine Letters: to which is added an Account of Timothy, 1726.” This book was recommended by the Revds. J. Watts and J. Evans.

Page 52.—FARNDON.

“12th August 1646. Memorandum that the Committee for Plundered Ministers have assigned 40*l.* a year for ye maintenance of ye minister of *Audelem* sequestered from Sir Thomas Smith, delinquent, out of ye profits of ye impropriation aforesaid. And 50*l.* a year more out of ye impropriation of *Farn don* sequestered from Sir Richard Grosvenor, Bart., to ye minister of *Farn don* aforesaid. And 40*l.* a year more to ye minister of *Harthill* out of ye said impropriation of *Farn don* sequestered from ye said Sir Richard Grosvenor.”—*Order Book, Domestic Interregnum No.* 286.

HARGRAVE.

“At ye Committee for Plundered Ministers 17th June 1646, By virtue of an order of both Houses of Parliament of ye 2nd of May last, it is ordered that

“ y^e yearly sum of 40*l.* be paid out of y^e impropriate tythes of *Ince* in the county of Chester sequestered from y^e Lord Cholmly, delinquent, to and for y^e increase of y^e maintenance of y^e minister of y^e chapel of *Hargrave* within y^e parish of *Tarum* in y^e said county, y^e said chappel being two miles distant from any church.”—*Ibid.*

Page 63.—SAMUEL FISHER.

The title of his little work is “ A Love Token for Mourners, teaching Spiritual Dumbness and Submission under God’s smarting Rod. By Samuel Fisher, M.A., late preacher at Bride’s, London, now at Thornton in Cheshire. September 25th, 1654.” He also wrote “ An Antidote against the fear of Death ; being Meditations of Samuel Fisher, in a time and place of Mortality ;” with an advertisement describing the treatise thus :—“ Some thoughts which the author used to flatter and allure his soul to be well pleased with death, when he with the Rev. Mr. Blake stayed in Shrewsbury (in July and August 1650), in a time of God’s last visitation of that place by the pestilence, to execute their pastoral office amongst their people that did abide there in that doleful time, when they were under the continual expectation of arrest.”

Page 66.—BACKFORD.

“ 10th June 1646. From the impropriate Rectory of Backford, sequestered from James Poole 50*l.* a year; y^e present maintenance being but 14*l.* per annum.”—*Order Book Domestic Interregnum No. 286.*

Page 68.—BEBINGTON.

“ May 5th, 1647. Whereas the Rectorie of Bebington is sequestered from Hugh Poole, and Josias Clarke was appointed minister by order of this Committee on y^e 5th of February last, complaint is made that y^e said Mr. Poole doth notwithstanding retain the rectory.—May 10th, 1647. This Committee do appoint to consider y^e petitioners of Bebington on y^e 5th July next, whereof Mr. Clarke, minister of Bebington aforesaid, is to have convenient notice together with a copy of y^e said Petition.”

“ June 12th, 1647. Whereas y^e Committee of y^e 10th of May last appointed to consider of y^e petition of y^e Parishioners of Bebington in y^e county of Chester, on y^e 5th July next, whereof Mr. Clarke, minister of Bebington aforesaid, was to have convenient notice ; for that y^e said Mr. Clarke standeth in no way charged with any misdemeanour, and it now appeareth that he was lately ordained to y^e ministry by y^e seventh Classis within y^e city of London, and that he was afterwards appointed by y^e Assembly of Divines as fit to officiate y^e cure of y^e said Church, and was thereupon by order of this Committee of y^e 5th of February last invested in y^e said Rectorie : And it now appeareth by certificate under y^e hands of y^e several godly ministers within y^e County of Chester, that he is an orthodox divine and well gifted for his years. and that he hath an audible voice ;

“ this Committee doe therefore confirm y^e said former order and dismisse y^e said cause, and discharge y^e said Mr. Clarke from any further attendance on y^e said 5th July next.”

“ July 5th, 1647. Whereas y^e Rectorie of y^e Parish Church of Bebington, in y^e County of Chester, is sequestered from Hugh Poole, and Mr. Josias Clarke is by order of this Committee of y^e 5th of February last invested in y^e said Rectorie and y^e Profitts thereof, notwithstanding which he hath been from time to time opposed in his possession and enjoyment of y^e said Rectorie and Profitts thereof, and in officiating y^e cure of y^e said Church by y^e said Mr. Poole, as by divers illaffected to him y^e said Mr. Clarke in y^e said Parish: It is ordered that y^e said former order whereby y^e said Rectorie is sequestered to y^e said Mr. Clarke be confirmed, and this Committee doe refer it to y^e Committee of Parliament for y^e said County, to take some effectual course from time to time to see y^e said order duly executed. And for that divers of y^e said Parishioners have by their Petition (a copy whereof is hereunto annexed) complained that divers of y^e said Parishioners have by force thrust one Mr. Poole, a sequestered minister, into y^e said Church, this Committee doe refer y^e said Petition to y^e committee of Parliament for y^e said County, who are desired to examine y^e truth thereof and settle and quiet all differences, and in case they see cause doe certifie y^e contentments of their orders to this Committee.”

“ July 19th, 1647. Whereas complaint is made that Mr. Clarke, to whom y^e Rectorie of Bebington in y^e County of Chester, is sequestered, is notwithstanding y^e said order opposed in his quiet enjoyment of y^e said Rectorie and Profitts thereof by Ralph Poole, John Fortlofght, and Henry Meoles, it is ordered that y^e said Ralph Poole, John Fortlofght, and Henry Meoles, do permit and suffer y^e said Mr. Clarke to possess and enjoy y^e said Rectorie and Profitts thereof, and officiate y^e said cure according to y^e said order, or shew cause to y^e contrary on y^e 6th day of August next.”

“ August 17th, 1647. It is ordered that y^e matters in difference between Mr. Clarke to whom y^e Rectorie of Bebington in y^e County of Chester is sequestered and y^e Parishioners of y^e said Parish be referred to Sir William Brereton and Mr. Aldworth members of y^e House of Commons Colonell Brooks High Sheriff of y^e said County who are desired to hear and examine y^e said differences and compose and settle them if they can or else to certifie y^e same to this Committee.”

“ September 27th, 1647. Whereas this Committee y^e 17th of August last referred y^e matters in difference between Mr. Clarke to whom y^e Rectorie of Bebington in y^e County of Chester is sequestered and the Parishioners of y^e said Parish to Sir William Brereton and Mr. Aldworth members of y^e House of Commons and Colonell Brooks High Sheriff of y^e said County to hear examine compose and settle them (if they could) or to certifie y^e said cause to this Committee; And complaint is made by y^e said Parishioners that notwithstanding y^e said reference they are disturbed in y^e interval by y^e said Mr. Clarke for tythes of y^e said Rectorie; It is ordered that y^e Parishioners doe keepe their tythes in their hands till y^e said difference be by y^e said Referees determined or certified provided that they make their certificate by y^e 28th of October next.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Add. MSS., No. 15,671.*

It appears that Mr. Clarke did not settle at Bebington, but that the differences

referred to in these extracts were settled by the appointment of Ralph Poole to Bebington and of Mr. Clarke to Tattenhall, as the signatures of both to the Cheshire Attestation prove.

Page 69.—BIDSTON.

The following extracts show that this curacy was held by GABRIEL BOARDMAN, who was sequestered in 1647.

“ August 14th, 1647. It is ordered that y^e cause concerning Gabriel Boardman, minister of Bidston in y^e county of Chester, be heard on Tuesday next.”

“ August 17th, 1647. It is ordered that y^e cause concerning Gabriel Boardman, curate of y^e Parish Church of Bidston in y^e county of Chester, in y^e presence of y^e said Mr. Boardman and counsell of y^e prosecutors, and upon hearing his defence therein before this Committee it appears that y^e said Mr. Boardman is a common frequenter of alehouses and oftentimes drunk, and a singer of lewd and idle songs; It is therefore ordered that y^e said church and curacie and all profitts thereto belonging be forthwith sequestered from him y^e said Mr. Boardman to y^e use of some godly orthodox divine.”

“ September 4th, 1647. Upon y^e humble petition of Gabriel Boardman, from whom y^e curacie of Bidston in y^e county of Chester is sequestered: It is ordered that y^e said Mr. Boardman shall have all rents stipends fees and profitts due and payable unto him before y^e 17th day of August last, on which day y^e said curacie was sequestered from him, and this Committee doe refer y^e said Mr. Boardman to y^e justices of peace in y^e said county to relieve him in his recovery of y^e premisses according to y^e late ordinance of Parliament in that behalf.”—*Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS. 15,671.*

Page 69.—RICHARD HOPWOOD.

The Committee for Plundered Ministers on “ August 24th, 1646, referred Richard Hopwood, minister, to y^e Assembly of Divines for y^e cure of y^e church of Burton *in Com. Chester.*”

“ September 24th, 1646. Whereas y^e rectorie of y^e Parish Church of Burton in y^e county of Chester is sequestered by y^e Committee of Cheshire from Mr. Trafford for his delinquency, it is ordered that y^e said rectorie shall stand sequestered henceforth to y^e use of Mr. Richard Hopwood a godly and orthodox divine, and that he doe forthwith officiate y^e cure of y^e said church and rectorie and preach diligently to y^e parishioners there and he shall have for his pains therein all houses and glebe lands and all stipends rents duties availes and profitts whatsoever of y^e said church and customarily paid to y^e curate thereof till further order shall be taken in y^e premisses; And all person and persons are required quietly to permit y^e said Mr. Hopwood to officiate y^e said cure and to enter possess and enjoy y^e said houses and glebe lands and to have receive and take to his own use all y^e said stipends rents and profitts whatsoever of y^e said curacy, as they will answer y^e contrary at their peril.”—*British Museum, Additional MSS. 15,670.*

“ 10th June 1646. From the rectorie of Burton sequestered from Sir Thomas

“ Smith 40*l.* per ann. is to be paid to the minister of Burton; the present maintenance being only 6*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* per ann.” Another order to the same effect follows on October 22nd, 1646.—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum* 286.

Page 70.—EASTHAM.

“ 10th June 1646. From the rectory of Eastham sequestered from George Penruddocke 50*l.* the present maintenance being but 20*l.* per ann. Also July 1st, 1646, from the profits of the same rectory 50*l.* a year is to be paid towards the support of the minister at *Bidston*.”

It appeared, however, that the profits of the rectory at Eastham were compounded for, and the order of the Committee on June 10th, 1646, was nullified. Under date April 13th, 1647, therefore, we have a second order discharging the previous one, and providing otherwise for the minister at Eastham. “ 17th June 1646. 50*l.* from the impropriate rectory of Bromborough sequestered from George Penruddocke towards the support of the minister. Present maintenance 4*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per ann.”—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum* 286.

Page 72.—NESTON.

“ 22nd September 1646. It is ordered that y^e articles against Francis Greene minister of y^e parish of Great Neston in y^e county of Chester (a copy whereof is hereunto annexed) be referred to y^e Committee of Parliament for y^e hundred of Wirrall in y^e said county or any three of them, who are desired to receive y^e said Mr. Green's answer to y^e said articles and to call before them and examine y^e witnesses that shall be produced as well for y^e proof of y^e said articles as of y^e said Mr. Green's defence and to certify y^e said answers and depositions to this Committee.”

“ September 22nd, 1647. Whereas *Francis Green* vicar of Great Neston in y^e county of Chester, being by reason of his age disabled from officiating y^e cure of y^e said church, hath relinquished y^e same and submitted y^e same to y^e disposal of this Committee; y^e said Mr. Green praying that *Samuel Marsden* a godly orthodox divine may be settled there; It is therefore ordered that y^e said Samuel Marsden doe henceforth officiate y^e cure of y^e said church and preach diligently to y^e parishioners.”—*British Museum, Add. MSS.* 15,669, 15,670.

Page 73.—SHOTWICK.

“ 10th June 1646. From the profits of the tythes of Shotwick 50*l.* a year; the present maintenance being but 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per ann. (sequestered from Thomas Glasiour.)”

STOAK.

“ At y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers 10th June 1646. By virtue of an order of both Houses of Parliament of y^e 2nd of May last, it is ordered that y^e tythes of y^e rectorie of Stoak in y^e county of Chester sequestered from Henry Bunbury delinquent, not exceeding 50*l.* a year be paid to and for y^e increase of y^e minister of y^e Parish Church of Stoak aforesaid, y^e present

“ maintenance belonging to y^e said church being but 1*l.* per ann. And y^e seques-
 “ trators of y^e premisses are required to allow y^e same accordingly at such times
 “ and seasons of y^e year as y^e same are payable. *Har. Grimston.*”—*Record Office,*
Domestic Interregnum 286.

Page 74.—MATTHEW JENKINS.

“ 31st October 1654. Ye like order [an augmentation] for Matthew Jenkins in
 “ y^e county of Denbigh, upon an order from y^e Committee for Approbation dated
 “ 19th July 1654. Directed to Denbigh.”—*Committee for Compounding Orders*
for Payment to Plundered Ministers. Record Office, Domestic Interregnum 319.

Page 76.—WEST KIRBY.

“ Samuel Eaton of West Kirby in the diocese of Chester, clerk, was fined, about
 “ 1634, in sums mounting to from 50*l.* to 500*l.*, by doubling each time for his
 “ contumacy in not appearing before the Commission.”—*Proceedings of Commis-*
sioners for Ecclesiastical Causes, quoted in the MSS. of the Rev. Joseph Hunter.
British Museum, Hunteriana Collectanea 24,460.

Page 77.—THOMAS GLOVER.

“ April 16th, 1646. Upon y^e humble petition of *Thomas Glover* from whom
 “ y^e rectorie of West Kirby in y^e county of Chester is sequestered (a copy whereof
 “ is hereto annexed) it is ordered that y^e Committee of Parliament for Wirrall in
 “ y^e said county be desired to certifie unto this Committee y^e causes of y^e said
 “ sequestration with all convenient speed.”

“ August 24th, 1646. Ralph Marsden minister is referred to y^e Assembly of
 “ Divines for y^e cure of y^e church of West Kirby in y^e county of Chester.”

“ 24th September 1646. Whereas y^e rectorie of West Kirby is by order of
 “ y^e Committee of Parliament sequestered from *Thomas Glover* for his delinquency
 “ it is ordered that y^e said rectorie shall hereafter stand sequestered to y^e use of
 “ *Ralph Marsden* a godly and orthodox divine.”

