THE HISTORY OF NONCONFORMITY IN PLYMOUTH.

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THE dawn of the Reformation sheds little light on the religious history of Plymouth. We can only infer, not trace, the course in this town of the religious conflict of the sixteenth century. There is no evidence whatever that Plymouth contained any sympathisers with Wickliffe; that Lollardry ever obtained a footing within its walls. But there is evidence inferential, if not direct, that the Reformation was welcomed in the Western town, and developed into its extremer phase of Puritanism. At first the spirit of the Vicar of Bray must have been widely prevalent. There is no record of disturbances arising in connection with the dissolution of the monasteries, or the declaration by Henry VIII. of his supreme headship of the Church. No sympathy was shown with the great Western rebellion of 1549 against the new owners of the Abbey Lands, and for the restoration of the old faith. On the contrary, Plymouth afforded an asylum to the refugees, and was assailed unavailingly, on their retreat from Exeter, by the Cornish insurgents, though they burnt the "steeple" with the town's evidence. Perhaps it was in set-off for this that one rebel was subsequently "burnt" at the town's expense. But all this did not prevent Plymouth from moving with the times when Mary came to the throne. If Protestantism was really much in favour here, its professors must have been very lucky or very circumspect. Plymouth furnished no martyr to the Marian fires; she has no place in the bloody record of Fox; and the only indication of religious persecution at this time of which I know is the deprivation of the vicar of St. Andrew, John Peryn, in the last year of Philip and Mary. And yet when Elizabeth came to the throne Plymouth readily acquiesced in the new policy; and since the corporation

subsequently had the grant of the advowson of St. Andrew, they must have been regarded as thoroughly loyal.

All this would seem rather to indicate the spirit of Gallio than that of Geneva. Still the Puritanic leaven must have been strongly at work, at least in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign. Indeed so strongly marked does the Puritanism of Plymouth become that, whatever outward conformity to Catholicism there may have been under Mary, I believe the principles of the Reformed religion had continued to be firmly held, and that it was only in seeming, and not in fact, that Plymouth went back to the old faith.

The early Puritan was not a Nonconformist. He was simply a religious reformer within the pale of the Church, who differed from it, not in doctrine, but concerning the retention of vestments and ceremonials, which seemed to him to savour of Popery. His morality was severe, his piety ardent, his principles narrow, and in obstinate fidelity to conviction he gave place to no man. Puritanism grew more rigid after the accession of Elizabeth. The men who fled beyond seas to escape the Marian persecutions had become largely imbued with the principles and practice of foreign Protestantism.

A numerous and earnest body rejected the liturgy of King Edward, and adopted the Presbyterian scheme. Hence early in the reign of Elizabeth the divergence between the two sections of the Reformers widened to the inclusion of the question of discipline. Both, as Neal* says, agreed that there ought to be "one religion, one uniform mode of worship, one form of discipline and of church government for the whole nation, with which all should comply outwardly, whatever their inward sentiments might be." They differed eventually, not only on the form of that religion, but upon its legal foundation—its relation to the State. It was not until after several years of hot conflict, bitter enmity, and of persecution on the side of power, that the Puritans distinctly severed themselves from the national church, and established separate Presbyterian worship. Nor was this decisive step taken until the Puritan ministers had been ejected and, so far as could be, silenced. And even then the struggle to influence the character of the national Church continued.

We have evidence of markedly Puritan feeling in this diocese.

* Neal's "History of the Puritans," the leading authority for many of the statements in the earlier part of this lecture.

Coverdale was the bishop during the reign of Edward VI. Dodds, the dean of Exeter, and Tremayne, proctor for the Exeter clergy, were among the leading advocates of Puritan views in the Convocation of 1562. It was but a few years after this that, according to Neal, the Puritans were shut out of the Church by sequestration, imprisonment, and the revocation of their preaching licenses; and that several of the leading ministers so silenced agreed that, under these circumstances, it was their duty to break off from the public churches, and provide places where they might worship God according to their own consciences. Hence there was erected the first Presbytery in England—that of Wandsworth; and Puritanism first became Nonconformist.

Plymouth does not seem to have given occasion to any disputes. I have shown that there was a strong Puritan feeling in Devon. That Cornwall shared therein is proved by a petition sent up to Parliament, in which it was stated that one hundred and forty clergymen in that county were unable to preach a sermon; that of one hundred and sixty churches the greater number were supplied by men guilty of the grossest sins; and in which Parliament was asked to dispossess these "dumb dogs and ravenous wolves," and appoint faithful ministers in their stead.

The absence of reference to Plymouth in the voluminous records of the ecclesiastical disputes of this time shows that the Plymouth folk were well of one mind. That mind being Puritan, Puritanism here did not become Nonconformist until a much later date. The evidence is clear. The corporation had the patronage of the living, and exercised large control over church matters. And of the Puritan character of the corporation (a self-elected body, be it remembered) there can be no doubt. Take the two leading members. Sir Francis Drake was the son of a Puritan clergyman, who fled from Devon into Kent, because he had been called to account under the Six Articles Act. Sir Francis himself was a strong Puritan, and a friend of Fox the martyrologist, whom we find him addressing as his "loving and faithful sonne in Christ Jesus." And that Sir John Hawkins, Drake's famous kinsman, was also of Puritanic sympathies we may gather from his great esteem for Emilius Paget, the silenced Puritan vicar of Kilkhampton. From these two we may judge the rest.

But we do not rest here. The Plymouth work of those days was to fight Spain; and Plymouth men lived for little else.

Spaniard and Papist were to them one. They hated all that savoured of Popery, save golden candlesticks and jewelled shrines. Everything conspired to foster the Puritanic spirit within the community. Other foreign influence was not wanting. Francesco Diaz, a Spanish captain, found lying in Plymouth harbour, in 1568, eleven French cruisers, which, with half a dozen English, carried the flag of the Prince of Condé, and scoured the Channel in search of Catholic ships. One of these vessels was commanded by William Hawkins, brother of Sir John, and himself a corporator.

Plymouth, thus distinctively Puritan, was, as compared with the rest of the kingdom, Nonconformist in fact if not in name. But actual Nonconformity was not long wanting. The earliest separatist Protestant body was the Anabaptist; or, as we now say, the Baptist. Save in the rite of adult baptism the Anabaptists differed widely. There were the bloodthirsty Anabaptists who seized Munster under John of Leyden, and carried out a reign of terror which reflected with lurid power the horrors of the Catholic persecution. There were the devout, sincere, liberal-minded Anabaptists, who seem to have got hold of the principles of religious liberty and toleration when all the rest of the Christian world was in more than heathen darkness thereon. There were the rationalistic Anabaptists, who brought all doctrines to the tribunal of their private judgment, and in the enjoyment of that freedom sought to live in peace with all men. The true Anabaptists persecuted nobody; they were persecuted of all. Henry and Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, each in turn sent them to the stake. There still exists at Moretonhampstead an ancient General Baptist congregation, which tradition carries back to the days of Mary, and associates with the sufferings of her reign. The early Baptists came from Holland; and it is highly probable that the frequent intercourse between this port and that country led to Baptist opinions being implanted here. Much about the same time the views of Browne, from whom the early Independents took the name of Brownists, must have been received. I am not sure that Browne ever visited Plymouth, but the seed was sown by some one; for when in 1620 the Pilgrim Fathers came hither on their way to America, they "were kindly entertained and courteously used by divers friends there dwelling." The Pilgrim Fathers were Independents; and the earliest recorded Nonconformist organization of Plymouth was such a mixed congregation of Independents and Baptists as was then common.

Indeed it was out of such mixed assemblies that the Baptist societies sprung.

But we must return to the local Puritanism. This developed remarkably during the reigns of Elizabeth and James. In 1609 an order was made that no beer should be carried through the streets on the Sabbath except for the supply of strange ships; and we have another Puritanic clue in the constitutions of the Hospital of Orphans' Aid, founded by Thomas and Nicholas Sherwill in 1617; and of the Hospital of the Poor's Portion, founded by John Gayer, Abraham Colmer, and Edmund Fowel, "in performance of the trust reposed in them by the Mayor and Commonalty," in 1630.

In the constitutions of the Orphans' Aid we read: "Our will and desire is chiefly that they may be trained up religiously to the knowledge and fear of God, and to that end that they be catechized duly every day in the principles of religion, or at least one of them by turn in the hearing of the rest, either in the evening after supper, or at some other time as their tutor shall see convenient. Further our will is that duly, morning and evening, and at their repasts, they be held to prayer and thanksgiving. We would have them observe that they be duly at church at sermons, and other times convenient, and behave themselves reverently there, and that they be examined touching what they learn there, and restrained from idle recreation, on the Sabbath-day especially. . . . . As we would have especial care taken that the Sabbath-day be duly observed generally in all religious exercises, so more particularly for the perpetual remembrance of God's mercy to this land and His whole Church, more especially manifested to this place in that great deliverance A.D. 1588, we desire that yearly on the Sabbath-day next before the 25th July, there be read by them the whole prophecy of Joel, which was preached on and particularly applied to that invasion and deliverance, in this church about that time, and in part accomplished in our sight; and further that there be sung at the same time either the 46th or the 124th psalm, or some other to the like purpose."