“ September 14th, 1647. Upon complaint made by *Mr. Marsden* to whom
 “ y^e rectorie of West Kirby in y^e county of Chester is sequestered, that *Mr. Glover*
 “ from whom y^e same is sequestered together with his wife in contempt of y^e said
 “ sequestration have intruded into y^e said Parsonage House and deteyne and keep
 “ y^e possession thereof from y^e said *Mr. Marsden*, and do also interrupt and disturb
 “ y^e said *Mr. Marsden* in his receiving and enjoyment of y^e tythes of y^e said
 “ rectorie and have seized upon part of them: This Committee doe therefore
 “ refer y^e said *Mr. Marsden* to y^e Sheriff Justices of Peace and Committees of
 “ Parliament for y^e said county who are desired and required to settle y^e said *Mr.*
 “ *Marsden* in y^e quiet and peaceable possession of y^e said Parsonage House and of
 “ y^e glebe lands thereto belonging, to assist him in his receiving of y^e tythes and
 “ profitts of y^e said rectorie and to afford him such further relief as shall be requisite
 “ and expedient according to y^e ordinance of Parliament of y^e 23rd of August last
 “ in that behalfe.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British*
Museum, Additional MSS. 15,670, 15,671.

Page 103.—TATTENHALL.

The following extracts show that Dr. Moreton was sequestered from Tattenhall for delinquency in 1646, and that *Mr. Francis Smith* was appointed in his place. Mr. Smith seems to have encountered great opposition from the parishioners, and though he was supported by the Committee for Plundered Ministers, he resigned the living, and *Josias Clarke*, who had gone through a similar battle at Bebington, succeeded him.

“April 16th, 1646. Referred *Francis Smith* minister to y^e Committee of y^e Assembly of Divines, to officiate y^e cure of Tattenhall in y^e county of Chester.”

“18th September 1646. Whereas y^e rectorie of y^e Parish Church of Tattenhall in y^e county of Chester is by y^e Committee of Parliament for y^e said county sequestered from *Dr. Moreton* for his delinquency it is ordered that y^e said rectorie shall stand sequestered from henceforth to y^e use of Francis Smyth a godly and orthodox divine, and that he doe forthwith officiate y^e cure of y^e said church and rectorie and preach diligently to y^e parishioners there. And he shall have for his pains therein y^e Parsonage House and glebe lands.”

“September 4th, 1647. Upon consideration had of y^e certificate of John Crew and Jonathan Bruen Esquires Justices of Peace in y^e county of Chester whereby it appeareth that John Bruce Thomas Breese Thomas Buckley and Thomas Dodd accompanied with divers others of y^e parish of Tattenhall in y^e said county were summoned before y^e said justices according to y^e ordinance of Parliament in that behalfe, upon complaint made by Mr. Smith to whom y^e rectorie of Tattenhall aforesaid is sequestered that they refused to pay their tythes unto y^e said Mr. Smith, y^e said Thomas Dodd producing before them a book entitled *Two Petitions* of y^e sequestered clergy of England and Wales to y^e King’s Majesty and to his Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax with a pretended declaration of y^e general and counsell of war; and that by y^e said practice and false and scandalous pretences divers persons hereabouts are encouraged against their minister: It being further certified from y^e said justices that they conceive y^e ordinance of Parliament for payment of tythes cannot be by them put into execution without bloodshed: It is therefore ordered that y^e Sergeant at Arms of y^e House of Commons or his deputy or deputies doe bring y^e said John Bruce Thomas Breese Thomas Buckley and Thomas Dodd in safe custody to answer their said contempt. And y^e sheriffs of y^e said county and all justices of peace mawr bayliffe constable and all other his Majesty’s officers and loving subjects are desired and hereby required to be aiding and assisting in y^e due execution hereof.”

“September 23rd, 1647. Upon hearing y^e cause between Mr. Smith to whom y^e rectorie of Tattenhall in y^e county of Chester is sequestered and John Bruce Thomas Breese Thomas Buckley and Thomas Dodd parishioners of Tattenhall aforesaid in y^e presence of counsel on both sides; it is ordered that they be continued in custody till they have given Mr. Smith satisfaction.”

“September 24th, 1647. It is ordered that John Bruce Thomas Breese Thomas Buckley and Thomas Dodd parishioners of Tattenhall in y^e county of Chester having now satisfied Mr. Smith to whom y^e rectorie of Tattenhall aforesaid is

"sequestered for y^e tythes and profitts from them due to him, it is ordered that they shall be discharged."—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,670, 15,671.

Dr. Moreton, who was restored in 1660, died in March 1674-5.

Page 120.—ACTON.

"22nd July 1646. From the tythes arising from the chapelry of Wrenbury in y^e parish of Acton 50*l.* to the minister of Acton; the said parish being very large and populous."—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum* 286.

"25th April 1654. Upon reading y^e petition of Edward Burghall minister of Acton in Cheshire complaining that he cannot enjoy y^e augmentation of 30*l.* per an. settled upon him as minister of y^e church of Acton *in regard that he hath refused to take the Engagement* which is since wholly taken away; and therefore he prays our order for repayment of y^e arrears hitherto withheld from him upon y^e account of non-engaging and not otherwise. It is ordered that y^e petitioner doe produce to us y^e order by which y^e augmentation is settled on him, and that our new Committee in Cheshire doe certifie y^e ground and reason wherefore y^e petitioner hath not been allowed y^e said augmentation, and he is to make his return herein within fourteen days after notice hereof. E. C., E. W., R. M., R. W., J. V."—*Order Book, Domestic Interregnum* 319.

"15th September 1654. To Mr. Robinson, Committee for the county of Chester. Sir, Your letter 31st July last we have this day again perused and as to augmentations therein mentioned you say in y^e postscript to y^e said letter you hear and are confident that all y^e ministers in your county except Mr. Burghall have bin here and have orders of approbation. We doubt not but you received our letter 21st July last whereby we let you know that all orders for payment of augmentations are to be by you produced to our auditor or else he is to charge y^e whole revenue upon your accounts; and we gave you our directions to fill up orders and letters carefully by our order y^e 21st of June last for y^e reasons therein expressed. We gave some directions concerning Mr. Burghall formerly upon his petition presented to us and we do of course give orders of allowance of y^e orders which are brought to us from y^e Committee appointed for approbation of publique preachers, which we thought meet to signifie to you, and are, yours &c., E. W., J. V., R. M., R. W."—*Letter Book (arranged in Counties), Domestic Interregnum* 327.

"31st October 1654. The like order (augmentation) for Mr. Edward Burghall in y^e county of Chester, upon an order from y^e Committee for Approbation, &c., 28th July 1654. Directed to Chester."—*Order Book, Domestic Interregnum* 319.

Page 124.—NANTWICH.

Mr. John Paget was minister of Nantwich about the year 1598. The times not bearing the continuance of his Nonconformity, he went into the Netherlands. In 1607 he was called to be pastor of the English church at Amsterdam, in which station he continued thirty years. While there he wrote a book called his *Primer*, dedicated to his friends at Nantwich, printed 1601; and some *Sermons* that were

published after his death; together with his Defence of Presbyterian Church Government, edited by his successor at Amsterdam, Thomas Paget, who was his kinsman, possibly his son.—See *Evans's MSS.*, vol. ii., page 65, *Red Cross-street Library.*

Page 134.

SAMUEL ACTON published the following works:—"The *Folly of Wise Scep-ticks*—a sermon on Jeremiah viii. 8; *Gospel Compulsion*—on Luke xiv. 23; "*Salvation by Grace*—on Ephesians iv. 5." These appeared in the year 1714. In 1717 he published a Discourse on the *Sacrament*—John xix. 3.

BAPTIST CHAPEL, NANTWICH.—"There was some years ago a respectable society of Baptists at Nantwich, but, through the odd conduct and management of some of the principal supports of the place, it is now dwindled and come to nothing, and Mr. Roger Maddock hath agreed with the Methodists to let them have the meeting-house for a term of years upon keeping it in repair. Upon further inquiry the following particulars were sent to J. Thompson, in a letter of the 5th April 1773. That the Baptist meeting-house at Nantwich was vested in the hands of several trustees, some of whom are now living. That Roger Maddock has 100*l.* in his hands belonging to the same, and that there is a small house or two belonging to the said chapel held by some person or persons that keep possession of the same and never pay any rent to the trustees. Mr. Radcliff, minister of Whillock, commonly preaches alternate Sabbaths there and at Leek in Staffordshire."—*Rev. Josiah Thompson's MSS.*, *Dr. Williams's Library.*

Page 139.—WRENBURY.

Robert Nicholls was minister of Wrenbury, where he was held in high repute for his excellent abilities and worthy ministerial labours. He was a man of a clear head, a tender heart, and a most holy life. He was called before the High Commission, and with many of his brethren was exceedingly harassed for Nonconformity. Being required by Bishop Moreton to produce his arguments against the cross in baptism, the use of the surplice, and kneeling at the sacrament, he presented them to the Bishop in the High Commission court, when, though he was esteemed a most learned and pious minister, his lordship treated him with much scorn and abuse. He was contemporary with Mr. Ball, Mr. Herring, Mr. Ashe, and other divines of distinguished eminence, with whom he lived in the greatest friendship. During the persecution of the times he found an asylum under the hospitable roof of the excellent Lady Bromley of Sheriff Hales, in Shropshire, at whose house he died in the year 1630. He was the author of the third part of a work entitled "*Some Treasure fetched out of Rubbish*; or three short but seasonable Treatises found in a heap of scattered papers which Providence hath reserved for their service who desire to be instructed from the Word of God concerning the Impo-sition and use of significant Ceremonies in the Worship of God. 1660." His part is entitled "Three Arguments, syllogistically propounded and prosecuted, against the Surplice, the Cross in Baptism, and Kneeling in the act of receiving the Lord's Supper."—See *Brooks' Puritans*, vol. ii., page 375; *Clark's Lives*, page 165; *Paget's Defence*, *preface.*

The following minutes of Parliamentary committees show that *Zachary Crofton*, who was turned out of Wrenbury for refusing the Engagement, was followed, after an interval, by *Joseph Ottiwell*, who had previously been settled a short time at Chelford.—*See page 257.*

“July 4th, 1646. Upon y^e humble petition of y^e parishioners of Wrenburie in y^e county of Chester this committee do hereby desire y^e committee of y^e said county to make enquiry of y^e value of y^e said vicarage and whether y^e impropriate tythes of y^e said parish are sequestered from y^e Lord Kilmurrey or from whom, and to certifie y^e same to this committee.”—*British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,669.

“July 15th, 1646. From y^e impropriate rectorie of Wrenburie sequestered from Lord Kilmurrey 50*l.* towards the support of the minister of the parish; the said parish being very populous and consisting of above six hundred communions.”—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum* 286.

“November 19th, 1652. Whereas the Parish Church of Wrenburie in the county of Chester is at present destitute of a minister; It is ordered that Joseph Ottwell a godly and orthodox divine do from henceforth officiate the cure of the said church and preach diligently to the parishioners there; and that he have for his pains therein all houses, &c., whatsoever belonging to the minister of the said church; till further order shall be taken in the premisses. Gilbert Millington, Nath. Hallowses, J. Danvers, and others.”—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum* 287.

“20th January 1652. Whereas we have received an order from y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers dated 19th November 1652 (a copie, &c.) reciteing that y^e Parish Church of Wrenburie in y^e county of Chester was then destitute of a minister; whereupon they ordered that Joseph Otwell a godly and orthodox divine should from henceforth officiate y^e cure of y^e said church and preach diligently to y^e parishioners there and that he shall have for his pains therein all houses glebelands tythes rents duties and profitts whatsoever of or belonging to y^e minister of y^e said church, till further order shall be taken in y^e premisses; It is ordered that y^e Committee for Sequestration in y^e said county of Chester doe observe y^e directions of y^e said order and proceed therein according to y^e Act of Parliament of y^e 31st May 1650, this order being first entered with our auditor. S. M., E. W., W. M., R. M.”

“20th January 1652. Whereas we have received an order from y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers dated y^e 30th December last (a copie, &c.) reciteing that y^e Lord Kilmorey upon his composition did by conveyance made unto certain feoffees in trust settle y^e yearly sum of 50*l.* for ever upon y^e minister of y^e Parish Church of Wrenburie in y^e county of Chester for y^e time being; whereupon they ordered that y^e said 50*l.* a year should from time to time be paid unto Mr. Joseph Ottiwell settled in y^e vicarage of Wrenburie aforesaid by order of y^e said committee of y^e 19th of November last; and further ordered (in regard y^e said Mr. Ottiwell had officiated the cure of y^e said church divers months before his said settlement) that y^e feoffees upon whom y^e 50*l.* a year is settled for maintenance of y^e minister of y^e said church, should pay unto him one year's arrears of y^e annual stipend then in their hands for y^e said service, and y^e growing profitts from time to time as it should grow due; Now upon reading a letter from

“ y^e Committee for Sequestration in y^e county of Chester dated 20th January instant, it is ordered that y^e said committee in Cheshire do see that y^e said Mr. Ottiwell be payd y^e said augmentation of 50*l.* per annum and y^e arrears thereof according to y^e settlement and y^e afore-recited order of y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers, for that he hath taken y^e Engagement appointed by Act of Parliament as is affirmed to us by Colonell Worsley.”—*Committee for Compounding Orders for Payment to Plundered Ministers, Domestic Interregnum* 319.

Page 141.—BADDILEY.

“ January 1st, 1646-7. 40*l.* per annum from the surplus of profits of the tithes of Frodsham, for increase of the maintenance of the minister to be appointed to the church of Baddiley. The present maintenance belonging to the said church in the best times not being worth above 30*l.* per annum.”—*Order Book*, 286.

Page 148.—CHURCH MINSHULL (see also Page 184).

“ July 4th, 1646. Upon y^e humble petition of Ellinor y^e wife of *Lawrence Newton* from whom y^e vicarage of Church Minshull in y^e county of Chester is sequestered it is ordered that y^e said Mistr. Newton shall have for and towards y^e maintenance of her and her children y^e full clear fifth part of y^e tythes rents Easter book of y^e vicarage from y^e sequestrators thereof (all charges first deducted from y^e whole) unlesse good cause be shewn to y^e contrary; Y^e said Mr. Newton and his wife yielding all due obedience to y^e said sequestrators; y^e examination of which cause (if there be any) this committee doe referre to y^e Committee of Parliament for y^e county of Chester or any three of them who are desired to hear y^e parties on both sides therein and to call before them and examine such witnesses as shall be produced as well for proof of y^e said cause as on y^e behalfe of y^e said Mistresse Newton for y^e justifying of her and y^e said parties, and to determine y^e difference between them.”—*Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,670.