The orders of the Poor's Portion direct: "First and principally we ordain that care be had that honest and religious orders and exercises be used within the said house, and by all the inhabitants therein, and that they be instructed and exercised in religious duties on the Lord's-day at such times as the public assemblies for religion are not; that every morning and evening they have their

set times for prayer and thanksgiving, that continual watch be had over them for avoiding all profaneness, &c. whatsoever."

It was in the reign of Charles I. that Plymouth Puritanism received its first check. Plymouth was one of the towns in which the desire for a preaching ministry had led to the appointment of lecturers, which was an ingenious device to supply the want of Puritan sympathizers among the parochial clergy, whence the Puritanic leaven had been rigorously weeded out. The corporation appointed the lecturers as well as the incumbents, and in September, 1631, the king ordered that Thomas Forde, of Brixton, who had been expelled the University of Oxford for preaching against the stone altar set up by Dr. Fewens in Magdalen Hall Chapel, was not to be chosen in that capacity. The Mayor replied that the king should be cheerfully obeyed. Two years later more serious difficulties arose. There was then living here a certain Sir James Bagg, the contemptible tool of a contemptible master—the worthless Buckingham—in whose interest he sought to use his official position in connection with the Customs and the Admiralty to govern the town. The character of this man is sketched in one word by himself. Writing to Buckingham he subscribes himself, "Your slave!" He seems to have been the constant fomenter of evil. In 1632 Upham, then vicar of St. Andrew, died. The corporation, in exercise of their undoubted right, appointed Alexander Grosse, the Puritan vicar of Plympton St. Mary. Grosse's institution was refused by the Bishop, and the king illegally presented Dr. Aaron Wilson, a thorough-going Royalist and Episcopalian. A connection so commenced could not prosper. Who was the aggressor I cannot say, but Wilson dragged the corporation before the Star Chamber on the pretence that the erection of the Hospital of Poor's Portion was an interference with his territorial rights; and they not unnaturally sought to have a lecturer of their own views since they could not approve the vicar. Bagg came to Wilson's aid. He moved the king, who wrote to Bishop Hall that certain persons had been endeavouring to maintain a lecturer in Plymouth without the approbation of the incumbent; and that the Bishop was not to admit any such, but to settle Thomas Bedford, and not permit him to be disquieted by Grosse, whom I hence gather to have been doing lecturer's duty. But the corporation were pertinacious; and I have to suggest that the petition which was presented to the king in the following year, asking permission

to erect a new church, had far less to do with the want of church accommodation in the town (the population of which had been greatly reduced by pestilence) than with the want of Puritan preaching. Wilson could not be got rid of, the lecturer was of the same type; what more ready mode of solving the difficulty than the erection of another place of worship? At any rate the church was built, largely if not wholly out of the rates of the town; and since the Civil War not only delayed its progress, but prevented its consecration until the Restoration, and in the interval it was used for Presbyterian worship, there is a sense in which Charles Church may fairly be called our oldest Nonconformist meeting.

During the siege in the wars of the Commonwealth (1642–46) there were several religious assemblies in the town, and not only Presbyterians, but Baptists, Independents, and Fifth Monarchy men, were represented. Plymouth, moreover, was then the refuge of many of the ministers of the adjoining parishes, who could not exercise their functions in the presence of the Royalist soldiery; as it was likewise the prison of not a few Episcopal clergy, whose zeal for the Royal cause brought them into the arena of political conflict.

There is little to record concerning the progress of Nonconformity here during the Commonwealth, when Presbyterianism was the established faith. St. Andrew was occupied by the Rev. George Hughes, leader of the Devonshire Puritan clergy, a man of high character, unblemished reputation, sincere piety, and great ability. The liturgy had been abandoned before his time by Francis Porter, preacher of Charles. There were two Nonconforming congregations. The oldest, the Baptist, is now represented by the Baptist Churches of George Street and Mutley, of Devonport, and of many other places in the neighbourhood. A careful, detailed, and interesting history of this Church has been written by my friend Mr. H. M. Nicholson. It sprung from the mixed congregation of Baptists and Independents already mentioned, and its records date back to 1648. In that year Abraham Cheare,* a native of Plymouth, and a fuller, was baptized, and shortly afterwards received an invitation to the pastorate, which he accepted in

* Cheare I take to have been of an Exeter family. There was buried at St. Andrew, April 30th, 1588, "Mighele Cheere, of Exon;" and two years later a daughter of Joan Sheere was interred.

the following year. The society must have been large, as the invitation was signed by one hundred and fifty members. In 1651 a piece of land was bought in the Pig-market, now Bedford Street, and a meeting-house erected; which was rebuilt in 1751, abandoned in 1789 in favour of the chapel in How Street, and finally, having been converted into stores, removed in April, 1865.

The Independents of the old united congregation and those of the garrison during the siege do not seem to have left any successors, and the Baptists continued the only separatists in Plymouth until the middle of 1654. There then came hither about the sixth month John Audland and Thomas Arey, two of the early Quakers, and were "received of many who were waiting for the Lord's appearance." They held several meetings in public and in private; "and on the first day the s^{d} John Audland went to one of the steeple-houses in the Towne, and testyfied against the priest and there worship, and also sounded truth amongst them, for w^{ch} the s^{d} John Audland received from the people in the steeple-house pritty much Abuse; and the s^{d} Thomas Arey he went to the Baptist meeteing, and sounded truth amonge them, who stod in great opposition to his testimony." On the 16th of the third month of 1655 Thomas Salthouse and Miles Halhead visited Plymouth, and established the first meeting, their reward from the powers that were being thirteen months' imprisonment at Plymouth and Exeter. In the same year George Fox paid the first of his four visits to Devonshire, and his journal records how, "Having refreshed ourselves at our inn, we went to Robert Cary's house, where we had a very precious meeting. At this meeting was one Elizabeth Trelawny, daughter to a baronet. She, being very thick of hearing, came close up to me, and clapped her ear very nigh me while I spoke; and she was convinced. After the meeting came in some jangling Baptists; but the Lord's power came over them, and Elizabeth Trelawny gave testimony thereto. A fine meeting was settled there in the Lord's power, which hath continued ever since."

There is a tradition in the Plymouth Society that the first meeting-house of the Quakers here was a thatched building which stood at the head of Sussex Street. Near this was undoubtedly the original Quaker burial-ground, used as such before the erection of the original meeting-house on the site in Bilbury Street in 1674, and not given up until 1721. The present meeting-house replaced the old one in 1804.

Plymouth was governed in all strictness during the Presbyterian régime; and there still remain a few illustrative records. Thus, in 1659, John Wood was presented for walking on the Hoe during "sermon time," and George Cragg for suffering company in his house to drink burnt wine during "sermon time;" while in June the constables of Old Town Ward presented John Olde "for keeping men drinking yesterday, being Lord's-day." This last of course is in accordance with modern ideas.

If the ruling powers had contented themselves with no more than this, matters would not have been so bad; but Milton was right—

"New presbyter was but old priest writ large."

Of religious liberty these Presbyterians had but the faintest idea. They were as zealous State Churchmen as the Episcopalians, and in behalf of their views were quite as ready to persecute. They were as rigorously fond of their Directory as the Prelatists of their Prayer-book; and under their sway many an Episcopal clergyman was fined, imprisoned, ejected. A law was even introduced into Parliament to punish blasphemy with death. Walker says all that can fairly be said against them (and a great deal more) in his well-known "Sufferings of the Clergy." But we must remember that here, as subsequently, politics were involved with theology. Episcopalian and Royalist, Presbyterian and Roundhead, were synonymous. Moreover, according to the accepted theory of a State Church, the officers of that church must be subordinate to the State. If the State changed its religion, it changed its officers likewise. The manner of the change is more important here than the change itself; and in the method adopted during the Commonwealth I do not see so much specially objectionable. Whatever was done was done methodically by process of law; and such care was shown for the ejected that they were assigned a fifth of the revenues of their livings for their maintenance, and were thenceforward unharassed. We shall have occasion again to refer to this. Undoubtedly there were many cases of individual hardship; undoubtedly a good deal that Walker says is true. But he starts with the idea not only of the divine right of the king, but of the divine right of the clergy; and his references to Plymouth are singularly unfortunate.

No such political considerations excuse the action of the Presbyterians towards the Quakers. The Independents and Baptists

were able to take care of themselves. Cromwell, with a large-hearted liberality, even protected the arch-heretic Unitarian Biddle. But the Quakers had very few friends; and, as in the earlier days of the Reformation, the men whose religious position depended solely upon the exercise of the right of private judgment persecuted those who dared to follow their judgment to different conclusions. The Quakers were fair game, and safe. I admit that they were aggravating, and that they showed little consideration for others in their perpetual testifyings in steeple and meeting-houses.

The persecutions of the Quakers at Plymouth began with a drunken naval chaplain, who attended a meeting held by Halhead and Salthouse in the garden of John Harris, and got excessively angry at being told to combine works with faith. He complained to John Paige, the mayor, and Salthouse and Halhead were committed to the assizes as disturbers of the public peace, and for "diverse other high misdemeanours against a late proclamation prohibiting the disturbance of ministers and other Christians in their assemblies and meetings." They were the disturbed; they were prosecuted as the disturbers. Then Margaret Killam offended the dignity of his worship the mayor by speaking to him on religious matters; and to gaol she went. Next year Priscilla Cotton, Margaret Cole, and Katherine Martindale spoke to the priest and people in the Church, after the priest—George Hughes, I suppose—had finished his sermon; and to gaol went they: while Barbara Pattison was locked up for interrupting a funeral sermon. In 1658, John Evans, for speaking to the people in a steeple-house, was not only imprisoned, but whipped through the streets. And so matters went on, until by 1660, the year of the glorious restoration of Charles II., every prison in the county was crowded with the Friends. "Within two months of that year the High Gaol and Bridewell of Exeter received no less than seventy, including all the men inhabitants of Plymouth of that persuasion.*

The evil days of Nonconformity were now at hand. For a quarter of a century, with intermissions that made the recurrence of tyranny but more galling, Presbyterian and Baptist, Independent and Quaker, were subjected to a persecution more persistent than any which England had known. "Continually

* See the "History of the Friends in Devonshire." By Mr. R. Dymond, F.S.A.

mocked with hollow promises of relief, now favoured by a temporary indulgence, and then visited anew with redoubled persecution, their whole life hung in suspense on the capricious humour and on the result of the conflicting purposes of the court and the parliament. . . . Persecution and indulgence, indulgence and persecution, in ceaseless alternation, make up the entire history of the time. Yet a sense of religious duty withheld the Puritan ministers from laying aside their pastoral functions. The strength of a solemn vow still bound them to their flocks. So long as the penal laws were in force they preached to their people in private, and visited them by stealth; while their retreats were hunted out by informers of the most infamous character, their places of meeting brok[illegible]n upon by a licentious soldiery, and [illegible]ged to the bar of justice for simply [illegible] insulted by magistrates, brow-beaten [illegible] fetid and unwholesome gaols—at that [illegible], and destitute of every Christian comfort [illegible] waymen and murderers."*

[illegible] ersecutions under his most religious and [illegible] II.—that merrily despicable monarch— [illegible]dom has known. Mary was a consistent, [illegible]evoted daughter of her Church, who be[illegible]hould burn here than many hereafter. And [illegible]o far merciful that it is quickly over.

[illegible] faithless, heartless, conscienceless debauchee, [illegible]had no higher motive than the revenge of a [illegible], without the warrant of conviction, without [illegible]y. James, like Mary, was consistent, and had [illegible]cy of the re-establishment of his faith. But if [illegible]d, their acts did not. Both played with their [illegible] they killed them; and under their Christian rule [illegible] of men and women, driven from house and home, forbidden all means of livelihood, whipped here and imprisoned there, pilloried, branded, and cropped, suffered tortures to which the fires of Smithfield would have been a crowning mercy.

And the second Charles among his other virtues counts that blackest sin of ingratitude. It was to the Presbyterians, quite as much as to Monk, that he owed his recal from exile. This was recognized in his declaration at Breda: "We do declare a

* Tayler's "Retrospect of the Religious Life of England," pp. 250, 251.

liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted, or called in question for differences of opinion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." And in the following October another declaration conceded, for the sake of pacification, "that the ministers should be freed from the subscription required by the Canon, and the oath of canonical obedience; receive Ordination, Institution, and Induction, and exercise their function and enjoy the profits of their livings without being obliged to it; and that the use of the Ceremonies should be dispensed with where they were scrupled."* Within less than two years came the Act of Uniformity, and Bartholomew-day, 1662, saw two thousand of the ablest, most learned, and most pious ministers of the Church cast out therefrom, because their consciences would not allow them to declare their unfeigned assent and consent to everything contained in and prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer, which, by the way, as modified by Convocation, very few of the seven thousand whose consciences were less tender could have seen.

"Nor shall the eternal roll of praise reject
Those Unconforming; whom one rigorous day
Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey
To poverty, and grief, and disrespect,
And some to want—as if by tempest wrecked
On a wild coast.

* * * * * * *

Men the dictate of whose inward sense
Outweighs the world! whom self-deceiving wit
Lures not from what they deem the cause of God."

Persecution began in Plymouth before the Black Bartholomew. One Captain William Pestell paid the West a visit in 1661, apparently in the character of spy. He wrote to Secretary Nicholas, on the 26th September, that the Fifth Monarchy Men were associated with the Presbyterians in encouraging the people to withstand the common prayer; that "several of the old sea-captains at Plymouth were determined that the common prayer should not come into Mr. Hughes's church," and that there was the same feeling at other places on the coast, where Anabaptists and Quakers abounded.

The Presbyterians could not be touched until the Act of Uniformity; the Quakers were in prison before Charles returned; only

* Calamy's "Abridgment," vol. i. p. 152.

the Baptists were available. So Abraham Cheare was sent to Exeter gaol for encouraging religious assemblies, and remained there three months, until released by "special grace."

Plymouth was singled out for special visitation. Its gallant stand for the Parliament made it a marked town. Its corporation continued thoroughly Puritan. Every way it was obnoxious to the ruling powers. So Plymouth had a call from the commissioners appointed to regulate corporations, who ejected the mayor, made a clean sweep of his brethren, and turned out Hughes from the vicarage of St. Andrew, a week before the fatal 24th of August. The mayor, William Allen, a Presbyterian, gave place to William Jennens, who justified his selection by proving an adept in persecution; and the old corporators to new aldermen and councillors of the same school. Four ministers were silenced in Plymouth. George Hughes, the vicar; Obadiah Hughes, his son, ejected from a studentship at Oxford; Thomas Martyn, lecturer at St. Andrew; Samuel Martyn, his son, an occasional preacher. Porter, minister of Charles Church, then unconsecrated, conformed. George Hughes and Thomas Martyn were sent to Drake's Island, under the charge of two files of musketeers. That rugged rock then held the dignity of state prison; and among its occupants were General Lambert (who died there), Colonel Lilburne, and Harrington, the author of "Oceana." Hughes was attacked with dropsy and scurvy, and after nine months was released on bond for £2,000 (given by his friends without his knowledge) not to come again within twenty miles of Plymouth. So he retired to Kingsbridge, where, in July, 1667, he died. Martyn was released under a similar bond for £1,000. He had been silenced some months before Bartholomew Day, on pretence of speaking certain words in private conventicles, which he altogether denied. At the same time Cheare was again seized, and lodged in the gaol at Exeter for three years. Obadiah Hughes is said to have been imprisoned, but if so it could not have been for long.

The Bartholomew storm beat most violently on the heads of the ministers; but there are entries in the accounts of our corporation which indicate that the congregations suffered likewise, though their turn had not yet fully come. Between August 14 and September 29, 1662, £3 10s. were paid for sending away prisoners to the common gaol. These were neither rogues nor malefactors; for they were carried in under a separate entry; and I do not think it

unimportant to note that in the following year a whipping-post was set up in the workhouse, and the cucking-stool repaired.

It may be said, indeed it has been said, that the ejections of 1662 were but a retaliation for those of the Commonwealth. I would not defend persecution in any shape. I cannot say that all fault was on one side; but this I must say, that, so far as Plymouth is concerned, these persecutions are almost without the miserable excuse of retaliation. Aaron Wilson, according to Walker, soon after the commencement of the civil war, was sent away prisoner in a ship to Portsmouth. I do not justify this; but bear in mind that Wilson had been illegally thrust upon the town, that he had made himself obnoxious personally, and that his ill-treatment was connected with the great civil conflict. On Wilson's death the king, again illegally, appointed Bedford, and him the corporation sent prisoner to London. Then Hughes was appointed, or, as Walker says, "by the factious part of the town of Plymouth thrust into the vicaridge"—a statement utterly false in its implication, as the corporation only acted in their right. Hughes had episcopal ordination, and, according to Calamy, was duly instituted. Not a whisper can be breathed against his piety, consistency, and ability; and the legality of his occupancy of the living can hardly be questioned. The illegality of his removal is clear. Doubts have been cast upon his institution. There is a story told in Calamy that one of the ruck of the time-servers, who looked on the restoration of the Stuarts as the prelude to a feast of fat things, obtained the gift of the vicarage, and came down to turn Hughes out. "Are you sure the place is vacant?" said he; and, showing his institution, "they went away with a flea in their ear." This is very likely to be true; since, in August, 1661, one Dr. Lionel Gatford was presented to the living because he had been chaplain at Pendennis, and this would account for his not having it. When I add to what I have said of Wilson and Bedford that one Hobbes was frightened to death (according to Walker) by being told he should be thrown into the grave if he came to the churchyard again with his mass-book, I have said all that can be said of the persecution of Episcopalians in Plymouth.