“ September 26th, 1646. Ordered that the tythe corn of Minshull worth about 24*l.* per annum sequestered from John Minshull, Esq., be paid to the increase of the maintenance of Mr. Holford, minister of the Parish Church of Minshull aforesaid; the present maintenance being but 8*l.* per annum.”—*Order Book, Domestic Interregnum* 286.

“ 31st October 1654. An order for an augmentation is made in favour of Mr. John Bradley of Minshull.—*Order Book*, 319.

Page 148.—WIBUNBURY.

“ 12th August 1646. 50*l.* a year from the tithes arising in the parish of Wybunbury sequestered from Sir Thomas Delves, to be paid to the maintenance of William Paretree minister of the church of Wybunbury; there being seventeen towns within the said parish and the vicarage thereof being formerly worth 60*l.* per annum and it is now worth but 40*l.* a year.”—*Order Book*, 286.

“William Pearetree of Nantwich, clerk,” was one of the Cheshire ministers plundered and imprisoned by the Royalists in the beginning of the Civil War. He afterwards became pastor of S. Mary’s, Chester.—See page 13.

Page 152.—ASTBURY.

“27th August 1646. It is ordered that *John Ley*, M.A., be commended to y^e Committee of y^e Assembly of Divines for examination of ministers, who are hereby desired to examine y^e fitness of y^e said Mr. Ley to have y^e sequestration and to officiate y^e cure of y^e Parish Church of Astburie in y^e county of Chester and to certifie y^e same to this committee.”—*Additional MSS.* 15,670.

“August 24th, 1647. This committee being informed that *John Ley*, B.D., one of y^e Assembly of Divines settled by authority of Parliament in y^e rectorie of Astburie in y^e county of Chester is opposed in y^e participation of y^e profits of that living by some malignant and ill-advised persons of that parish upon pretence of some inhibition of His Majesty by some paper of his in form of a proclamation heretofore issued out against ministers placed by power of Parliament whilst His Majesty was in act of hostility against his Parliament whereby by y^e late distractions those ill-minded persons have taken courage to hope for some alteration, and presume to detain from their minister his rights; Doe hereby think fit to enjoin and order that y^e parishioners of y^e said parish make due payment of their tythes to y^e said Mr. Ley in such manner as they did or ought to have done to their former rector from whom y^e living stands sequestered, notwithstanding their said false and scurrilous pretences, y^e said paper being of no force to control y^e proceedings of Parliament.”—*British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,671.

Page 156.

Mr. Moxon had a son, George Moxon, minister of Radwinter in Essex, from which place he was ejected in 1660.—See *Nonconformist Memorial*, vol. ii. page 212; and *Dauids’ Annals of Essex Nonconformity*, page 445.

Page 164.—MIDDLEWICH.

“13th January 1646. Whereas the parish of the market town of Middlewich in the county of Chester is very large, containing fourteen townships, whereby the cure of the said Parish Church hath been supplied by two ministers, and this committee have formerly granted 50*l.* a year for increase of the maintenance of Mr. Langley, one of the said ministers, the present maintenance belonging to the said church being but 19*l.* a year: It is ordered that the further yearly sum of 50*l.* be paid and allowed out of the profits, &c., to and for increase of the maintenance of *Mr Matthew Clayton*, the other minister of the said church: and the sequestrators, &c. HAR. GRIMSTON.”—*Record Office, Order Book*, 286.

Page 178.—OVER.

“12th August 1646. 50*l.* a year from OVER, sequestered from Thomas Cholmley, Esq., delinquent, farmer thereof under the Bishop of Chester, towards the maintenance of the minister that this committee shall settle in the church of Over; and from the same profits 40*l.* a year to the minister to be appointed to the chapel of WETTENHALL within the said parish; and three miles distant from the said church of Over.”

Further, on December 7th, 1652, occurs an order reciting that 40*l.* per annum had been settled by Thomas Cholmley, Esq., on the minister of Over, and directing “that the same be from time to time paid and continued to Mr. John Ashbrooke, this day settled minister of the said church by this committee.”

“26th January 1652-3. Whereas we have received an order from y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers bearing date above written reciteing a former order of theirs of y^e 7th December 1652 whereby they settled *John Ashbrooke* a godly and orthodox divine in y^e vicarage of Over in y^e county of Chester and granted him y^e augmentation of 40*l.* a year settled by Thomas Cholmondly, Esq., delinquent, by conveyance unto feoffees in trust upon y^e minister of y^e Parish Church of Over aforesaid for y^e time being, and by y^e same order of y^e date above written they order that y^e said Mr. Ashbrooke shall have and receive all arrears of y^e said 40*l.* a year which become due and payable for such time as he officiates y^e said cure of y^e said church as by y^e said order of y^e date hereof (a copie whereof is annexed) appears; It is therefore ordered that y^e Committee for Sequestration in y^e said county of Chester doe observe y^e directions of y^e said order and proceed therein according to y^e Act of Parliament of y^e 31st May 1650; this order being first entered with our auditor. And y^e said committee are to see that y^e feoffees upon whom y^e said augmentation is settled doe pay y^e said arrears unto y^e said Mr. Ashbrooke according to y^e settlement and y^e order of y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers. S. M., E. W., A. S., R. M.”
Minutes of Committee for Compounding Orders, Domestic Interregnum 319.

“3rd August 1654. The like order [for payment of an augmentation] for Mr. *John Colefax* of Wettenhall in com. Chester.”—*Ibid.*

Page 193.—BRERETON.

“September 22nd, 1646. Whereas y^e rectorie of Brereton in y^e county of Chester is sequestered from Mr. Robinson by y^e Committee of Parliament for y^e county it is ordered that y^e Committee of Ministers in y^e said county appointed for examination of ministers in y^e county of Lancaster doe and they are hereby desired to examine y^e fitness of *Thomas Upton* minister of y^e word to officiate y^e cure of y^e said parish and to certifie y^e same to y^e end that upon approbation he may be settled in y^e sequestration of y^e said rectorie; and it is ordered that y^e said Mr. Upton doe officiate and be established in y^e said rectorie and parish in y^e meantime.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,670.

“ 15th October 1652. Whereas the church of BRERETON in the county of Chester is at present destitute of a minister, It is ordered that *John Holme*, a godly and orthodox divine do from henceforth officiate the cure of the said church, and preach diligently to the parishioners there : and that he shall have for his pains therein all houses, glebelands, &c. ; and all person and persons are required quietly to permit the said Holme to officiate the said cure ; and to enter, possess and enjoy the said houses, &c. : or they will answer the contrary to their peril.

[ENDORSED]—“ John Thornicroft maketh oath that he received this order from Mr. Phelps, clerk of the Committee for Plundered Ministers, as the original order of settlement for Mr. Holme to officiate the cure at Brereton.

(Signed) JOHN THORNICROFT.

“(Countersigned) R. M.”

On 16th February 165 $\frac{3}{4}$ we have a further order respecting Mr. Holme, to the same purport as the above.—*Order Book*, 319.

Page 235.

The register of baptisms belonging to the chapel in King Edward-street, Macclesfield, commences in September 1713. The first entries (as appears from an examination of the original, now in the keeping of the Registrar-general) are in the handwriting of Dr. Holland, and are very difficult to read. Dr. Holland distinguishes between public and private baptisms. “In my house,” he adds occasionally. Mr. Culcheth’s handwriting commences April 6th, 1718, and ends on April 14th, 1751. So far the registers are very carefully kept. Mr. Street’s handwriting commences (apparently) on April 28th, 1751, and ends December 24th, 1763; but the name of the minister does not occur. After this date the entries in the older book bear the signature of *William Brocklehurst*. This was, doubtless, Mr. Brocklehurst of Dean Row. His name occurs as officiating at King Edward-street from March 5th, 1764, to September 1785. In a second and separate book, however, we have a list of “persons in and around Macclesfield” baptized at the Presbyterian Chapel by the Rev. John Palmer; and the entries in this book commence August 4th, 1765. After this the name of the Rev. Lowthion Pollock occurs (as following Mr. Palmer) from September 1780 to May 1788. We have no mention of Mr. Bolt; but perhaps one folio of entries affixed to the end of the older book—and in a different handwriting to that which appears elsewhere—is to be assigned to him. These entries extend from about 1769 to 1771.

The list of ministers given above (page 235) was taken in part from the Cheshire Minute Book, and in part from an article in the *Congregational Magazine* for November 1820.

Page 247.

It may be mentioned that on the occasion of Mr. Mc.All’s ordination at Townley-street the introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. G. B. Kidd; the questions were proposed to Mr. Mc.All by the Rev. Samuel Bowen; the ordination prayer was offered by the Rev. Samuel Mc.All, president of Hackney

College; and the charge was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Raffles of Liverpool. In the evening of the day the sermon to the church and congregation was preached by the Rev. Dr. Alliott of Spring Hill College.

Page 255.

Since the above notice of the Baptist Chapel, Macclesfield, was in print, the congregation have been enabled to complete the purchase of the chapel premises. The late T. Whillock, Esq., of Rainow, bequeathed the sum of 250*l.* to aid in clearing off the chapel debt. To this sum the congregation has added about 170*l.*; and in addition to the removal of the debt, has made many necessary improvements in the interior of the chapel.

PRESTBURY.—“15th July 1646. Upon hearing y^e counsell of Mr. Leigh of “Adlington in y^e county of Chester in y^e cause appointed by order y^e 28th of May “last concerning y^e rectorie of Prestbury; this committee think fit that all things “shall remain as formerly without any alteration of any former orders of this “committee.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,670.

In March 1861 a preaching-room was opened at Prestbury (in connection with the church at Townley-street Chapel, Macclesfield), where service is held once a fortnight. No school has been opened yet, nor is any church formed.

Page 257.—CHELFORD.

May 25th, 1653. Mention is made of a petition from Hugh Henshaw, minister of the chapelry of *Sankie*, in the parish of Prescot in Lancashire, for confirmation of an order of the commissioners respecting his stipend. The order is dated 30th July 1649. A further order follows: 8th February 1653. Doubtless this is the Hugh Henshaw who was afterwards ejected from *Chelford* in 1662.—*Order Book*, 319.

Page 261.—WILMSLOW.

“18th March 1645. Whereas y^e deputie-lieutenant and y^e committee for “y^e county of Chester have in pursuance of an ordinance of Parliament of y^e 26th “March 1644 sequestered y^e rectorie of y^e Parish Church of Wilmeslowe in y^e said “county from *Mr. Wright* for absenting himself from y^e said church and betakeing “himself to y^e forces raised against y^e Parliament; and *Mr. John Brereton* a “godly and holy divine was thereupon invited and appointed by y^e said deputie- “lieutenant and committee to y^e said rectorie and cure of y^e church; This com- “mittee doe hereby settle and confirme y^e said *Mr. Brereton* in y^e said place, and “order that he shall continue to officiate y^e said cure and have possession of and “enjoy y^e said rectorie and all tythes rents revenues and profits thereof according “to y^e ordinance of Parliament of y^e 26th May 1644 in that case made and pro- “vided. And all person and persons whatsoever are required quietly to permit “y^e said *Mr. Brereton* to officiate y^e said cure and to have and enjoy all lawfull “emoluments and advantages of y^e said rectorie as they will answer y^e contrary at “their peril.”

“ July 4th, 1646. Upon y^e humble petition of Anne y^e wife of Thomas Wright from whom y^e rectorie of Wilmeslowe in y^e county of Chester is sequestered it is ordered that y^e said Mistresse Wright shall have for and towards y^e maintenance of her and her children y^e full clear fifth part of y^e tythes rents Easter book of y^e said rectorie from y^e sequestrators thereof (all charges first deducted from y^e whole) unless good cause be shewn to y^e contrary: y^e said Mist. Wright yielding all due obedience to y^e said sequestration.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,669.

Page 286.—STOCKPORT.

The following extracts from the minutes of the Committee for Plundered Ministers give the names of two rectors of Stockport who followed Mr. Storer and preceded Mr. Johnson, viz., *William Shalcrosse* and *Thomas Case*.

“ July 31st, 1645. It is ordered that y^e rectorie of Stockport in y^e county of Chester void by y^e death of William Shalcrosse rector thereof shall stand sequestered to y^e use of Thomas Case Master of Arts a godly learned and orthodox divine, and member of y^e Assembly of Divines; who is hereby appointed, and forthwith do officiate y^e cure of y^e said church as rector and preach diligently to y^e parishioners there.”

“ August 19th, 1645. Ordered that Mr. Wheeler be desired to report from this committee y^e ordinance of Parliament hereto annexed for conferring y^e rectorie of Stockport on Mr. Thomas Case.”

“ April 16th, 1646. Whereas Mr. Thomas Case rector of Stockport in y^e county of Chester hath relinquished y^e said rectorie and cure of y^e said church in regard he hath another place with cure of souls; and doth desire that *Thomas Johnson* a godly orthodox divine may succeed him in y^e said cure and rectorie; this committee think that y^e said Mr. Johnson shall officiate y^e cure of y^e said parish and enjoy y^e profits thereof untill further order shall be taken by y^e said Parliament or committee. It is therefore ordered that y^e said Mr. Johnson shall forthwith officiate y^e cure of y^e said church as rector and preach diligently to y^e parishioners there.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS.* 15,669.

THOMAS CASE was son of Mr. George Case, minister of Boxley in Kent. He graduated M.A. at Christ Church, Oxford. His first pastorate was at Erpingham in Suffolk, out of which place he was forced by Bishop Wren's severity. From Stockport he removed to S. Mary Magdalene, Milk-street, London, where he was zealous in promoting the Morning Exercises. He was turned out of this living for refusing the Engagement. He was imprisoned six months in the Tower for Mr. Love's plot, and was afterwards rector of S. Giles's-in-the-Fields. He was one of the commissioners at the Savoy, and was silenced with his brethren in 1662. He survived all the Dissenters who sat in the Assembly of Divines. He died May 30th, 1682, aged eighty-four.—See *Neal's Puritans*, vol. iv., page 477; *Nonconformist Memorial*, vol. i., page 153.

Page 287.—STOCKPORT; MR. PAGET.

THOMAS PAGET belonged to the family of Paget of Rothley in Leicestershire. He became minister of Blackley Chapel in the parish of Manchester about the year 1600, for his name appears in a "platform" or ground plan of that chapel in 1603. He accepted the appointment of Blackley Chapel at the solicitation of the Rev. William Bourne, Fellow of the Collegiate Church, Manchester, of whom Hollingworth relates "that he laboured much and succeeded well to procure " ministers to every chapel in the parish." Mr. Paget gives an account of "some " prelatical proceedings exemplified mostly in the particulars of your humble " advertiser who was called to the work of the ministry many years ago in such " place of Chester diocese [Blackley] where he could execute his function without " such officiating as is usually required of incumbents that take the cure in parishes. " In process of time," he continues, " Dr. Moreton became prelate, who taking " knowledge of divers Nonconformists in this diocese sent out letters missive to " summon some of them to the High Commission Court then kept in Chester." A letter of remonstrance on behalf of these Nonconformists, of whom Mr. Paget was one, was delivered to the Bishop at Stockport, " he being not only Bishop but " parson of Stockport, the greatest benefice in Cheshire." Mr. Paget and his brethren were present at the reading of this letter, and the Bishop required his arguments against the ceremonies. At first he declined disputation, but being urged he gave his arguments, and the Bishop acknowledged his own neglect to study the controversy. Besides releasing him and his brethren, he commanded each to produce his arguments against the ceremonies in writing, which they did; and these defences of Nonconformity were afterwards published.

Mr. Paget was not allowed to prosecute his ministry in peace. The wardens of Blackley were admonished in 1622 to provide a book of Homilies and the Articles of Religion, and not to suffer any to preach unless they were licensed under the Bishop's hand and seal. In 1631 he was silenced by Bishop Bridgeman, and in order to escape fine and imprisonment he fled into Holland, to Amsterdam, where in November 1639 he became pastor of the English church. During his residence abroad he edited the works of his predecessor in the charge, the Rev. John Paget, first minister of the English church in Amsterdam. This was in the year 1641. On returning to England in 1646 he was nominated to the rectory of S. Chad's, Shrewsbury, which he held until 1658. He died in October 1660, rector of Stockport. Newcome (*Autobiography*, page 87) records how "an " apparitor at Blackley, when old Mr. Paget was there, came in among the com- " municants and took all their names, and bragged that he would present them all " at the Visitation. The next Lord's Day when he was getting up, something as " he thought gave him a dust on the neck; he fell immediately sick and died " within two hours. Some godly men came in when he was dead, as neighbours, " and providentially saw the paper and burned it; and so the mischief by him was " prevented." The grandfather of Oliver Heywood was converted by hearing a sermon preached at Bury "by Mr. Paget minister of Blackley;" and continued till his death an attendant on the ministry of Mr. Paget. (See *Hunter's Life of Oliver Heywood*, page 8.) By his will (proved October 16th, 1660) Mr. Paget leaves his

property to his two sons, Nathan, a physician, and Thomas, in holy orders; and alludes to three daughters—Dorothy, Elizabeth, and Mary, entreating his cousin Minshull, apothecary of Manchester, to be supervisor of his will. Dr. Nathan Paget was the author of a “Thesis on the Plague,” printed at Leyden 1639, and was an intimate friend of Milton and cousin to the poet’s wife, Elizabeth Minshull.

Page 299.—MR. DE LA ROSE.

The MSS. of the Rev. Joseph Hunter inform us that Mr. De la Rose of Stockport was brother to John De la Rose of Sheffield, and that they were sons of a French Protestant refugee. The following also, from Mr. Hunter’s MSS., throws light upon the controversy at Stockport.

“Copy of a curious paper respecting Mr. Samuel De la Rose, the minister of Stockport, formerly belonging to the Rev. Mr. Smith of Stannington:—

“November 15th, 1720. We whose names are subscribed did amicably agree to propose to Mr. De la Rose the following things. 1st. Whether he is pleased to own himself a candidate for a pastor amongst us, and will consent to be enquired into as to what concerns this affair by the reverend senior ministers in our neighbourhood approved by the church? 2nd. If he refuses this, will he be pleased amicably to consent that the church look out for another person to be their pastor, for we earnestly desire one?

“Josh. Travis, Thos. Taylor, John Bancroft, Wm. Hunt, J. Dutton, Edwd. Stringer, James Hudson, Wm. Webster, Thos. Smith, Saml. Deane, Edwd. Benison, Thos. Benison, Joseph Lowe, John Hunt, Roger Walkden, Saml. Siddal, Henry Davie, Ralph Oldham.”

“To those of the congregation who subscribed the two questions to me.

“Dear brethren and friends,—I am sorry your matters were no better laid together in your questions to me. You do in the 1st deal unhandsomely by me, and seem not to have honourable thoughts enough of the reverend neighbouring ministers. The 2nd as to matter and manner is not by far well managed. But besides these things some of you who have put your names to the questions have not any power so to do, and the whole management has not been so serious, peaceable, and regular as it ought to have been in so solemn and momentous an affair. I do therefore, which I look upon to be most proper for you at present, both beseech and charge you to give yourselves much unto prayer, and to seek the Lord earnestly that you may not act unbecoming the holy and peaceable Jesus whom you profess to follow. But by the piety of your lives, your peaceableness in the congregation, and discreet management in the weighty affairs that lie before some of you in conjunction with others, you may be enabled to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour. And then in due time God will put something into the hearts of the members of the church to propose to me, and I trust I shall be the happy instrument of settling it in a more truly loving, honourable, and flourishing condition than ever yet it has been in. And that by your weakness and imprudence you may not render yourselves in particular altogether unworthy of such a blessing, is and shall be the constant fervent prayer, and earnest steady endeavour of, your sincere and hearty well-wisher and servant in the gospel, SAMUEL DE LA ROSE.
“December 26th, 1720.”

Then follow in the MS. four paragraphs out of Mr. De la Rose's sermon, pages 4, 8, 10; and two censures from the neighbouring ministers, viz. :—

“FIRST CENSURE.

“Stockport, January 28th, 17 $\frac{3}{4}$.”

“Brethren,—We have seriously and impartially considered the sermon that hath been read to us, and we think ourselves obliged to declare that it containeth such doctrine as we apprehend we cannot safely preach to the people committed to our care.

“Jer. Aldred (Monton), Thomas Culcheth (Macclesfield), Michael Fletcher (Cross-street), James Clegg (Chapel-le-Frith), John Heywood (Blakeley), Wm. Perkins (Newton), Nichs. Waterhouse (Ringhay), Nehemiah Rayner (Gorton), John Lightbowne (Allostock), Edward Thornton (Tinsel).”

“SECOND CENSURE.

“To the congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Stockport,—Whereas we have been credibly informed to our great grief, that some of our friends belonging to the Dissenting congregation at Stockport have very injuriously traduced our behaviour while among them, and have also put a sinister construction upon the judgment we gave upon the sermon which was read to us, by Mr. Samuel De la Rose the 25th January last, when we told them we thought it contained such doctrine as we apprehended we could not safely preach to the people committed to our care, we do now declare that by those fore-mentioned words we neither meant that we were afraid of losing the favour of our people or their contributions, neither was it that we did not comprehend the meaning of that doctrine, or understood the consequences of it, but because we thought, and do still think, that it was disagreeable to the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore false and dangerous to the souls of men.—With our own hands, Manchester, February 16th, 17 $\frac{2}{4}$.” (Signed by all the above except Mr. Thornton.)

Page 317.—JOHN JONES.

The following extracts from the minutes of the *Committee of Compounding Orders for Payment to Plundered Ministers*, show that Mr. John Jones was for some time minister of Charlsworth on the borders of Derbyshire.

“February 24th, 165 $\frac{3}{4}$. Whereas we have received an order from y^e Committee for Plundered Ministers dated y^e 26th of December 1650 reciteing a former order of y^e 20th of February 1649, whereby they granted 50*l.* a year out of y^e tythes and profits of y^e impropriate rectorie of Glossop in y^e county of Derby sequestered from y^e Countess of Arundell and Surrey for increase of y^e maintenance of such minister as y^e said committee shall approve of, to officiate in y^e chappel of *Chausworth* within y^e parish of Glossop in y^e county of Derby aforesaid; and by y^e said order of y^e 26th of December 1650 they ordered y^e said 50*l.* a year should from thenceforth be from time to time paid unto *Mr. John Jones* a godly minister then settled at y^e said chappel (a copie, &c.) it is ordered that y^e Committee for Sequestrations in y^e said county of Derby doe observe y^e said directions of y^e said order and proceed therein according to y^e Act of Parliament of y^e 31st of May 1650; this order being first entered with our Auditor. R. M., J. R., S. M., E. W.”

“ June 14th, 1654. The like order [for Augmentation] for Mr. John Jones of Charlesworth in y^e county of Derby, upon an order from y^e Committee for Approbation of Public Preachers, and dated 12th of June instant; directed to Derby.”—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum No. 319.*

Page 327.—MR. BURGESS.

“ February 7th, 1770. Independent congregation of Stockport seemed intent upon giving me a call thither, but their hopes of succeeding were suddenly damped by the unexpected death of Mr. Shepley of Hatherlow, and upon very good grounds, for Hatherlow congregation, which is far larger than that at Stockport, gave me (so far as I know) an unanimous call to their place soon after. The very same day on which I returned an affirmative answer to Hatherlow call, a reverend brother informed me by letter that he was desired to make use of his best interests with me to remove to S. Helens. It is remarkable that Hatherlow and S. Helens were the two congregations which I had for several years thought I could with more pleasure remove to than any other congregation whatever in case I left Whitworth.”—*From a MS. Diary of Mr. Burgess, copied by J. Wilson, Esq., of Tunbridge Wells.*

Page 335.—CHEADLE.

“ September 4th, 1646. Whereas Sir William Brereton and y^e deputies lieutenants of y^e county palatine of Chester have in pursuance of an ordinance of Parliament of y^e 26th of March 1644 sequestered y^e rectorie of y^e Parish Church of Cheadle in y^e said county from Dr. Nicholls for his delinquency, to y^e use of Thomas Gilbert a godly and orthodox divine; it is ordered that y^e said order of y^e said committee be confirmed and that y^e said Mr. Gilbert doe officiate y^e said cure of y^e said church as rector and preach diligently to y^e parishioners there, and that he shall have for his pains therein y^e parsonage house glebelands and profits of y^e said rectorie.”

“ September 24th, 1646. Upon information that Humphrey Buckley, Esq., hath intruded himself into y^e parsonage house of Cheadle in y^e county of Chester sequestered from Dr. Nicholls to y^e use of Thomas Gilbert, and deteyneth y^e possession thereof from y^e said Mr. Gilbert contrary to y^e said order of sequestration; it is ordered that y^e said Mr. Buckley doe forthwith deliver up y^e said parsonage house and y^e glebelands thereto belonging and y^e quiet and peaceable possession thereof, or doe shew cause to y^e contrary before this committee on y^e 7th of November next.”

“ May 8th, 1647. This committee doe appoint to consider of y^e petition of Thomas Gilbert to whom y^e rectorie of Cheadle in y^e county of Chester is sequestered, on Wednesday next, y^e first cause.”

“ May 12th, 1647. Upon consideration of y^e petition of Thomas Gilbert to whom y^e rectorie of Cheadle in y^e county of Chester is sequestered it is thought fit and ordered that y^e former order of March 4th last procured in y^e absence of y^e said Mr. Gilbert be admitted and discharged and that Captain Buckley who retaineth y^e possession of y^e parsonage house and glebelands from him doe shew

“ before this committee by what right y^e said Mr. Buckley layeth claim to y^e said
 “ parsonage house and glebelands, on y^e 24th of June next; and for y^e better
 “ preparing of y^e said cause for y^e said hearing it is ordered that y^e Committee of
 “ Parliament for Sequestrations for Maxfield hundred doe in y^e meantime examine
 “ y^e respective claims as well of y^e said Mr. Gilbert as of y^e said Mr. Buckley to
 “ y^e said parsonage house and glebelands hearing and examining such witnesses as
 “ shall be on both sides produced therein and to certifie y^e same to this committee
 “ before y^e 24th of June. And it is further ordered that y^e said Mr. Buckley doe
 “ forthwith upon sight hereof deliver and yield up unto y^e said Mr. Gilbert y^e keys
 “ of y^e said church by him detained whereof he is not to fail at his peril.”

“ July 1st, 1647. Whereas there is no certificate returned to this committee
 “ hitherto from y^e committee of Maxfield hundred in y^e county of Chester to
 “ y^e order of y^e 12th of May 1647 in y^e cause to them referred upon y^e petition of
 “ Mr. Gilbert to whom y^e rectorie of Cheadle in y^e said county is sequestered con-
 “ cerning y^e difference between y^e said Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Buckley concerning
 “ y^e parsonage house and glebelands mentioned in y^e said order of y^e 12th of May;
 “ therefore and for that y^e said cause was by order of y^e 4th of March 1646 by
 “ y^e said Mr. Buckley his consent to admitt and confesse y^e said Mr. Gilbert rector
 “ of y^e said church; it is therefore ordered that y^e said order of y^e 12th of May
 “ upon which there is no return made according to y^e purport thereof (although
 “ y^e time of y^e said returne being y^e 24th of June last is elapsed) be discharged and
 “ that y^e aforesaid order of y^e 4th of March shall stand and y^e same is hereby
 “ ratified and confirmed.”

“ July 16th, 1647. Upon consideration had of y^e examination returned from
 “ y^e Committee of Parliament for Maxfield hundred in y^e county of Chester in
 “ y^e cause to them referred between Mr. Gilbert to whom y^e rectorie of Cheadle
 “ in y^e said county is sequestered and Mr. Buckley concerning y^e parsonage house
 “ complained to be deteyned from him by y^e said Mr. Buckley, which said exami-
 “ nations and y^e said Mr. Buckley his answers were taken before y^e time limited
 “ by order of y^e 12th of May last, although by reason of y^e distractions at that
 “ time could not be returned; for that it appeareth by y^e said examinations that
 “ Dr. Nicholls did recover y^e said parsonage house at law in right of y^e said rec-
 “ torie and accordingly held possessed and enjoyed y^e same for more than twenty
 “ years together, till absenting himself about three years since y^e said Mr. Buckley
 “ broke open y^e door of y^e said house and made forcible entrie thereupon without
 “ any proceeding at law but against y^e said doctor; besides there were heretofore
 “ two verdicts given against y^e said Mr. Buckley his claim before y^e judges at
 “ Chester (as by a copie of y^e said verdict under seal of y^e court now produced
 “ appeareth) It is therefore ordered that y^e said Mr. Gilbert shall have hold and
 “ enjoy y^e said parsonage house with y^e appurtenances and y^e glebelands thereto
 “ belonging until he shall by due course of law be evicted notwithstanding y^e former
 “ order of y^e 1st of July last. And y^e said Mr. Buckley is required forthwith to
 “ deliver and yield up unto y^e said Mr. Gilbert y^e quiet and peaceable possession
 “ of y^e said house together with y^e keys of y^e said Parish Church and y^e glebelands
 “ thereto belonging and suffer y^e said Mr. Gilbert quietly to enjoy them until he be
 “ legally evicted as aforesaid and this committee doe desire y^e sheriff and justices
 “ of peace in y^e said countie to be aiding and assisting to y^e said Mr. Gilbert in
 “ his entering and taking possession of y^e said house and glebelands and keys.”