When the appointed ministers were removed their adherents were not left utterly to themselves. There lived then in Plymouth a certain Nicholas Sherwill, member of a wealthy merchant family, an M.A. of Magdalen, a Presbyterian, who had received episcopal

ordination. He, with the younger Hughes, had been imprisoned, and set free on promising not to return to Plymouth without leave of the governor, the Earl of Bath, or his deputy. His absence could not have been long; for he commences the first register-book of the Unitarian congregation in Treville Street, now preserved at Somerset House, with the entry of the marriage by him at Stonehouse, on the 17th September, 1662, not a month after Bartholomew-day, of Walter Trowt and Katharine Crampron; while on the 28th November he baptized Mary, the daughter of George and Mary Lapthorne. He had no cure, but was an occasional preacher, and he ministered to the people who adhered to Hughes and Martyn when they were cast into prison. In the congregation thus formed the two societies in Treville and Batter Streets originated. It has been held that there were two congregations from the commencement; but as Hughes and Martyn both ministered in the same church, and as Sherwill was the only minister free to engage in ministerial work in Plymouth immediately on the ejection, it seems clear that the Nonconforming layfolk of Plymouth must for a considerable time have constituted one body, though meeting in different places, as best they could. But Sherwill ere long had assistance. Obadiah Hughes was ordained by Jasper Hicks, the ejected from Landrake, and five other ministers, and preached in the neighbourhood as he had opportunity. At length, being no longer safe, he removed to London in 1674, where he became minister of a large congregation. John Quicke, ejected from Brixton, also preached in Plymouth, and once spent eight weeks in the Marshalsea. Quicke continued preaching at Brixton after Bartholomew-day, until removed by force. When prosecuted for this he excused himself on the ground that there was no one else to supply the spiritual wants of his people; and though imprisoned, contrived to escape on appeal. He would not agree to give up preaching as a condition of liberation; and indeed made the best of his opportunities in gaol by preaching to the prisoners there. For this Bishop Ward prosecuted him, and, I am happy to say, unsuccessfully. Nathan Jacob too, the ejected minister of Ugborough, rode to Plymouth once a fortnight, and eventually became permanent pastor here.

But for several years Sherwill was clearly the sole regular minister of the Plymouth Presbyterians. George Hughes never saw Plymouth after his retirement to Kingsbridge. He was then

sixty years of age, and worn out by infirmities. Thomas Martyn took advantage of the Indulgence of 1672, and returning to Plymouth, became minister of a Nonconformist society. There are entries of baptisms by him in the Treville Street registers from June 12th, 1672, to February, 1675, and he did not die until 1677. I believe it was upon his return that the division of the followers of the Ejected into two societies took place; for to this date the existence of two separate bodies can clearly be traced. Sherwill continued in the ministry until his sudden death, May 15th, 1696. His last entry of baptism was on the 7th May preceding. As the interments took place in the churchyard of the parish, where Sherwill could not officiate, he did not register burials; but he entered the texts and occasions of funeral sermons preached by him from August 15th, 1662, until September 8th, 1695. In his later years he had an assistant named Byfield, of whom Fox says that he had "the best sense and parts"* of any Dissenter he had ever heard. Sherwill was succeeded by John Enty.

Such briefly is a history of the establishment of the two congregations which represent in Plymouth the Bartholomew of 1662. Let us retrace our steps awhile, and consider the conditions under which that establishment took place. We have seen how their immediate founders, with the Baptist Cheare, were visited with imprisonment. Less fortunate than Martyn and Hughes, Cheare remained in bonds until 1665. Between 1662 and 1665 the records of borough expenditure clearly indicate that persecution was onward. In 1662–3 money was paid, not only for sending several persons to the gaol, but to poor people to give in evidence against them; and in 1663–4 Richard Philp and Abraham Appleby are entered as having been paid for their expenses in going to the assizes to give evidence against "the blind preacher." Who was this blind preacher? Philp was an informer. He appears in the following year as having been paid, with John Wolfe, for giving evidence against Daniel Northerne, who from a subsequent entry we learn was pilloried. He must have been either a popular or a dangerous character, for it took five men to guard him in the pillory.

William Jennens, the church-and-king mayor of 1662–3, was

* John Fox, of Plymouth, whose MSS. are preserved at the Plymouth Public Library.

a very zealous persecutor: probably he would have dignified his conduct by a higher title. Among those who were proceeded against during his mayoralty by his order, presented by James Jackson and Lucas Cocke, churchwardens, were the following: Samuel Northcott, senior and junior, Thomas Durant and wife, Richard Maine and son, William Allen, his wife, son, and manservant, Captain Burthogg, Daniel Parrett, John Glanvill, Anthony Windeatt and wife, Thomas Short, Thomas Spry, Nicholas Gloyn, John Merrin, Thomas Spencer, John Daubance, Anthony Field, Roger Towle, Jacob Sanders, Charity Mohun, Richard Hall, William Stitson, Walter Trowte, Catherine Trowte — Presbyterians; John Trenicke, Thomas Trenicke, Edward Cole, Richard Vincent, James Blackburn, Thomas Teate, Josias Pickes, Samuel Fletcher, Richard Blagdon, John Bennett — Baptists; Nicholas Cole, Anthony Todd, Arthur Cotton, Margaret Dier, Elizabeth Ditford, John Light, Francis Light, Richard Smith, Francis Rawle, George Crocker—Quakers. Some of these were prosecuted for not attending church, some for not observing the rites of the Church as to baptism and marriage.

Great as was the persistence of the persecutors, that of the persecuted was greater. Writing from Exeter Gaol, 17th of 7th month, 1662, Cheare says: "The poor lambs that I have left have been visited by the constables again and again at their meetings, summoned before the mayor, fined for not coming to church, yet have a little strength left to meet in the same place, expose their goods to be spoiled, &c., rather than consent to promote that which their soul is grieved at."

That October between forty and fifty were taken in one meeting, ostensibly on the ground that they refused to promise not to take up arms against the king.* There appear to have been rumours about this time that Plymouth was to be the rallying-point of a Republican insurrection.

The Conventicle Act came into operation in July, 1664; and 1665 was a year of special activity with the dominant party. Cheare by the efforts of his sister was released, and returned to Plymouth. He enjoyed his liberty a month. Then he was apprehended, lodged a month in the Guildhall prison—a wretched den —and finally conveyed to Drake's Island, where he lay until his death, after great suffering, on the 5th of first month, 1668.

* See State Papers.

Cheare had numerous companions in suffering on the island besides Lambert and Lilburn. To one of these, Edward Cock, who died in 1666, Cheare alludes by name; and also to a companion prisoner at Exeter, John Edwards, junior, who died there in his twenty-seventh year. Burnet says of the Baptists that they were generally men of virtue, and of a universal charity; but these were days in which virtue availed nothing, and charity was a scoff.

Sherwill was also imprisoned in 1665. On the 6th of October he was called on by some officers of the garrison to go to a tavern, as the governor was waiting for him. He went, was taken into custody by a guard of soldiers, imprisoned, and not released until the 4th of December.

In the March following 1666, William Allen* records in his MS. diary that, without any law commanding it, most of the townsmen of Plymouth took the oath appointed for Nonconformist ministers; and several were compelled to enter into bonds to the amount of £1,000. "Yea," says Allen, "besides such kinde of impositions were not practised in any part of the two kingdoms as in Plymouth." If so things must have been bad indeed. And I find that in 1664–65 the pillory and stocks were repaired.

The passing of the Five Mile Act in 1665 marked the culminating point of this first period of persecution. For the next three years Nonconformity in Plymouth seems to have been winked at. Nonconformists could not assemble for public worship, nor take any part in public affairs; but it was something to be able to meet without danger of disturbance by constable or soldier, and being fined or imprisoned at justicial caprice. By the Five Mile Act ministers were not allowed to come or be except in travelling within five miles of any city, town, corporation, borough returning members to parliament, or of a place in which they had exercised the ministry, unless they took an oath of fidelity to the Constitution in Church and State, and swore that it was not lawful to take up arms against the king.

In 1670 persecution was renewed, and a new Conventicle Act passed. The first Conventicle Act of 1663 declared that wherever five persons, beyond those of the same household, should assemble in a religious congregation, each should be liable, for the first offence, to be fined £5, or imprisoned three months; for the second offence the penalty was doubled; and the third entailed transporta-

* The mayor who was ejected for his Nonconformity.

tion for seven years, or a fine of £100. The new Act reduced the fines for the first and second offences to 5s. and 10s.; but fined the preacher and the house-owner £20 for the first offence, and £40 for the second; and there was a clause declaring that all doubts were to be given against the conventicles.

William Jennens was again in his element. He fortified himself by advice from the recorder, Sir John Maynard, as to the effect of the Act, and set heartily to work. So he and the mayor, William Symons, were very busy, in August and September, going about with a body of soldiers hunting out and breaking up meetings, and committing the conventiclers to prison. Allen records the breaking up of one meeting at Robert Mening's, and of another at Mr. T——y's; which means I presume, Trelawny's. Then there was another meeting proceeded against at Thomas Yeabsley's. Several Quakers were sent to gaol, and special mention is made of one Abigail Libby.

In 1672 Charles issued his famous declaration of indulgence, which allowed the license of Nonconformist preachers and meeting-houses. Under it there were licensed in Plymouth not only Sherwill and Martyn, but the younger Hughes, John Quicke, and George Mortimer, who had been ejected from Harberton, and apparently returned thither to minister. John Glanville, who had been proceeded against for not coming to church, had his house licensed for worship, as did Thomas Yeabsley. A house near Charles Church was also licensed, and the widow Menir's at Stonehouse.