“ October 6th, 1647. This committee have taken into consideration y^e certificate of Henry Brook, Esq., sheriff of y^e countie of Chester made in pursuance of y^e order of reference of y^e 29th of July last whereby y^e said sheriff together with y^e justices of peace were desired to settle Mr. Gilbert minister of y^e word in y^e quiett possession of y^e parsonage house of Cheadle in y^e said countie deteyned from him by Captain Buckley, by which this committee are no way satisfied; for y^e said detayner y^e said Mr. Buckley having possessed himself of y^e said house by force whilst y^e same was in y^e disposition of y^e Parliament without everting by a due course of law y^e possession thereof; And y^e said Mr. Gilbert being y^e minister of y^e parish of Cheadle aforesaid y^e said rectorie being sequestered to his use by authority of Parliament; it is therefore ordered that y^e said sheriff do put y^e said Mr. Gilbert in y^e quiet and peaceable possession of y^e said house according to y^e said order of y^e 29th of July 1646, without prejudice notwithstanding to y^e said Mr. Buckley his trying of his title at law for recovery of y^e said house; and in case y^e said Captain Buckley shall refuse to deliver possession as aforesaid, it is ordered that y^e Sergeant at Arms of y^e House of Commons or his depute or deputies doe bring y^e said Captain Buckley before this committee in safe custodie to answer his said contempt.”—*Minutes of Committee for Plundered Ministers, British Museum, Additional MSS. 15,670-71.*

These consecutive minutes are interesting, not only as giving a chapter of local history, but as illustrating the proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Committee and the extent of its power.

Page 340.—DUKINFIELD.

George Fox the Quaker often visited this part of Cheshire on his journeys, and made several converts, some of whom had been connected with Samuel Eaton's congregation. Fox writes:—“ Passing on I went among the professors at Duckenfield and Manchester, where I staid awhile and declared truth among them. There were some convinced, who received the Lord's teaching, by which they were confirmed and stood in the truth. The professors were in a rage, all pleading for sin and imperfection, and could not endure to hear talk of perfection or of a holy and sinless life. But the Lord's power was over all; though they were chained under darkness and sin, which they pleaded for, and quenched the tender thing in them.” (*George Fox's Journal*, page 12.) “ 1657. After this, returning to England [from Wales], we came to Shrewsbury, where we had a great meeting, and visited friends up and down the country in their meetings till we came to William Gandy's in Cheshire, where we had a meeting of between two and three thousand people as it was thought, and the everlasting word of life was held forth and received that day. A blessed meeting it was, for friends were settled in the power of God upon Jesus Christ, the rock and foundation.” (Page 231.) “ 1666. We came into Cheshire, where we had several blessed meetings, and a general men's meeting wherein all the monthly meetings for that county were settled, according to the gospel order in and by the power of God.” (*Journal*, page 391.)

To counteract the teachings of George Fox, Eaton published a small treatise entitled “ *The Quakers Confuted* ; being an answer to nineteen queries propounded by them and sent to the Elders of the Church of Duckinfield in Cheshire; by

“Samuel Eaton, Teacher of the church of Christ heretofore meeting at Duckinfield, now in Stoppert in Cheshire, 1653.” The story of these “Nineteen Queries” is told in the preface thus:—

“There was a certain man named Richard Waller, who was servant at a gentleman’s house near Stoppert in Cheshire. This man fell in league with a woman servant in the same house, who stood related to us, and was a member of our society. She acquainted us, and sought our consent to the marriage. . . . Upon the 5th June last, being the first day of the week, Waller delivers the paper of questions to me in their [the Quakers’] name in the face of the congregation, entitled ‘The Quakers’ Queries for some friends who call themselves ‘elders of the Church of Christ meeting at Stoppert, from some friends of the ‘truth in Lancashire whom the world calls Quakers.’”

Eaton’s book contains the “Copy of a letter which Richard Waller, a Quaker, sent to a gentleman’s family near Stockport in which both he and his wife had been formerly servants; wherein he pleads for an absolute perfection and for quaking.” Also “Copy of an Answer to the forementioned letter, written in the name of the church at Duckinfield now meeting in Stoppert, and sent unto the wife of Richard Waller for the settling and establishing of her faith in Christ, being a member of the forementioned church.” This letter begins “Sister Waller you are very precious to us, though your miscarriage from God hath been very great,” &c. It is subscribed “from the elders and some brethren of the Church of Christ meeting in Stoppert in the name and on behalf of the rest: Samuel Eaton.”

The Quakers published a reply to Eaton, entitled “An Answer to a book which Samuel Eaton put up to the Parliament, in which he saith he is a teacher of the Church of Christ heretofore meeting at Duckenfield now at Stoppert in Cheshire; and he calls the title of his book *Quakers Confuted*.” 1654. The authors of this book say “We hearing of a paper which was sent to a member of a church (as they call it) at Duckenfield or that way of which one Eaton is the pastor, and in that paper we find many slanderous speeches and false accusations against us whom the world scornfully calls Quakers; we wrote some things to the paper and sent it back to the church (as they call it) and certain queries to be answered.” Eaton’s book is Christian and temperate, but this reply from the Quakers is full of the coarsest abuse; e.g. “O Eaton thou liar! O thou liar! Doth Satan transform himself into ministers of righteousness? . . . Here I charge thee in the presence of Christ to be a liar. O thou dark sot!”

CHESHIRE AUGMENTATIONS.

The following extracts from the Minutes of Commissioners for Compounding deeds and settlements for Augmentation of Livings relate to Cheshire. The volume is arranged in counties, and is entitled *A Book for all such settlements for Augmentation of Ministers as have been made by appointment of Parliament, and are delivered over by the Commissioners for managing the estates under Sequestration; unto the trustees appointed by order of His Highness the Lord Protector and his counsell, dated 2nd September 1654, entitled An Ordinance for y^e better Incouragement*

of preaching ministers and for the uniting of parishes: 21st December 1654. John Thorowgood, Ri. Sydenham, E. Hopkins, Richard Yong, Ra. Hall, Jas. Brock, John Humphry.

Chester.—*Sir Richard Grosvenor* of Eaton in y^e said county by deed dated y^e 15th December 1646 hath settled y^e rectorie of *Farne* also *Farnon* of y^e value of 130*l.* per annum upon George Booth, Esq., in trust for y^e ministers of such places as y^e Committee of Goldsmith's Hall shall appoint for ever. Consideration 1,300*l.*

Sir Orlando Bridgeman of y^e cittie of Chester by deeds dated y^e 3rd March 1646 hath settled y^e rectorie of *Plemstall* of y^e value of 140*l.* per an. upon Sir William Brereton and others in trust for y^e ministry of such places as the gentlemen for that city shall advise, and y^e said Commissioners of Goldsmith's Hall shall approve of for ever. Consideration 1,400*l.*

Henry Bunbury of Stanney in y^e said county gentleman, by deeds dated 25th January 1646 hath settled the rectorie of *Stoake* of y^e value of 25*l.* per an. upon Sir W. Brereton and George Booth, Esq., in trust for the minister there and his successors for ever. Consideration 250*l.*

Sir Thomas Smith of Hough in y^e said countie by deeds dated y^e 25th January 1646, hath settled y^e *Hospital of S. Andrew* and certain glebe lands thereto belonging of y^e value of 110*l.* per an. upon Sir W. Brereton and George Booth, Esq., for three lives in trust for y^e minister of such places as y^e Honourable Committee of Goldsmith's Hall shall appoint. Consideration 1,200*l.*

Thomas Glasior of Lea in y^e said countie gentleman by deeds dated y^e 13th of April 1647 hath settled y^e rectorie of *Shotwick* of y^e value of 15*l.* per an. upon Sir William Brereton and George Booth for fourteen years in trust for y^e raising of 50*l.* per an. for y^e minister. Consideration 315*l.*

Thomas Cholmondeley of Vale Royal in y^e said countie, Esq., by deeds dated 4th March A.D. 1646 hath settled y^e rectorie of Over upon Thomas Stanley and others in trust for y^e raising of 40*l.* per ann. for y^e viccar of *Over*, 40*l.* per ann. for y^e viccar of *Whettenhall* and y^e remainder upon y^e minister of *Whitegate* for fourteen years. Consideration 720*l.*

Robert Lord Viscount Kilmorey by deeds dated y^e 14th of April 1647 hath settled y^e tythes of *Wrenburie*, *Newhall*, and *Acton* of y^e value of 120*l.* per ann. upon Sir W. Brereton and George Booth, Esq., in trust for y^e raising of 50*l.* per ann. for y^e minister of *Wrenburie*, 40*l.* per ann. for y^e minister of *Burledam* and y^e remainder for y^e minister of *Acton*, and their successors for ever. Consideration 1,200*l.*

William Lord Brereton by deeds dated 19th of January 1647 hath settled y^e rectorie of Brereton of y^e value of 80*l.* per ann. upon George Booth, Esq., and others upon trust for y^e raising of 40*l.* per ann. for y^e minister of *Brereton* and 40*l.* per ann. for y^e minister of *Church Holme* and their successors. Consideration 800*l.*

Lawrence Winnington of y^e Armitage in y^e said countie gentleman by deeds dated y^e 17th March 1647 hath settled y^e tythes of *Goostrey*, *Twenlow*, and *Blackden* of y^e value of 40*l.* per ann. upon Sir William Brereton and George Booth in trust for y^e minister of Goostrey and his successors for ever. Consideration 411*l.*

George Penruddocke of Broad Chalke in Com. Wiltes Esq. by deed dated y^e 13th July 1648 hath settled y^e tythes of *Bromborrowe* and *Brimstage* of y^e value

of 80*l.* per ann. upon Sir William Brereton and George Booth Esq. for 18 years in trust for y^e raising of 40*l.* per ann. for y^e minister of *Bromborrowe* and 30*l.* per ann. for y^e minister of *Eastham*. Consideration 500*l.*

Thomas Leigh of Adlington in y^e said countie, Esq., by deeds dated y^e 16th of November A.D. 1648 hath settled y^e tithes of *Prestbury* of y^e value of 56*l.* per ann. upon George Booth Esq. in trust for y^e minister of *Boscley* and his successors for ever. Consideration 560*l.*—*Record Office, Domestic Interregnum* 320.

THE REV. R. FRANKLAND.

The Rev. Richard Frankland was born in the year 1630, at Rathmel, in Craven, Yorkshire. He studied at Christ Church College, Cambridge. Oliver Heywood, with whom he afterwards contracted a warm and enduring friendship, entered Trinity College the same year that Frankland entered Christ College. Both were born in the same year, and both professed to owe their spiritual life to the same preacher—Mr. Samuel Hammond, Fellow of Magdalen College, and afterwards ejected from a lectureship at S. Nicholas's, Newcastle. Calamy tells us that Mr. Frankland was ordained on September 14th, 1653, and was given the living of S. Andrew's, Auckland, eleven miles from Durham, by Sir Arthur Haslerigg. He afterwards was nominated to the office of tutor in the college at Durham, projected by Cromwell, but on the death of the Protector the project fell to the ground. In 1662, Frankland being ejected from his living, retired to his native village, where, after the lapse of five years, he set up a private Nonconformist academy in his own house, and the name of "George Lyddell, March 8th, 1669, son of Sir Thomas "Lyddell," stands at the head of the list of his pupils. In 1674 Mr. Frankland removed to Natland, near Kendal, Westmoreland, still prosecuting his labours as theological tutor. The enforcement of the Five Mile Act in 1683 obliged him to remove further from Kendal, and in 1686 he transferred his academy to Attercliffe near Sheffield. He returned to Rathmel again in 1689, and continued the academy till his death. Dr. Clegg, in his account of Mr. John Ashe (both of these ministers were pupils of Mr. Frankland), gives the following testimony regarding his tutor:—"The Rev. Mr. Frankland, M.A., had then under his conduct the most numerous "and flourishing private academy in England, and he was, indeed, by great "learning, wisdom, and an admirable temper, excellently qualified for that post "and service. In the space of a few years he had to the number of three hundred "and upwards under his tuition,—some of them intended for the law, some for "physic, but most of them for the ministry of the gospel; and I never knew a "tutor so entirely beloved by them all, nor one that so well deserved it. His "unaffected gravity, sweetened with candour, meekness, and humility, procured "him that esteem and veneration even from the most licentious, that made them "ever afraid of grieving or offending him. Very few, indeed, of any persuasion "conversed with him but they respected and valued him; for he was a man of "great moderation, of a truly charitable disposition, and studious to do good in all "relations. Yet his great worth could not secure him from a great deal of dis- "turbance and vexation, which was given him by the Spiritual Courts. He was "frequently cited and prosecuted, and at last excommunicated, to the great preju-

“ dice of both the tutor and his pupils, as constraining him to remove frequently from place to place to keep out of their merciless hands; and his troubles were renewed and continued from year to year till his death. He died in 1698 [aged sixty-eight years]. I can never forget the manner and frame in which he left the world, being one of the numerous and sorrowful flock that then stood about his bed. His last breath was spent in taking leave of us, and most solemnly and affectionately recommending us to the favour of God, and to the conduct of the great Shepherd. The candid reader will forgive me this digression; I could not forbear the payment of this small tribute of gratitude to one of the best of men, my reverend tutor.”—*Account of the Life of the Rev. John Ashe, by Dr. Clegg, pages 53, 54.*

It is a significant fact that the only published work of Mr. Frankland is a Tract against Socinianism, entitled *Reflections on a Letter writ by a nameless Author to the reverend Clergy of both Universities, and on his bold Reflections on the Trinity*. 4to. 1697. The following are Mr. Frankland's remarks regarding this pamphlet, extracted from a MS. letter of his preserved in the library of the British Museum:—“ That this work of mine, how mean soever in respect of its author, yet as designed in defence of the glory of our great God, Father, Son, and Spirit, against a scoffing adversary, may find acceptance, shall be the earnest prayer of your ever endeared brother and servant in our Lord, RICH. FRANKLAND. Rathmel, March 1st, 1696.”—*Letters of Divines, vol. ii., page 95. See Memoir of Frankland, with a List of his Pupils, by the Rev. R. B. Aspland, M.A.*

Oliver Heywood, in the preface which he wrote to Mr. Frankland's tract, gives the following testimony regarding him. He says, “ The trinity of persons, and hypostatical union of manhood and godhead in Christ, being so fully revealed in Scripture, let us hold them fast, and contend for them as our freehold. This is the attempt and design of the ensuing treatise, which was put into my hands by a very reverend and dear brother whose praise is in the gospel, who is better known to the world by the successful fruits of his indefatigable labours, sounding *viva voce*, than by legible characters in Scripture, having spent much time and strength in his peculiar province, with much advantage to the church of God. His learning and capacity elevate him above his fellows, so that he needs no epistle of commendation from me or any other person; nor doth any (*pruritus scribendi*) itch of appearing in print prompt him to this undertaking, but purely a zeal for God, his cause truth and glory, and the preventing of young students being poisoned with soul-destructive errors, that have edged his upright soul and moved his able hand to this uncouth undertaking.”

It must be remembered that the majority of the first ministers of the Nonconformist chapels in the north of England, built on the accession of William III., and under the protection of the Toleration Act, were Mr. Frankland's pupils, and shared his Trinitarian views.

Dr. Clegg gives the following account of “ the method observed ” in Mr. Frankland's academy. “ The whole family was called to prayer exactly at seven in the morning, summer and winter. About an hour after breakfast the several classes, according to their seniority, were called into the lecture room, and the tutor and his assistant continued reading lectures to them till noon. After dinner the students that minded their business retired to their closets till six at

“ night, and were then called to prayers. After supper the most diligent and studious met, eight or ten in a chamber, to confer about their reading, and any difficulties they had met with in it, and one of them prayed before they parted. On *Thursdays* the students exhibited theses on such subjects as were given them, and disputed in publick on such questions as the tutor appointed. On that night, after supper, they had often disputations in their chambers on such questions as they agreed to debate. On *Saturdays*, before the evening prayers, one read in public what was called an analysis, or methodical and critical dissertation on some verses of a Psalm or some chapter of the New Testament ; but this was not expected from any in their first years. After supper, on that night, they went in their chambers to confer on some practical subject, and concluded with prayer, which each performed in his turn, but only one of a night.”—*Life of Ashe, page 55.*

Two academies arose out of Mr. Frankland’s—that of the Rev. Timothy Jollie, Independent minister at Attercliffe, and that of Mr. John Chorlton, assistant to Henry Newcome, at Manchester. Dr. Clegg remarks:—“Under him (Mr. Chorlton) it was that several of Mr. Frankland’s pupils finished our studies afterwards ; where, besides other advantages, we had opportunities of frequenting the public library in that town.”



INDEX OF PERSONS.

* * When a name occurs on two successive pages, the number of the first only is given. Names of persons still living are omitted.



- ADAMS, Parson, 171.
 Adams, Randall, 75.
 Acton, Samuel, lxi, 117, 134, 474.
 Addenbrook, Thomas, 201.
 Ainsworth, Ralph, lvii, 86, 168, 412.
 Aldred, Jer., 37, 234, 484.
 Aldworth, Mr., M.P., 468.
 Anderton, William, 148.
 Angier, John, 6, 11, 57, 146, 167, 169,
 179, 226, 234, 310, 315, 321, 424.
 Angier, Samuel, lvii, 191, 292, 316, 344,
 346, 356.
 Anlezark, Robert, 241, 303, 337.
 Arderne, Dr., 64.
 Arderne, Ralph, 57, 451.
 Armitage, W., 41, 136.
 Ashe, John, 292, 490.
 Ashe, Simeon, 13, 166, 474.
 Ashbrook, John, 478.
 Ashton, Mr. (Sale), 368.
 Ashton, Mr. (Knutsford), 416, 448.
 Ashton, Solomon, 300.
 Ashworth, John, 134.
 Aspinall, Thomas, 373.
 Aspinwall, Peter, 85, 167.
 Astbury, Edward, 452.
 Aston, Sir T. xvi, 163.
 Auchincloss, Dr. 300.
- BAGSHAW, William, lvi, 15, 292, 323,
 332, 352, 361, 363.
 Bailey, John, 26, 28.
 Baker, Mr., 51.
 Ball, Benjamin, 13.
 Ball, John (Whitmore), 21, 138, 166, 178,
 474.
- Banne, Dr., 199.
 Banner, Richard, 71.
 Barlow, Robert, 203, 283.
 Barnett, Andrew, xlix, 197.
 Barnett, Joshua, 197, 456.
 Barrett, William, 209, 225, 289.
 Bartle, James, 334.
 Batley, Joseph, 335.
 Becket, Mr., 140.
 Bennet, Thomas, 160, 331, 348.
 Bethel, Hugh, 69.
 Birch, Eliezer, lvii, 158, 270, 272.
 Birch, Joseph, 373.
 Bispham, William, 52.
 Boardman, Gabriel, 469.
 Bold, Edward, 441.
 Bond, William, 191.
 Bonnyman, George, 95, 107.
 Booth, Sir G., xiii, xxxvi, xxxvii, 116,
 262, 370—376, 426, 489.
 Bourn, Joseph, 158.
 Bowker, Richard, 63, 151, 166.
 Boyer, John, 49.
 Braddock, Mr., 130, 132.
 Bradley, John, 184, 476.
 Bradshaw, Sir J., 103.
 Bradshaw, Judge, 151, 262, 313.
 Bradshaw, Mr. (Bradshaw Hall), 224, 228.
 Bradshaw, Adam, 167.
 Bradshaw, Henry, 313.
 Bradshaw, James, 15, 203, 214, 224, 229.
 Bradshaw, Thomas, 365, 453, 455.
 Breck, Thomas, 457.
 Brereton, Sir W., xiii, 50, 116, 156, 261,
 263, 370, 455, 468, 485, 489.
 Brereton, Lord, 463, 489.

- Brereton, John, xlix, 203, 261, 267, 383, 480.
 Brewen, Calvin, 8.
 Bridge, Thomas, 96.
 Bridgeman (Bishop), x, 6, 97, 110, 156, 441, 482.
 Bridgeman, Dr. H., 49, 110, 123.
 Bridgeman, Sir O., xviii, xix, 9, 489.
 Bridges, William, 52.
 Briscove, Michael, 436.
 Brocklehurst, William, 276.
 Bromfield, Mr., 149.
 Brook, Peter, 429.
 Brook, Thomas, 150, 153, 204.
 Brook, Thomas (Stockport), 300.
 Brooks, James, 349.
 Brooks, Major Henry, 453, 468, 487.
 Browning J. H., 243.
 Bruen, John, xviii, 56, 58, 60, 62, 83, 145, 164.
 Bruen, Jonathan, 472.
 Buckley, Captain, 485, 487.
 Buckley, John, 151, 197.
 Buckley, William, lxi, 321, 347.
 Bunbury, Henry, 470, 489.
 Burger, Peter, 82.
 Burges, George, 82.
 Burgess, J., 327, 485.
 Burghall, Edward, xx, 115, 119, 122, 142, 144, 473.
 Burnham, Mr., lviii, 402.
 Burroughs, Hugh, 50.
 Burroughs, Thomas, 101, 141.
 Burroughs, Robert, 412.
 Byfield, Nicholas, ix.
 Byrom, John, lvii, 63, 291.

 CAER (or Kerr), Patrick, 140.
 Case, Thomas, 481.
 Cartwright, John, 66, 82, 140, 256.
 Catherall, Randall, 200.
 Catherall, Samuel, 101, 200.
 Cawdrey, Zachary, 103, 142, 144, 187, 189.
 Chadderton (Bishop), vii, 5.
 Chadderton, Lawrence, viii.
 Chadwick, George, 276.
 Chapman, Richard, 63.
 Checkley, George, 349.

 Cheetham, Isaac, 450.
 Chetham, George, 401.
 Chetwood, Sir J., 404, 412.
 Chidlaw, John, lxiv, 37.
 Cholmley, Lord, xviii, 467.
 Cholmley, Thomas, Esq., 478, 489.
 Chorlton, John, 169, 234, 300, 492.
 Clark, Josias, 103, 467.
 Clark, Sabbath, xii, 58, 62.
 Clark, Samuel, xii, 63, 73, 166.
 Clarke, Essirius, 107.
 Clayton, Matthew, 477.
 Clayton, Dr. James, 292, 299, 323, 447, 484, 490.
 Clayton, John, 334.
 Clive, Lord, 414.
 Cockayne, James, 365, 451.
 Colefax, John, 478.
 Colley, Mr., 50, 104.
 Colthurst, Thomas, 132, 447.
 Cook, William, xxxvi, xlix, 21, 25, 28.
 Cooper, Bristowe, 349.
 Cooper, James, 173.
 Cooper, John (Nantwich), 135, 147, 192.
 Cooper, John (Hyde), lxi, 349.
 Cooper, Mr., 159, 414.
 Cope, Joseph, 143, 151, 168, 187—191.
 Cottingham, George, 53.
 Cowper, Mr., 356.
 Cresswell, Mr., 338.
 Crewe, Sir John, 57, 103.
 Crewe, John, Esq., 190, 386, 472.
 Crofton, Zachary, 139, 475.
 Crompton, Mr., 126, 168, 436.
 Cromwell, Oliver, xxxiii, xxxv, 9, 19, 313.
 Crowther, Thomas, 300.
 Culcheth, Thomas, 87, 169, 235, 325, 484.
 Cunningham, Mr. 452.

 DALE, Roger, 344.
 Davies, D. L., 347.
 Dawson, Benjamin, 159.
 Dearnley, William, 321, 385.
 DeCourcy, R., 105, 135.
 De la Rose, Samuel, lix, 158, 293, 299.
 Delamere, Lord, 299, 433, 483.
 Delves, Sir T., 130, 149, 476.
 Dod, Dr., 152.
 Dod, John, 102.

- Done, Sir J., 55, 314.
 Downham, John, 465.
 Downs, Andrew, 150.
 Duckenfield, Col., 262, 340.
 Dunkerley, Daniel, 241, 300.
 Dunster, Henry, 363.
- EARLE, Mr., 391.
 Eaton, Dr., lvii, lviii, 230—233, 292.
 Eaton, Richard, xx, 399.
 Eaton, Robert, 365.
 Eaton, Samuel, xii, xvi, xxiv, xxxiv, 15, 65, 76, 81, 197, 203, 225, 274, 288—290, 340, 342, 465, 471, 487.
 Eaton, Samuel (Allostock), 414.
 Eaton, Mr. (Alford), 100.
 Edge, George, 161.
 Edge, Richard, lviii, 85.
 Edge, Thomas, xxxiv, 196, 199, 203, 215—217, 258.
 Edgley, Samuel, 64, 123, 167.
 Edwards, Leoline, 87, 191.
 Edwards, Richard, 50.
 Edwards, William, M.P., xiii.
 Egerton, Dr., 187, 190.
 Elcock, Ephraim, 64, 455.
 Evans, Joseph, 173, 185.
 Evans, William, 45, 106, 184, 303—305, 348.
- FILLINGHAM, William, 159.
 Finmore, William, 457.
 Firmin, Giles, 339.
 Fisher, Samuel, 63, 166, 467.
 Fletcher, Edmund, lxi, 300.
 Fletcher, Michael, 366, 484.
 Fogg, Dr., 53.
 Fogg, Robert, 110, 123.
 Foolowe, Joseph, 292, 323.
 Ford, John, 178.
 Ford, Mr. (Ashton), 365.
 Forshall, Samuel, 145.
 Fox, George, 451, 487.
 Fowler, Richard, xx, 142.
 Francis, Arthur, 401.
 Frankland, Richard, 490—492
 Freckleton, Robert, 66.
- GAMUL, Francis, M.P., xiii.
- Gardner, John, lxi, 37, 87, 131, 275, 376, 414.
 Garside, John, 27, 257, 463.
 Garsyde, Samuel, lxi, 169, 413, 464.
 Gastrell (Bishop), 12.
 Gates, Mr., 236.
 Gelborne, Joshua, 52.
 Gilbert, Thomas, 336, 485—487.
 Glasier, Thomas, 489.
 Glegge, William, 72.
 Glendall [Glendole], John, xlix, 13, 26.
 Glover, Thomas, 77, 471.
 Goodman, Christopher, iii.
 Grastie, Samuel, 66, 82.
 Gray, Andrew, 355.
 Green, James, 416, 452.
 Green, John, 135.
 Gregg, Mr., xlvi.
 Gregg, Mr. (Malpas), 97, 111.
 Gregory, Cornelius, 147, 192.
 Griffith, Henry, 139.
 Griffith, John, 95, 102.
 Grimstone, Sir Har., 442, 471, 477.
 Grosvenor, Sir R., 466, 489.
 Guest, Randal, 54.
- HAINES, Thomas, 131.
 Hall, Ralph, 27, 442.
 Hall, Mr. (Over), 179.
 Halliley, Thomas, 164.
 Hammet, George, lxi, 170.
 Hammond, Samuel, 490.
 Handforth, John, 160, 337.
 Hardie, Edmund, 223.
 Harding, William, lxi, 376.
 Hardman, Samuel, 333.
 Hardy, James, 299.
 Hargreaves, Mr., 323.
 Harris, John, 244.
 Harrison, Major-General, 113, 119.
 Harrison, Dr., xlvi, xlvii, 19—22, 25, 83.
 Harrison, Peter, D.D., 336.
 Harrison, Ralph, 389.
 Harrison, R. (Sale), 366.
 Harrop, Robert, 333, 366, 389.
 Harvey, John, lvii, 28, 31—33, 66, 76, 85.
 Harvey, Jonathan, 34.
 Hassel, Mr., 144.
 Hatton, Henry, 88.