This illegal indulgence was speedily revoked, and persecution again broke out; but I am unable for the next ten years to trace the course of events. During this period there were times when the Nonconformists practically enjoyed considerable liberty. There were also special local influences at work in their favour. The tone and temper of the corporate body changed gradually as the commission-intruded corporators died off, and new men were chosen to take their places. Moreover, powerful friends were not wanting. Chief of these was Brett, a wealthy merchant, who had served his apprenticeship with Samuel Northcote, the mayor removed and imprisoned in 1659, for scrupling to publish a proclamation of parliament in church. Brett was a great supporter of Nonconformist ministers; and not only maintained whole families of Nonconformists in their need, but furnished them with means to

leave the town. His son afterwards entered the ministry. Brett was a man of singular equanimity. Nearly all his property was lost in the capture of one ship—the Industry. He remarked to his daughter that there would be a little less for her, and said no more.*

During this period Charles and his brother, the Duke of York, paid the town a couple of visits, when the corporation displayed an exuberant and costly loyalty. To be stirred to loyalty in these days was also to be moved to persecution; but Charles, whatever he may have thought of the Nonconformist men, had no ill-feeling towards the Nonconformist women, if they were young and good-looking. Allen's son† records, with a certain amount of satisfaction, that his wife was kissed both by Charles and his brother on the Hoe. I suspect she was not alone in this.

Whatever the extent of the lull may have been, there was a very decided revival of oppression in the concluding years of the reign of Charles. The church-and-king party had again got the upper hand in the corporation, and used their power unsparingly. The character of the men is shown by the fact that they took the pains to send to Launceston to invite that "famously loyal" ‡ infamous brute Jefferies to pay the town a visit. This did not prevent his subsequently demanding the surrender of the town charter.

In 1682–83 the persecutions were thus again in full swing. Nathaniel Jacob and Samuel Martyn were conveyed to the high gaol by Peter Millet, Samuel Grere, John Bosaverne, Francis Spurrell, and other constables; while Richard Stephens and John Pane were equally energetic in carrying Quakers thither. In the following year, 1683–4, there is an entry of payments to one Richard Hall and his son Henry for their expenses in going to the assizes to give evidence against Nonconformist ministers. Jacob and Martyn and Sherwill were, so far as I know, the only ones in the town, and Sherwill appears to have escaped. The Baptists were without a pastor from the time Cheare was taken from them until 1687, when James to favour the Papists indulged the Protestants. Yet through nineteen years of persecution sixty-six members had kept the faith. Thomas Voisey, ejected from

* John Fox's MSS.

† Samuel Allen, who has also left a fragmentary diary.

‡ Yonge's "Plymouth Memoirs."

Thatcham, who used to preach in Plymouth, had died of fever, brought on by his excessive labour, in 1668. Jacob and Martyn were imprisoned about six months.

In 1684 the loyal justices of Exeter made an order offering 40s. a head for the apprehension of Nonconformist ministers, and Bishop Lamplugh commanded it to be read by his clergy in their churches;* but I cannot find that it affected Plymouth, although under the new freeman's oath appointed in that year every freeman was sworn to give the mayor notice of all conventicles.

How strongly, notwithstanding such sore afflictions, the fires of civil and religious liberty still smouldered in their embers, was happily manifested when James was hurled from the throne, and persecuted—still Puritan—Plymouth was the first town to declare for his successor. The Toleration Act was passed in 1689. This, though imperfectly, secured freedom of worship to all Dissenters who took the oath to the government, and gave security to their preachers who subscribed the doctrinal articles of the Church of England. It comprised the Quakers, but "excluded Roman Catholics and those who impugned the Trinity from its benefits; and it left the Test and Corporation Acts, passed in Charles II.'s reign, which made participation in the Lord's Supper, according to the rites of the Church of England, a legal qualification for civil office, in full force against Nonconformists."†

With the accession of Dutch William much of the better feeling and spirit returned; much of the animosity died out. When, full of years, Nathaniel Jacob died in 1690, Canon Gilbert preached his funeral sermon in St. Andrew Church, and concluded his discourse with the weighty words, "I have said more of this worthy man than I dare say of myself, or deserve that any person should say of me."

Freedom once given, Nonconformity speedily took a prominent position in the town. Long after the ejection many of the Presbyterians cherished the hope that there might yet be settled terms of comprehension. Nor until hope had departed did they commence the erection of meeting-houses. For nearly thirty years their conventicles were held in private dwellings. Martyn the elder baptized at "Greene House, near Charles Church, in Greene Street;" and it is not unlikely that this was Sherwill's residence, as we know

* Neal, "Hist. Puritans," vol. iv. p. 495. † Tayler, p. 533.

that he lived in that immediate locality. A chapel was erected on the site of the present Unitarian Chapel about 1689 by the adherents of Nathaniel Jacob; for when in 1690 Nathaniel Harding succeeded Jacob the congregation was large, and must have had a special place of assembly, and a trust deed of 1708 states that the chapel had been used several years previously for divine worship. Harding came to Plymouth from Ireland—more by accident than design—just after Jacob's death, was chosen in his stead, and remained pastor until 1743.

Sherwill's congregation about the same time, or a little earlier, met at the "Old Marshalls." They occupied it certainly for ten years,* and probably until the erection, in 1705, of the chapel in Batter Street. The "Old Marshalls" still exists—in the oldest portion of the distillery premises in Southside Street. Tradition connects this ancient building with the Dominicans. It may have been part of the fifteenth century guildhall; but whatever its origin, it was used in the seventeenth century as the Marshalsea or town prison. Probably the extensive additions to the Jacobean Guildhall in 1667 rendered a separate prison unnecessary.

Fox says of the dissenting ministers of his day, that "they were generally enthusiasts, and retained greatly that canting way of speaking and that old method of composition which was peculiar to the old preachers." He was still less complimentary to the congregations; for he speaks of the "seats and the beasts that sat in them," and of "the people of the country meetings as of mean rank and meaner understandings." Still under Harding (who was universally respected, and whom Fox terms a man of singular piety) and Enty the two societies flourished; and in 1715 mustered 1260 hearers. Both were on friendly terms, and the interchange of pulpits common. Doctrinally both congregations were Calvinistic, and known as Presbyterian. And though there was no actual presbytery or synod in the county, there was an analogous organization in the Exeter Assembly. On the 18th October, 1655, an association of Presbyterian ministers of the county was formed at Exeter to deal with matters of doctrine and discipline. This association held two meetings a year; and the county was divided into seven divisions, the ministers in which used to meet monthly. George Hughes was the first moderator; and the articles of asso-

* There are entries of baptisms at the "Old Marshalls" from July 27th, 1687, to August 20th, 1697.

ciation were signed by one hundred and thirty-one ministers. In the following year Independent ministers were admitted, and an address voted to the Lord Protector. There is no record of the Assembly's history during the troublous times of Charles and James the Second; but after the Act of Toleration it became the governing body of the Presbyterians of the county, examining and admitting candidates for the ministry, ordaining them, and exercising generally presbyterial powers. These old Nonconformists were heedful to provide a learned ministry as well as a spiritual. The ejected were almost universally men of university breeding. The exclusion of Nonconformists from the universities caused them to establish academies, some of which obtained great and deserved repute. Secker and Butler were both educated in the academy of Mr. Jones, of Tewkesbury. The most famous in the West was that of Mr. Warren, at Taunton; but Mr. Hallet had a notable one at Exeter. Into the latter Hallet's son, who corresponded with Whiston, introduced Arian views about the year 1708. These were taken up by five or six of the students, and eventually spread into the ministry, giving rise to what was known as the Western Arian controversy, which raged fiercely among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists of the West. Matters came to a head in the Assembly in 1716. The orthodox party won the day; and Pierce of Exeter, the leader of the Arians, and several other ministers, were ejected from the assembly, and left to preach, as Fox says, "to the poor remains of a few broken congregations, which had good-nature and charity enough to stand by their ministers, whose reputation, interest, and usefulness were absolutely ruined by the rage, aspersions, and violence of the other party."

Fox, himself inclined to Arianism, credits the orthodox ministers of his day with believing that they were specially commissioned for the governance of the church; in fact, with holding the doctrine of apostolical succession. The two Plymouth congregations were little affected by the first Arian wave. But the expulsion of that heretical element by no means purged the Assembly. Arianism found such favour with the younger ministers that at length, in 1753, the Assembly refused to declare against the admission of candidates to the ministry who would not profess faith in the deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And so in process of time the Assembly became—though there neither were

then, nor are now (for it still exists), any doctrinal conditions attached to membership—first Arian, and then Unitarian.

Arianism first made head in Plymouth under the ministry of the Rev. H. Moore, successor to Mr. Harding; and as it showed itself at the same time in the Batter Street congregation, where it was favoured by Mr. Hanmer, assistant to Mr. Baron, there was a double exodus; the orthodox of both congregations settling in Batter Street, the heterodox in Treville Street, which has since been distinctly Unitarian.

An exceedingly interesting feature of the religious life of the town has passed into oblivion. Few call to mind the fact that Plymouth was the seat of a colony of Huguenot refugees, who settled here when driven from their own country by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The first party escaped across the Channel in an open boat from Rochelle, arriving on the 5th September, 1681. They numbered between forty and fifty, and were joined by so many others that they established two congregations, one at Plymouth and the other at Stonehouse. It is the one redeeming feature in the years of persecution which followed, that these poor creatures do not seem to have been molested. We know little more concerning them than is to be found in the registers of the two congregations, now at Somerset House; those of the Stonehouse congregation ranging from 1692 to 1791,* and those of the Plymouth congregation from 1733 to 1807, the earlier records having been lost. The register of 1733 commences with an entry of the election, on the 11th April in that year, as wardens, of Pierre Hory Laine, Jayre Valeau, Jean Parc, and Moyere Thomas, in succession to Jean Parc, Etienne Brigeau, Francois Thomas, and Etienne Cagna—twenty-four heads of families assenting. In the July following there is an entry of the distribution of the royal bounty of fifteen guineas to fifty-one poor members of the community, ranging from eighty-two years of age to an infant in arms. Allowing five to a family, and assuming that the recipients of the bounty did not take any set part in the management of the church affairs, the number of the little colony may be reckoned at between 150 and 200. For fully half a century these sufferers for conscience lived in Plymouth, among, but not of, our forefathers. When they were householders they were entered in the rate-books under the style of Monsieur or Madame. Thus in the poor rate

* It was not dissolved until 1810.

assessment for 1720, the earliest preserved, we find with the prefix of Monsieur the names of Perry, Peter Perry, Francis Thomas, F. Jourdan (reputedly the first introducer of the printing business here), James Borgeau, Peter Bone, James Ruffiat, Charles le Mar, Isaac Oust, Mignan, Ruffiat, Valleau, Boteet, Pratt, Lavigne, Sherren, Freno, Dammer, Chardevoine, Bourvit, and Ruleau. Then we have Mesdames Cateau, Burfeans, Langaller, and "Mons. Osorio's widow." Other names of French origin occurring without either prefix (which was probably applied only to the well-to-do) are Francis Colas, Peter Averilla, Isaac and Peter Lelander, Abraham Angoure, Gilbert de Lapp, Gerrard, Stephen Cagna, Ch. Peneau, Bignon, Barbe, and Gabon, the latter described as a French barber. There was likewise a Dr. Freno.

The registers supply us with several family names in addition to those already given, among them Du Bouchet, Du Clou, Dore, Dechereaux, Arnaud, Bordier, Cherri, Viall, Blondett, Guillard, Benoit, Bastard, Rous, Dubois, Lardieu, Travers, Duval, Vincent, Herring, Gille, Delacomb, Gruzelier, Bonnet, Maingy, Darton, Lamoureux, Mousnier, and Paillin.

While the original refugees lived, and the first generation of their descendants, the foreign character of the little band was distinctively kept up; but the registers show that with the second generation exterior influences of association and intermarriage began to work; and the third was far more English than French. The knowledge of the mother tongue wore gradually less and less among the younger members of the community, and the attendance on public worship, which was of course conducted in the French language, gradually dwindled until it was confined to a few aged persons only, on whose death the congregation became extinct. James Devoit was pastor from his arrival, in 1685, until his death, in 1723. In 1733, the date of the first register, Pierre du Bouchet was minister. He was succeeded in 1739 by Jacob Bordier; who was followed in 1764 by Jaques Touzeau. It was during his pastorate that the congregation gave up the chapel which they had erected in How's Lane, and which was removed about 1785 to give place to the present edifice. Touzeau was the last minister. He died in February, 1810, having been pastor nearly half a century, and having outlived nearly all his people. For many years he kept a French school in Lower Lane, and he was much respected in the town.

Many of the descendants of the refugees still reside in this locality. Such names as Darton, Gruzelier, and Lamoureux, are of course easily identified; but in most cases there has been some amount of Anglicising. Thus Cherri is Cherry; Touzeau, Tozer; Gille, Gill; Parc, Park; Bonnet, Bonny; Lardieu, Lardew; Rous, Rowse; Viall, Vile; Lavigne, Lavin; Conde, Cundy; Benoit, Benoy; Guillard, Jillard; Jourdan, Jordan.

Towards the middle of the last century Conformity and Nonconformity alike fell dull and lethargic; decorous indeed, but wanting in energy and spirit — the form of Christianity truly, but lacking the vitality. The religion of feeling had no place where all was formal and frigid. Church and chapel come under the same condemnation. Nor was Plymouth any exception to this rule, though St. Andrew boasted the polished Zachary Mudge, whose sermons Dr. Johnson praised so highly, and the Treville and Batter Street congregations were enlivened somewhat by the stirrings of the Arian controversy. As to the Baptists, they were "a poor disjointed people," a "small remnant," the membership falling off until it was reduced to eight.* At Plymouth therefore, and in the growing town of Dock, there was ample scope for the exertions of the early Methodists, and both Whitfield and Wesley reaped an abundant harvest.

Calvinistic Methodism was the first established. Whitfield came to Plymouth about 1744 with the intention of embarking for America. But before that date his labours had borne local fruit. One Andrew Kinsman, a native of Tavistock, converted by reading one of Whitfield's sermons, settled in Plymouth as a grocer; and by him and his wife chiefly (she was a Mrs. Ann Tiley, and gave the ground) the Tabernacle in Briton Side was built, in the garden behind his house. Adams and Cennick and Midleton, with other of Whitfield's colleagues, and Kinsman himself, occupied the pulpit at first. In 1750 Kinsman became a regular minister, and in 1752 removed to Devonport, where he built the first dissenting chapel. The Tabernacle remained his property, and he was still accustomed to preach there, his chief assistants being named Dunn, Paddon, and McAll. Kinsman was a duly-qualified member of the church militant. When a party of seamen, led by their lieutenant, broke into the Tabernacle while he was preaching, with intent to put out the lights, and "castigate

* Nicholson, pp. 66, 67.

the congregation"—one of the humours, I presume, of a press-gang—Kinsman seized the leader, and took him before the magistrates. When Kinsman died he left the Tabernacle in trust for the purpose of perpetuating the gospel. The bequest was annulled by the Mortmain Act, and Kinsman's son became the owner. He was a very autocrat. The minister wished to get married. Kinsman preferred his celibacy. The minister got married. Kinsman padlocked the door of the Tabernacle, planted himself in a window opposite, armed with loaded pistols, and threatened to shoot any one who meddled with his property. So the congregation were ejected as well as their minister. For a while they met in the Baptist Chapel, which was placed at their service. At length Norley Chapel was built (then called the New Tabernacle), and opened December 8th, 1797. What became of the then Old Tabernacle for a few years I cannot say. There was a Mr. Cooper there in 1808, who formed his congregation into a Baptist church, and who was ejected by Kinsman in 1811. His congregation then divided, part going to the Moravian Chapel at the Old Mitre, and part to a currier's shop in Duck's Lane (Week Street), whence they moved, in 1812, to a chapel in Willow Street, built by the Universalists, first called the Philadelphian Church, but then the Refuge Chapel.

The New Tabernacle, so far as I am aware, was the first dissenting place of worship in the town in which an organ was placed. The instrument was built by a carpenter of Turnchapel named Redstone, chiefly at the expense of Mr. Cater. Terrible was the discord which resulted. There was nothing that the old Baptists quarrelled about more fiercely than the propriety of singing hymns in public worship; and the organ has continued down to our own day to be the abomination of sundry Presbyterians, especially of the Free Kirkers. The organ in the New Tabernacle led to a division in the congregation, and in the end to the re-opening of the Old Tabernacle. The Friday before the organ was to be opened a letter was received, signed "David," announcing that Dagon had fallen before the ark, and that the writer had discovered the art of taking his guts out. On examination it was found that all the pipes of one stop had been taken away, proving, as Harris, who records this incident, quaintly says, "that the thief was no musician."

Wesleyan Methodism was established in a settled shape in Ply-

mouth in the year 1745, when a class was formed. This was twelve months before Wesley—himself, be it remembered, of Nonconformist descent—paid his first visit to the town in September, 1746; and as a result he found several zealous local preachers hard at work, and great activity and zeal. More than thirty years elapsed before any attempt was made to erect a chapel. The members met in private houses, and there was a good deal of open-air preaching on the Parade, by the great tree in Briton Side, in rooms in Catte Street, Batter Street, in the Moravian Chapel, and the Old Tabernacle. The first Wesleyan Chapel in the Three Towns was commenced in 1779 in Lower Street, chiefly by the exertions of Redstone, a carpenter in the navy, and Nehemiah Jane, a quarterman in the Dockyard. This sufficed until 1792, when the chapel in Buckwell Lane (then called Mud Lane) was begun in Mr. Prideaux's garden. Thenceforward the progress of Wesleyanism was exceedingly rapid, though the larger population and greater activity of Dock gave it such a preponderance that Devonport still names the district. Ebenezer Chapel was commenced in 1815; and consequent upon the cessation of the war and the depression thus caused, Wesley Chapel had to be closed until 1847. Salem Chapel, however, was built in the meantime, in 1828. In 1864 the erection of King Street Chapel was commenced; and now there is to be a new chapel erected in North Street, in substitution for Wesley and Salem.

The period of the great French war, one of the greatest activity in all business affairs in Plymouth and Dock, was marked also by the greatest activity in religious matters; thus described by a no means friendly contemporary hand: "Amidst the general dissipation and rage for worldly aggrandizement, a religious disposition was everywhere prevalent. Churches, chapels, and meetings were crowded with auditors; the latter not only on Sundays, but many evenings in the week. Besides public places of worship, parties of the pious assembled at each other's houses, and embryo preachers here first practised the rudiments of their future calling. These spiritual pastors were principally uneducated mechanics and artificers in the Dockyard and town. Never perhaps did moralist survey a more incongruous spectacle than this place afforded. The most open and undisguised profaneness and the most rigid sanctity seemed equally predominant. On one hand were heard the revels of debauchery and drunkenness; and on the other, the praises and

prayers of devotional congregations! The sanctuaries of religion were surrounded by the temples of profligacy." *

This sounds very bad, and would sound much worse, did we not reflect that an equally stern censor might write pretty much the same, apart from the multiplicity of irregular meetings—the true conventicles—about the Plymouth of the present day. The contrasts are well-nigh as strong. There were, however, unusual religious activities here seventy to ninety years ago, chiefly in the direction of Calvinism. Several personal causes were formed by different preachers, most of which perished with the failing popularity of those to whom they owed their origin, while the religious societies of their day still continue to exist and flourish.