- Haughton, John, 133.
 Hawkes, J., 133, 159, 317.
 Haywood, Rowland, 450.
 Henry, Matthew, lvii, 29, 34—36, 83, 98,
 125, 127—130, 139, 167, 180, 187, 190,
 231, 234, 272, 321, 451.
 Henry, Philip, l, 11, 95, 109—115.
 Henshall, Peter, 138.
 Henshaw, Hugh, 203, 215, 258, 480.
 Herring, Julines, ix, xii, 138, 474.
 Hewetson, William, 74.
 Heyhurst, Mr., 215, 230.
 Heyrick, Richard, 146, 257, 442.
 Heywood, Oliver, 63, 166, 179, 269, 315,
 351, 491.
 Higgison (or Higginson), Samuel, 115,
 148, 184.
 Hinde, William, vii, ix, xii, 144, 164.
 Hitchin, Thomas, 106.
 Holford, Thomas, 184, 476.
 Holgate, Thomas, 334.
 Holland, Dr. Adam, lxi, 167—169, 180,
 234, 321, 479.
 Holland, John (Weaverham), 462.
 Holland, John (Mobberly), 415, 452.
 Holland, Thomas, 79.
 Holland, Thomas, lxi, 452.
 Holland, Mr. (Denton), 344.
 Holland, Robert, lviii, 412, 413.
 Holland, William, 97.
 Hollingworth, Richard, 146, 214, 227, 257.
 Holm, James, 316.
 Holm, John, 479.
 Holmes, Benjamin, 378.
 Holmes, Mr., 443.
 Holt, Thomas, 282.
 Hooper (Bishop), ii.
 Hopkins, Edward, 170.
 Hopwood, Richard, 69, 469.
 Houl, Richard, 86.
 Howe, John, 232.
 Hudson, William, 359.
 Hulme, John, 401.
 Hulse, John, 164.
 Hunt, Robert, 26.
 Hunter, Joseph, 483.
 Hunter, Robert, 365, 441.
 Hutchenson, Thomas, 152.
 Hutchins, William, 203.
 Hutchinson, James, 51.
 Hutchinson, Mr., 153.
 Hyde, Mr., 302.
 ILLIDGE, George, 125, 129.
 Illidge, Lieut., 120, 125, 129—131, 148.
 Irby, Sir A., 126, 150.
 Irlam, Thomas, lvii, lxi, 158, 192, 299,
 321, 356, 376, 414.
 JACKSON, Richard, 124, 198.
 James, John, 136, 138.
 Jeffries (Judge), l, 112.
 Jenkins, Matthew, 66, 74, 471.
 Jenks, Thomas, 148.
 Jevons, W., 382, 389.
 Jeynson, Thomas, 215.
 Johns, William, 133, 378.
 Johnson, Mr. (Stockport), 120, 286, 481.
 Jollie, John, 203, 310, 312—316.
 Jollie, Timothy, 272—274, 325, 492.
 Jolly, James, xlvi, xlvii.
 Jonas, Charles, 150.
 Jones, Gamaliel, lvi, lviii, lxi, 127, 129,
 234, 292, 312, 315, 320, 324, 356, 392.
 Jones, John, 54, 57, 87, 203, 317, 320,
 484.
 Jones, John (Junr.), 324, 326.
 KEYES, Mr., 66, 72.
 Kilmurrey, Lord, xviii, xix, 475, 489.
 Kimber, Isaac, 117, 134.
 Kingston, John, 237, 240.
 Kirby, Mr., xlvi, 169.
 Kirkes, Mr. (Acton), 122, 140.
 Knowles, Francis, 133.
 Knowles, John, 16, 18, 465.
 Kynaston, Mr., 411, 446.
 Kynaston, Thomas, lviii, 167, 411, 445.
 LANCASTER, Nathanael, xviii, xx, 54, 149.
 Langley, Samuel, xxxiv, 151, 198, 200,
 202.
 Langley, Thomas, xii, xxxiv, 7, 62, 145,
 164, 166, 201, 214, 477.
 Lassells, Brian, 75.
 Lawrence, Edward, 125—129.
 Lawrence, Samuel, lvii, 86, 125—129, 169,
 180, 191, 234.

- Lea, Thomas, lvii, lxi, 87—89, 414, 447.
 Leadbeater, Thomas, xlix, 198—200.
 Lee, Thomas, Esq. (Darnhall), 89, 169, 179, 357, 402.
 Leigh, Peter, xlvi, 13—15, 25, 442, 465.
 Leigh, Thomas (Adlington), 490.
 Ley, John, xxii, 78, 152, 205, 399, 477.
 Lightbown, John, 87, 414, 484.
 Livesey, James, 365, 401.
 Lord, Robert, lxiv, 447.
 Low, Samuel, 89, 169, 321, 446.
 Lowe, George, 323.
 Lowndes, Charles, 338, 379.
 Lyons, James, 38.
- MACHIN, John, 141, 155, 214, 279, 365, 405, 440.
 Maddox, R., 133, 474.
 Mainwaring, Henry, xviii, xix.
 Mainwaring, Sir T., 95, 141.
 Mainwaring, George, 95—97, 139, 141, 149.
 Mainwaring, Roger, 103.
 Mallory, Thomas, xxiii, 283.
 Marbury, James, 162.
 Marbury, William, xviii, xix, 401, 426.
 Marigold, John, 64, 104.
 Marris, George, 160.
 Marsden, Gamaliel, 73.
 Marsden, Jeremiah, 72.
 Marsden, Ralph, 72, 77, 471.
 Marsden, Samuel, 66, 72, 470.
 Marsh, Mr., 402.
 Marsh, George (Martyr), 2—4.
 Martindale, Adam, xxxi, 10, 71, 154, 164, 197, 228, 264, 315, 317, 365, 374, 391, 404, 417—437.
 Masy, Henry, 13.
 Maurice, William, 170, 237, 302.
 Maynwaring, Edward, 148, 196.
 Mc.All, Dr., 248, 306, 352.
 Meanley, Richard, 132.
 Meeke, Mr., 214.
 Meldrum, John, 171, 330, 337.
 Mercer, Edward, 140.
 Mercer, Samuel, 349.
 Midgley, Joseph, ix.
 Millington, Gilbert, 475.
 Milne, Richard, lxi, 292.
- Milton, John, 117, 183, 314, 481.
 Minshull, Elizabeth, 117, 483.
 Morton, Dr., 103, 472.
 Moseley, Robert, lvii, lviii, 319, 384.
 Moseley, Francis, 146.
 Mottershed, Joseph, lxi, 128—130, 414, 452.
 Moxon, George, xxxiv, 1, 151, 155—157, 271, 477.
 Murcot, John, 15, 18, 66, 71, 76, 81, 152.
 Murrey, Jos., 37, 452, 466.
- NEWCOME, Henry, xxxiv, xxxvi, 11, 13, 62, 103, 119, 123, 143, 146, 152, 162, 164—166, 188, 196—199, 201, 204—226, 229, 258, 263, 266, 279, 287, 289, 364, 373.
 Newcome, Henry, (Junr.), 103, 152.
 Newton, Lawrence, 148, 184, 476.
 Nicholls, Dr., xxiii, 335, 485.
 Nicholls, Robert, ix, xii, 139, 474.
 Nichols, Gabriel, 367, 377.
 Norbury, Robert, 365, 463.
- OLIVER, Philip, 48.
 Ottiwell, Joseph, 257, 475.
 Owen, Mr., 87, 131, 414.
- PAGET, Thomas, ix, x, xii, xvi, 287, 474, 482.
 Paget, John, x, 473.
 Palmer, John, lxiv, 235, 415.
 Partington, John, lx, 392.
 Pearetree, William, xx, 13, 139, 476.
 Pemberton, John, 13, 153.
 Pendlebury, Jeremiah, 337.
 Penruddocke, George, 470, 489.
 Perrott, Thomas, lxi, 87.
 Peters, Hugh, 22.
 Petre, Father, li.
 Phillips, John, 170, 452.
 Poole, Ralph, 68.
 Poole, Hugh, 467.
 Porter, Thomas, 146.
 Pott, Nehemiah, 200, 259.
 Preston, John, 254.
 Priestley, Dr., 133, 389, 415.
 Procter, W. T., 277.
 Prynne, William, 7, 9.

- RABAN, James, 242.
 Radcliffe, Benjamin, 192.
 Radcliffe, John, M.P., xiii.
 Ravenshaw, John, xlix, 151, 197.
 Reece, John, 160, 240, 395.
 Reyner, Nehemiah, 366, 484.
 Reynolds, John, 45.
 Rivers, Earl, xviii, 442, 451.
 Roberts, John, 100.
 Robinsou, J. (Middlewich), 173, 457.
 Robinson, Ralph, 72.
 Robinson, Dr., 329.
 Rothwell, William, 3.
 Rowbottom, John, 159.
- SACHEVERELL, Dr., lx.
 Sandford, Captain, 121.
 Saring, John, xxiii, 123.
 Savage, Mrs., 110, 124, 130, 139, 197.
 Scholefield, Nathanael, 172, 181.
 Scholefield, Ratcliffe, 387.
 Scholes, Jeremiah, 233.
 Scholes, Nathanael, 168, 233, 321.
 Scott, Jonathan (Captain), lxiv, 40, 136—
 138, 159, 171, 237, 241, 334, 394.
 Seddon, R., 71, 316.
 Seddon, William, xxiii, 70, 453.
 Senior, Mr., 138, 360.
 Shakerley, Sir G., xlv—xlvii, 257, 464.
 Shalcross, William, 481.
 Shaw, John, 455.
 Shelmerdine, Francis, 203, 335, 351.
 Shepley, James, 326.
 Sherard, Mr., 103.
 Sherlock, Dr., 82.
 Shenton, W., 425.
 Shipton, Samuel, xxiii, 278.
 Sidebottom, John, lviii.
 Sidebottom, Silas, lxi, 87, 139, 169, 191,
 321, 387, 414.
 Sillitoe, Randall, 161.
 Silvester, William, 45, 105, 184, 193—195.
 Simpson, Isaac, 148.
 Simpson, Samuel, 50, 52, 104.
 Smith, Sir T., 466, 470, 489.
 Smith, Mr. (Barthomley), 115, 143.
 Smith, Mr. (Bowdon), 373, 420.
 Smith, Francis, 472.
 Smith, James, 300, 337.
- Spurstowe, Dr., 146
 Stanley, Sir J., 269.
 Stanley, Thomas, 265, 489.
 Steel, Mr., xlix, 111, 214.
 Stephenson, Nicholas, 26, 203, 279.
 Storer, Arthur, 60, 286, 481.
 Street, Benjamin, 37, 235.
 Stringer, Gabriel, 124.
 Stringer, Ralph, 224—226.
 Stringer, Mr., lvii.
 Sunderland, Daniel, 145.
 Swan, John, 141.
 Swan Thomas, 141.
 Swanne, John, 145.
- TAYLOR, Gilbert, lxi, 321, 356.
 Taylor, Timothy, xxiv, 341—344.
 Tetlaw, Reynald, 356.
 Thomas, Zachariah, 123.
 Thornton, Edward, 357—359, 452, 484.
 Thorowgood, John, 489.
 Tong, William, lxii, 128, 444.
 Travers, Robert, 86.
 Tudman, Thomas, 188.
 Turner, Francis, lxi, 281, 403, 460
 Turner, James, 106, 249, 285, 380, 448.
 Turner, John, lxi, 281, 447.
 Turner, Kettleby, 442.
 Turner, Samuel, 337.
 Turner, William, 159, 414.
 Turner, Mr. (Northwich), 393.
 Turton, William, 124.
 Twemlow, Nathanael, 169.
- UPTON, Thomas, 13, 26, 478.
- VALENTINE, Thomas, 452.
 Vaughan, Richard, 101.
 Vawdrey, William, 130, 413.
 Venables, Col., 179, 402.
 Venables, Peter, xiii, 10.
- WALKDEN, Peter, 300.
 Wallace, Charles, 382, 389.
 Walton (Bishop), 9, 22.
 Waterhouse, Nicholas, lxi, 87, 299, 325,
 376, 386, 414, 484.
 Watmough, James, 373.
 Watts, Dr., 93.

- Watts, Mr., 75.
 Weyerburton, Mr., 403, 460.
 White, Ebenezer, 43.
 Whitelegg, George, 377.
 Whitfield, George, lxiii, 135.
 Whitney, Geoffrey, iv, 5, 116.
 Whittingham, W., iii.
 Wild, Robert, lxxv.
 Wiidbore, J., 238—240.
 Wilcoxon, Jonathan, 47.
 Wilson, Bishop, 69.
 Wilson, Dr. L., 299.
 Wilson, Job, 43, 45, 105, 136, 162, 171,
 180, 184, 241, 250, 337, 395—397.
 Wilson, John, xlvii, 1, 27, 66—68.
 Wilson, John (Junior), 68, 84.
 Winnington, Lawrence, 489.
 Withington, Peter, 37.
 Woodcock, Thomas, 87.
 Worsley, Ralph, 90, 257.
 Worthington, Hugh, lxi, 132, 272—275,
 312, 323.
 Worthington, Hugh (Junior), 274, 276,
 299, 388.
 Worthington, John, 316.
 Worthington, Nehemiah, 257.
 Wright, Robert, 338.
 Wright, Thomas, xxiii, 261, 267, 480.
 Wright, Mr. (Bidston), 69.
 Wright, Mr. (Harthill), xxiii, 101.
 Wyrley, George, 284.
 YATES, Mr., 383.
 Yong, Richard, 489.

INDEX OF PLACES.

- ACTON, 64, 115, 119—122, 138, 473, 489.
 Alderley, 263, 278—280.
 Aldford, vii, 100.
 Allostock, lvii, lxi, lxx, 130, 162, 394,
 412—417.
 Alvandley Chapel, 451.
 Appleton, 403, 454.
 Ashbourne, 407.
 Ashley Hall, 373, 387.
 Astbury, xlix, 79, 151—155, 205, 408, 477.
 Audlem, 82, 140—142, 466.

 BACKFORD, 66—68, 467.
 Baddiley, 101, 141, 197, 476.
 Barthomley, xlix, 142, 187, 189.
 Baschurch, 125, 129.
 Bebbington, 68, 467.
 Bidston, lxxvii, 69, 469.
 Birkenhead, 90.
 Blackley Chapel, ix, 452, 482.
 Bollington, lxx, 251.
 Bosley, 256, 490.
 Boughton, 48, 99.
 Bowdon, xi, xlix, 369—382.
 Bramhall, 283.
 Brassey Green, lxx, 147.
 Brereton, 193, 401, 478, 489.
 Broad Oak, 109, 111, 125.
 Brombrough, lxi, 19, 66, 83, 86—88, 412,
 489.
 Bucklow Hill, 437.
 Budworth, xi, 398.
 Bunbury, vii, ix, xix, 144—147.
 Burleydam Chapel, 140, 489.
 Burton, 69, 469.