The most remarkable feature connected with this period in the religious history of the town was, however, the revival of persecution. The old spirit had never died; but it had shown itself in petty ways. Thus when the great Exeter heresiarch, James Pierce, was buried at St. Leonards, and it was proposed to place on his tombstone a tribute to the "learned, reverend, and pious" James Pierce, the rector objected that Pierce was not learned, because not bred at a university; not reverend, because not episcopally ordained; not pious, because not orthodox; and so his last resting-place was inscribed simply, "Mr. James Pierce's Tomb." And in like manner, on the death at Newton Abbot of Isaac Gilling, his remains were altogether refused interment. An appeal to the owner of the peculiar, Sir William Courtenay, resulted only in the gratuitous advice to bury him in the marshes, and so in the end he was interred in his own meeting-house.

But the dead care little about these things; and the Plymouth persecution was of the living. Though the Birmingham Bible-and-Crown riots did not extend to Plymouth, the spirit which actuated them found its way hither in high places. The Unitarian Chapel opened at Devonport in 1791 was closed, because the Commissioner of the Dockyard intimated that dockyardsmen who attended there would be dismissed as disloyal subjects; and by perjury and malice the Rev. W. Winterbottom, junior minister of the Baptist congregation at Plymouth, was punished for seditious words he never uttered, and for treason of which he was not guilty. It was the custom in those days for Dissenting congregations to celebrate the anniversary of the landing of the Prince of Orange

* Britton and Brayley's "Devon," p. 185.

by special sermons; and on the 5th of November, 1792, Winterbotham preached such a sermon in How's Lane from Exodus xiii. 8, "Thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me." This he followed on the 18th of the same month by a sermon from Romans xiii. 12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." For these sermons he was brought to trial in the following July. The evidence for the Crown was wholly insufficient to sustain any charge; indeed, so far as regarded the second sermon, it consisted entirely of the jumbled notes of one Edward Lyne, a clerk to the Collector of Excise, and of the random recollection of John Denby, a midshipman, that he agreed with Lyne. On the other hand, there was abundant testimony that the sermons, though political, were anything but seditious. Yet Winterbotham was found guilty. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment, two for each sermon; a fine of £200, £100 for each; and to find £900 security for his good behaviour for five years; while the expenses of the trial were £337. But his friends at Plymouth stood by him, and after his release he returned to minister among them.

While undergoing his first year's imprisonment on the state side of Newgate, Winterbotham published the two sermons. Careful and candid perusal will show that while Winterbotham was an ardent reformer he was no sower of sedition. He defended the Revolution of 1688; denounced the Church-and-King riots at Birmingham; condemned religious persecution in every form and shape; argued that "all government originates with the people," that "the people have a right to cashier their governors for misconduct," that they "have a right to change the form of their government if they think it proper so to do;" insisted on the need of parliamentary, legislative, and financial reform; and expressed a fervent hope for the due progress of the revolution in France. But he added, If "we labour under evils, we need not throw ourselves into a state of anarchy and confusion to obtain redress; to this you should prove superior; we want neither revolution nor blood." He advised his hearers to "take no doctrine on trust." "Persecute no man for his religious opinions, however different from your own. Extend with pleasure to others the liberty you claim for yourselves, believing a man may fill up the relative ties of society with honour though the dogmas of his religious creed

be not what you approve." Indeed, in a note he goes so far as to say, "The conduct and not the creed will to me ever be the criterion of Christianity. . . . . I shall ever deem that government tyrannic that does not afford equal advantages to the Catholic and Protestant, the Churchman and Dissenter, the professor of Judaism and the follower of Mahomet." Again, "Instead therefore of teaching your offspring blindly that they are governed by King, Lords, and Commons, teach them that these are men; that themselves are to arrive at the stature of men; that the excellence of their government is not in having King, Lords, and Commons, but in King, Lords, and Commons governing according to laws which secure the rights of every individual of the realm, and who are only worthy of esteem while they respect and venerate those rights." The second sermon enforced the reciprocal duties of governor and governed; and denounced persecution: "The day is at hand when men will no longer be persecuted for their religious opinions, further than they are destructive of morality, ... each worshipping God according to the dictates of his conscience, none daring to make him afraid, finding that while conscience is left at liberty men can unite as citizens and Christians; yea, as friends." And so too, raising his voice on behalf of the "unhappy African," he declared, "The night of slavery and bondage is far spent, and the day of universal liberty is at hand." Such was the man, such were the sentiments, such the language; in those days deemed worthy of persecution. Yet there was a little religious charity even then. When Gibbs, Winterbotham's co-pastor, died, Dr. Hawker, the famous vicar of Charles, and Mr. Hitchens, of St. John Chapel, Devonport, were among his pall-bearers.

Mass was celebrated in the Citadel Chapel during part of the reign of James II. by Christopher Turner, his Majesty's Catholic chaplain. But this did not lead to the local revival of Roman Catholicism; quite the contrary. The first priest who is known to have statedly ministered in Plymouth itself since the Reformation was the Rev. Edward Williams, chaplain to Mr. Richard Chester, of Buckland-tout-Saints, who occasionally visited the town. This was a century since. The first missionary station with regular worship was, however, established by the Rev. Thomas Flynn, an Irish Franciscan, in a room over a stable behind the George Inn, Dock. The first chapel, that in St. Mary's Street, Stonehouse, was erected by the Rev. Jean Louis Guilbert, a French refugee,

and opened in 1807; and it was not until the Cathedral was erected (the foundation-stone was laid by the present bishop in 1856) that Plymouth again possessed a Roman Catholic public place of worship. A century and a quarter after Plymouth gave shelter to the persecuted Huguenots, it afforded a resting-place to a community of persecuted Catholics. A sisterhood of the order of Poor Clares, who had been compelled to flee from France, occupied the premises at Coxside now used by Messrs. James as offices, from 1813 to 1835. Recently part of the old Carmelite property of the White Friars has been acquired by the Roman Catholics, who re-established their worship on the site whence it had been driven at the dissolution of the monasteries. Plymouth was created a bishopric in 1851. Dr. Errington was the first bishop, and was succeeded by the present prelate, Dr. Vaughan, in 1850.

Concerning the other religious bodies represented in the town a few dates will suffice. A few families of Jews settled here about 1740, and in 1764 built their synagogue. The Universalists, who now meet in Henry Street, worshipped previously in chapels in Richmond, Park, and Ebrington Streets. They have had an existence here for nearly a century. The Plymouth meeting of the Brethren dates from 1831. They erected what is now the Temperance Hall in Raleigh Street, and the large chapel in Ebrington Street, and have divided into several sections. The Catholic Apostolic body established themselves here in 1836. The Bible Christians, who date from 1818, erected their chapel in Zion Street in 1847. The Wesleyan Association body, another off-shoot from the Wesleyans, for nearly twenty years occupied the Old Tabernacle. Now, united with other dissidents under the name of the United Methodist Free Church, they occupy the large chapel in Ebrington Street, already mentioned. The Primitive Methodists have a little chapel in the same street. The Presbyterian congregation originally formed at Devonport in 1857 removed to Eldad in 1862. The Moravians are no longer represented in the town. They were active workers in the last century. Their chapel at Devonport, built in 1771, is now the only one west of Bristol.

And here, without further detail, my retrospect must close. This century does not present many salient features in the history of our local Nonconformity. But it has seen the gradual removal of the pains and penalties attached to the exercise of private judgment, and obedience to the voice of conscience, in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries. Under William III. the imperfect Toleration Act was passed. Under Anne the burdens were made heavier by acts against occasional conformity, forbidding habitual dissenters to attend worship and take the sacrament occasionally in the Established Church, and preventing dissenting teachers from undertaking the education of youth. On the accession of the House of Hanover these were repealed. Fifty years, during which public opinion became increasingly indifferent and therefore tolerant, elapsed before a further step was made. In 1779 profession of a belief in the Scriptures, with the declaration of Christianity and Protestantism, became the legal condition of toleration, instead of the acceptance of the doctrinal articles of the Church; and in 1812 provision was made for the registration of places of worship. In 1813 Unitarians were first admitted to the legal benefit of toleration. In 1828 the Test and Corporation Acts were swept away. In 1829 the Catholics were emancipated. The establishment of the London University first restored to the Nonconformists the advantages of a university education. In our own time the Jews have been relieved from the final shred of their disabilities; and church-rates (abolished long before in Plymouth by common consent) have been swept away.

There is now greater religious liberty than the land ever knew before; and the result is neither the old-time predicted anarchy nor immorality, but greater activity of religious life. The present generation has done more work in church and chapel building, and in religious organization, than the five preceding centuries. The whole fabric of persecution has been proven utterly baseless; its reasons as poor as its practice was cruel; its fears as worthless as its hopes were vain. Faggot and scourge have done their best, and worst. Thumbscrew and rack have worn out in their evil service. Gaol and gibbet have been glutted. And what has been the harvest? In the past retaliation. In the present an evil memory. Nought has availed to quench the fire of free opinion.