 CALCOT, 205.
 Caldecot, 200.
 Cawk, 138.
 Chadkirk, lvii, lxi, 316, 327, 331.
 Charlesworth, 484.
 Cheadle, 335—338, 485.
 Chelford, 216, 257—259, 480.
 Cherry Lane, 455.
 Chester, xlix, lvii, lxi, lxiv, lxx, 1—49, 67,
 105, 115, 129, 430.
 Church Lawton, 161.
 Churton Heath, 50, 104.
 Coddington, 101, 105.
 Congleton, lvii, lxiv, lxx, 151—161, 170,
 193, 205.
 Coppenhall, 148.
 Crewe, 142, 148, 192.
 Cross Street, lxi, lxx, 366.
 Cuddington, 184.

 DARESBOURGH, 461.
 Darnhall, 176—180, 402.
 Davenham, 162, 163.
 Dean Row, lvi, lvii, lxi, lxx, 270—277.
 Delph, 170, 359.
 Denton, 98, 315, 320.
 Disley, 338—340.
 Doddington, 130, 149.
 Drayton, 137, 170.
 Dukinfield, xxiv, lviii, lxi, lxx, 15—17,
 160, 289, 340—348, 487.
 Dunham, 199, 370—376.

 EASTHAM, 70, 79, 470, 490.
 Eccleshall, 143, 187.
 Edale, 338, 340.

 Farndon, 52, 466, 489.
 Ford, 353, 362.
 Frodsham, xi, 205, 422, 450, 476

 GATLEY, 337, 338
 Gawsorth, 203—217.
 Glossop, lvi, 354, 362, 484

- Goostrey, 153, 196, 199, 205, 489.
 Gorton, xxxiii, 71, 311, 422
 Crappenhall, 71, 453
- HALE, lxiv, lxx, 383, 387, 390
 Handforth Hall, 262.
 Handley, 101.
 Harden Hall, 57, 81, 314.
 Hargrave, 52, 104, 466.
 Harthill, 101, 104, 141, 466.
 Haslington, 87, 142, 144, 187, 189—194.
 Hatherlow, lxi, lxiv, lxx, 127, 160, 312—
 332.
 Hazel Grove, 312.
 Hefferston Grange, 461, 462.
 Heswall, 66, 72.
 Hey Head, 390.
 Hill Cliffe, lxi, lxx, 403, 459.
 Hinckley, 198.
 Holmes Chapel, 197—200, 489.
 Hyde, lxi, lxiv, lxx, 348—350.
- INCE, xi, 467.
 Iscody (Flintshire), 110.
- KERMINCHAM, 196, 201.
 Killingsworth, 124.
 Kinderton, 163, 164.
 Kingsley, lxi, lxx, 451.
 Knowles Green, 285.
 Knutsford, xi, xvi, lvii, lxi, lxiv, lxx, 84,
 89, 128, 132, 158, 167, 173, 213, 437—
 450.
- LISCARD, 93.
 Lostock—see Allostock.
 Lymm, lxx, 454.
- MACCLESFIELD, xi, lvii, lxi, lxiv, lxx, 168,
 223—255, 292, 321, 479.
 Malpas, 1, 95—100, 110, 139, 141, 149,
 152.
 Manchester, lxi, 217—222, 492.
 Marbury, 150.
 Marple Bridge, 317—319, 332—335.
 Marple Hall, 313.
 Mear, 27, 442.
 Mellor Chapel, 319.
- Middlewich, lxi, 151, 162, 164, 170—175,
 181, 184, 463, 477.
 Mill Brow, 332.
 Millington, 450.
 Milton [or Milneton], 183.
 Minshull, 148, 173, 175, 183—185, 476.
 Minshull Vernon, 183.
 Mobberley, 283, 449.
 Moreton Chapel, 69, 153.
 Morston, 50.
 Mottram, xi, 350—353.
 Moulton, 162.
- NANTWICH, xi, lvii, lxi, lxx, 105, 115,
 118, 121, 123—127, 129, 131—133, 137,
 144, 184, 198, 414, 473, 477.
 Neston, 72, 470.
 Norbury, 310—312.
 Northenden, 363.
 Northwich, xi, xxv, lxi, lxiv, lxx, 105, 170,
 184, 220, 390—398, 430.
- OVER, 173, 175, 177—183, 478, 489.
- PARK GATE, 66, 456.
 Partington, lxi, lxx, 376—380.
 Peover, 173, 462.
 Peover, Nether, 463.
 Plemondstall, 53, 489.
 Prestbury, 255, 256, 480, 490.
 Puddington, 23.
 Pulford, 54.
- RINGWAY, lvii, lxi, 269, 273, 320, 382—
 390.
 Rosthern, 154, 417—437.
 Rowley, 124.
 Rudheath, 162.
 Runcorn, 456—459.
- SANDBACH, xlix, 105, 142, 184, 186,
 187—196.
 Shocklach, 102.
 Shotwick, 73, 470, 489.
 S. Andrew, Hospital of, 489.
 Stoak, 470, 489.
 Stockport, x, lxiv, lxx, 170, 197, 286—
 310, 481, 488.
 Swettenham, 165, 200—202.

- TARFORLEY, xi, xviii, 54, 57, 147.
 Tarvin, vii, xi, 58, 61, 144.
 Tattenhall, 103, 106, 144, 184, 472.
 Thelwall Chapel, 461.
 Thornton-in-the-Moors, 63, 167.
 Threapwood, 100.
 Thurstaston, 75.
 Tilstock, 123.
 Tilston, 106, 107.
 Tintwistle, lxi, lxiv, lxv, 87, 352—361.
- UPTON, lxi, 66, 83—88.
 Utkinton, 55, 57, 318.
- VALE ROYAL, 176—178, 317.
- WALLASEY, 28, 75.
 Warburton, 403, 456.
 Warford, lxi, 280—283.
 Warrington, xxxi, lxi, 113, 126, 402, 453.
 Waverton, 64—104.
 West Kirby, 18, 76, 79, 82, 341, 471.
- Waverham, 141, 177, 178, 404, 461, 463.
 Waverton, 64.
 Wettenhall, 478, 489.
 Wheelock, lxi, lxv, 87, 191—193, 195.
 Whitchurch, 110, 113, 133, 137, 141, 407.
 Whitegate, 179, 451, 489.
 Whitewell Chapel, 101, 111.
 Whitley, lvii, 86, 156, 320, 404—412, 421.
 Wilmslow, 260—270, 277, 480.
 Wincham, 179, 402.
 Wincle, 259, 260.
 Wirrall, lvii, 65, 83, 86, 199.
 Wistaston, 150.
 Withington, 63, 216, 259.
 Wollerton, 137.
 Woodchurch, 82.
 Woodhead, 353.
 Woodhey, 82, 122, 140.
 Worthenbury, 29, 96, 108, 111.
 Wrenbury, 95, 122, 124, 136—140, 142,
 197, 474, 489.
 Wybunbury, xlix, 134, 148, 476.

INDEX OF SUBJECTS.

- ACT of Uniformity (1662), xxxix—xli.
 Agreement of the People, xxviii.
 Allowance of Fifths to Sequestered Clergy,
 52, 77, 188, 278, 476, 480.
 Arian Controversy, lxii.
 Attestation of Cheshire Ministers, xxv—
 xxviii.
 Augmentation of Ministers' Incomes, 266,
 466, 467, 470, 471, 473, 475—478.
 Articles, v, vi, viii.
- BAPTISMAL Covenant—P. Henry's, 110.
 Baptists, Early, in Cheshire, 459.
 Bartholomew Day (1662) :—
 At Acton, 121. Manchester, 219.
 Chester, 22, 25. Rosthern, 432.
 Denton, 315. Stockport, 287.
 Macclesfield, 227. Worthenbury, 109.
 Bishops of Chester, vii, ix, li, 1—12.
 Book of Sports, ix, 288.
- CHARTER of Chester, 32, 33.
 Cheshire Association of Ministers (1653),
 xxxii, xxxiii, 213, 264, 428.
 Cheshire Association of Ministers (1691),
 lv—lix, 84, 86, 89, 114, 132, 158, 230,
 264, 271, 292, 298, 320, 363, 384.
 Cheshire Congregational Union (1806),
 lxv, 304, 396.
 Cheshire Petition against Episcopacy, xiv.
 Cheshire Petition for Episcopacy, xv.
 Cheshire Rising, xxxvi, xxxvii, 260, 340,
 351, 371, 429.
 Civil War in Cheshire, xvii—xix, 55, 116—
 121, 142, 149, 163, 188.
 Committee for Plundered Ministers, xx, xxi.
 Committee for Compounding Orders, xxi.
 Cole's Irish Commission, 5.
 Confirming and Restoring Ministers (1660),
 xxxviii, 267, 429.
 Conventicle Act, xlii, 112, 220.
- Comprehension Bill, liii.
 Communion, Candidates for, lvii, 196, 208.
 Communion, Mode of Administration, 232.
 COVENANT, xxii, 10, 146, 206, 315.
 Courts of Star Chamber and High Com-
 mission, 7—9, 14, 77, 143.
- DECLARATION of Indulgence [1672], xlvi, xlviii,
 xlix, 23, 29, 53, 111, 198, 220, 362, 434.
 Declaration of Liberty of Conscience [1687],
 li, 113, 124, 222.
 Directory of Worship, xxiv.
 Disfiguring of Churches, i, 61, 223, 264.
 Dissenting Academies, 490—492.
- EJECTED Ministers in Cheshire, xlii, lxvi.
 ENGAGEMENT, The, xxix—xxxii, 10, 22,
 63, 139, 146, 197, 206, 315, 336, 401,
 426, 451, 473, 475, 481.
 Engagement, Reasons for Signing or
 Refusing, xxxi, xxxii.
 Et Caetera Oath, xii.
 Evangelical Movement, lxiii.
 Ex Officio Oath, vi.
- FEOFFEES, xi.
 Five Mile Act, xlii, xliii, 23, 27, 156, 198,
 220, 229.
- HYPER-CALVINISM, Controversy upon,
 lix, 293—298.
- INDEPENDENCY, Rise of, xxii, xxiv, 209,
 225, 261, 340—342, 423, 427.
 Ingenious Device for Recollecting Scrip-
 ture, 60.
 Institution to Livings, Form of, 205.
- LICENCES in Cheshire (1672), xlix.
 Long Parliament, xiii.

- MAYPOLE at Rosthern, 154.
 Millenary Petition, viii.
 Missions, Indian, 209.
 Missions, Virginia, 19.
 Monasteries and Pories:—
 Bangor, 108. Combermere, 140.
 Birkenhead, 90. Vale Royal, 176.
 Chester, 1.
- NEONOMIAN Controversy, lix.
 Neutrality Condemned, xix, 372.
 Nonconformist Intelligencers, xliii.
 Nonconformist Preachers, xlv.
- OCCASIONAL Conformity, lx.
 Ordination, Certificates of, 78, 168, 257,
 351.
 Ordination, Importance attached to, 258,
 272.
 Ordinations:—
 Angier, 344. Mosley, 146.
 Bagshaw, 362. Mottershed, 129.
 Bond, 191. Murcot, 78, 152.
 Bowker, 167. Newcome, 165.
 Byrom, 292. Nicholls, 377.
 Dearniley, 385. Ottiwell, 257.
 Edge, R., 85. Partington, 393.
 Edge, T., 258. Scott, 137.
 Edwards, 87. Sidebottom, 191.
 Garside, 169. Swan, 141.
 Harding, 376. Tetlaw, 356.
 Hardy, 299. Thornton, 357.
 Henry, 31. Travers, 86.
 Holland, 167, 234. Twemlow, 169.
 Jones, 136. Vawdrey, 413.
 Marsh, 348. Waterhouse, 386.
 Martindale, 426. Wilson, 395.
 Meanley, 132. Worthington, 272.
- Orthodoxy of Early Dissenters, liii, lxiii,
 30, 35, 40, 334, 412, 416, 491.
- PACIFICATION, Treaty of, xix, 372.
 Penal Proceedings against Nonconformists,
 xlv—xlvii, 2, 7—9, 10, 28, 111, 139,
 166, 198, 310, 375, 387, 391, 430.
- Petition of Cheshire Independents for
 Liberty of Conscience, xxiv.
 Plundered Ministers, xviii, xx.
 Presbyterian Church Government, v, 422.
 Private Days, 210—213.
 Prophecysings, vi.
 Protestants in Piedmont, Collection for;
 265.
 Puritanism, Rise of, ii, v.
 Puritans, Learning of, 78, 85, 102, 214,
 405, 408.
- QUAKERS, 110, 121, 201, 319, 451, 487.
- REFORMATION Lectures, 35, 62, 168, 231,
 321.
 Remonstrance, The Grand, xvi.
 Revision of Prayer Book, xvi, xxxviii,
 xxxix.
 Royalist Troops, Conduct of, xviii, 142,
 163, 421.
 Rye House Plot, 221.
- SABBATHS, Puritan, 24, 56, 126, 286.
 Savoy Conference, xxxviii.
 Scandalous Ministers, Commission for
 Removing (1654), xxxiv, 213.
 Schism Bill, lx.
 Sequestered Clergy, xxii, xxiii.
 Social Life, Illustrations of (17th Century),
 56, 59, 80, 155, 180, 207, 418—421,
 432—434, 469.
 Synod of Dort, ix.
- TEST Act, l.
 Theses, Ordination, 87, 168, 325, 347,
 349, 376, 385, 393, 413, 452.
 Toleration Act, lii.
 Toleration Act, Enlargement of, lxiv.
 Tory Riots, lx, 158.
 Triers, The, xxxiv, xxxv, 289, 453.
- VOTERS for Cheshire (1717), lxi.
- UNITED Ministers, Agreement of, lii.
- WESTMINSTER Assembly, xxii.

ERRATA.

- Page 29, line 9, for "Wybunbury," read "Worthenbury."
,, 151, ,, 8, for "Thomas Cope," read "Joseph Cope."
,, 220, ,, 22, for "1644," read "1664."
,, 222, lines 12 and 13, for "1686," read "1687."
,, 307, line 15, for "70,000," read "40,000."
,, 327, ,, 20, for "John Burgess," read "James Burgess."
,, 329, ,, 19, for "Phillipians," read "Philippians."
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N.B.—Since the foregoing pages were in type the Rev. W. B. MacWilliam has removed from Middlewich to Altrincham; the Rev. C. Chapman has removed from Chester to Bath; the Rev. R. C. Lumsden has come to Cheadle; the Rev. S. W. McAll has accepted an invitation to Finchley.

312

Harriet, 10m Ed.