"The Beautiful and True
Live through all ages, while the false dies out."

All the blood shed, all the pain wrought, but aided what they were meant to crush. And now the children of persecuted and persecutor live and work side by side, for the most part in the honest and honourable rivalry of good effort, though in the under-

currents of life words of scorn, sneers of hate, and gnashings of impotent rage, do now and then arouse old feelings that should sleep, and call upon us to remember how

> "Truth fails not, but her outward forms that bear
> The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
> That in the morning whitened hill and plain,
> And is no more;—drop like the tower sublime
> Of yesterday, which royally did wear
> His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
> Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
> Or the unimaginable touch of time."

It is not then to arouse the old antipathies, but to teach the nobler lesson of charity and good will, that I have endeavoured to trace the part which Plymouth has played in the history of Nonconformity — a part in which I at least see no reason to be ashamed. Here, as elsewhere, Nonconformity has been tinged by error, blurred by inconsistency, not free in itself from the faults it condemned in others. It has exaggerated trifles, and overlooked points of greater moment. But these failings were those of its day, which charity, perfected in suffering, taught it little by little to cast aside; and they are atoned for by a manly courage, a firm trust, an earnest piety, which sustained it through all its troubles; and in varying shape—the form changing, but the spirit one—have preserved it until now.

I could say much more: this is neither the time nor the place. But still at least I may add: However much that old bitter leaven of religious antipathy, which leads men to hate each other for the love of God, and which it is so easy to develope into persecution, may linger with us—however much Conformist and Nonconformist among themselves, and toward each other, may lack of Christian charity,—the old animosities revive with fading influence and narrower power, the bells do ring out the

> "Ancient forms of party strife."

And here of late in Plymouth, what 1576 dared not, 1676 would not, 1776 could not—do, 1876 has done.* At the call of humanity the widest differences of doctrine, and discipline, and formulary

* The reference here is to a meeting held in the Plymouth Guildhall a short time previously to the delivery of the lecture, in which men of the most diverse religious views united with one voice to protest against the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria.

have been forgotten, and men of all shades of belief, all forms of worship, have found a common bond of union in a work of Christian charity.

"Oh, human heart, thou hast a song
For all that to the earth belong,
Whene'er the golden chain of love
Hath linked thee to the heaven above."

APPENDIX.

LISTS OF MINISTERS.

MINISTERS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH.—Abraham Cheare, 1649–1668; persecution then kept the church without a pastor for nineteen years; Robert Browne, 1687–1688; — Warner, 1688; Robert Holdenby, 1688–1690; Samuel Buttall, 1690–1697 or 1698; Nathaniel Hodges, 1698–1701; — Bryant commenced 1707, not ordained until 1710; Wm. Bennick, 1718–1720; Caleb Jope, 1720–1722; Elkanah Widgery, 1723–1725; John Ridley, 1726–1730; Didcot Hoare, mentioned as pastor in 1737 and 1739; John Binnick, left in 1747; Philip Gibbs, 1748 (ordained 1749)–1800; Isaiah Birt, co-pastor with Mr. Gibbs, 1782–1789; William Winterbotham, at first co-pastor, and afterwards successor to Mr. Gibbs, 1790 (four years in prison, 1793–1797)–1804; — Ragsdale, 1808–1810; John Dyer, 1811–1814; G. Gibbs, 1816–1819; S. Nicholson, 1823–1856; G. Short, co-pastor, and afterwards successor to Mr. Nicholson, 1856–1858; T. C. Page, 1860–1869; John Aldis, 1869–1876; Robert Lewis, co-pastor, 1870–1876; J. Benwell Bird, pastor of Mutley Chapel, 1876.

MINISTERS OF THE UNITARIAN CONGREGATION.—George Hughes and Thomas Martyn, ejected in 1662; Nicholas Sherwill, 1662–1672; Thomas Martyn, 1672–1677; Nathaniel Jacob, 1677–1690; Nathaniel Harding, 1690–1744; Henry Brett, assistant to Mr. Harding, 1707–1723; Joseph Cock, ditto, 1721–1731; Henry Moore, assistant to Mr. Harding till 1744, and afterwards his successor, 1731–1762; John Reynell, 1762–1784; John Hanmer, co-pastor with Mr. Reynell, 1762–1771; Thomas Watson, 1785–1788; Thomas Porter, 1789–1794; John Kentish, 1794–1795; John Jones, LL.D., 1795–1798; John Tingcombe, 1798–1806; John Jones, 1807–1812; Israel Worsley, 1813–1831; William James Odgers, 1832–53; John Hill, 1853–1854; Henry Knott, 1854–1865; J. K. Smith assisted Mr. Knott for about two months

previous to his death, and continued on into 1866, but was never appointed minister; T. W. Freckelton, 1866–1874; William Sharman, 1875.

MINISTERS OF THE BATTER STREET CONGREGATION.—George Hughes and Thomas Martyn, ejected in 1662; Nicholas Sherwill, 1662–1696; — Byfield, assistant to Mr. Sherwill; John Enty, 1696–1720; Peter Baron, at first co-pastor with Enty, came to Plymouth in 1700, was ordained 1704, chosen minister 1720, died 1759; John Moore, assistant to Mr. Baron, and his successor, 1727–1760 (the trustees then chose John Hanmer, the congregation Christopher Mends—the latter was put in possession by a mandamus, and Hanmer became co-pastor at Treville Street); Christopher Mends, 1762–1799; Herbert Mends, co-pastor with his father, afterwards his successor, 1782–1819; J. Mitchell, 1819–1821; Richard Hartley, 1822, driven away some years after because seen in a London theatre; W. Morris; T. C. Hine, 1839–1846; Joseph Steer, 1846–1851; John Barfitt, 1851–1854; W. R. Noble, 1855–1860; E. Hipwood, 1860–1867; W. Whittley, 1867.

MINISTERS OF NORLEY AND SHERWELL CHAPELS.—Norley Chapel was opened 1797.—Charles Soper, 1798–1805; Thomas Pinchback, 1807–1811; Francis Moore, 1812–1816; James Doney, 1816–1823; W. P. Davies, 1825–1831; G. Smith, 1833–1842; Eliezer Jones, 1844–1856; C. Wilson, 1858. During Mr. Wilson's ministry Sherwell Chapel has been erected. The foundation-stone was laid in September, 1862, and the opening services held in September, 1864. The schoolrooms were opened in March, 1868.

EXTRACTS FROM CORPORATION ACCOUNTS.

AUGUST 1662 to 29th Sept next following

"Item paid for sending away of severall pson^{ers} to the comon goale wthin the said time £3 10."

Sept 29th 1662 to Sept 29th 1663

"Item paid for sending away severall persons to the Goale the said yeare as appeareth by the noate of perticulars now pduced to this accompt £4 13."

"Item paid for sendinge severall persons to the Goale & to poore people to give in evidence against them £1 15."

1663–4

"Item paid Richard Philpe & Abraham Appleby for their charges in goeing to the Assizes to give evidence against the blind preacher £3 4 6."

1664–5

"Item paid Richard Philpe and John Wolfe charges as witnesses against Daniel Northerne £3 0 0."

Subsequently a payment of £3 4s. is recorded to five men who guarded Daniel Northern when he was set in the pillory.

In the records for 1664–5, in addition to minor disbursements, there is an entry of £30 paid to John Martyn, the Mayor, for his expenses in entertaining the Bishop and his retinue and others several days, when his Lordship came to consecrate Charles Church. Andrew Horsman and another were paid £1 11s. 4d. for their expenses in inviting the Bishop; and one Mr. Jackson had 8s. 6d. for the rent of his tent, and for putting it up and taking it down, which reads suspiciously like a record of a luncheon in the churchyard.

1670–71

In 1670–71 £18 5s. was paid to several ministers.

1665–6

In this year £5 8s. was paid for sending away persons to gaol.

1669–70

"Item paid the Sarjeants charges for carrying Quakers to Exon £1 10."

"More paid for carrying Abigail Libby to goale $11^s/6^d$ and for James Holbertons charges to give in evidence against her 25^s £1 16 6."

"Item paid Mr. William Jennens for fee and charges to S^r John Maynard for advice about the conventicle act £1 6 6."

"Item paid Samuel Carkeete for his charge and horse hire in rideing to Exeter to precute a meeting which was att Mr. Yeabsleys house £2 5 0."

1682–3

"Item paid unto Peter Millett & Samuel Grere John Bosaverne, Francis Spurrell & other constables toward their charges in carryeing Mr. Jacob and Martyn Nonconformist preachers to the high gaol £4 5."

"Item paid unto Richard Stephens & John Pane constables toward their charges in carrying severall Quakers to prison £4 9."

1683–4

"Item paid unto Richard Hall and Henry Hall his son for their expenses and for horse hire in goeing to the County Assizes to give evidence against Nonconformist ministers with other disbursements relating to the same £3 5 0."

THE OLD NONCONFORMIST REGISTERS.

SHERWILL commences his part of the register with the words, "Baptized by mee Nicholas Sherwill," and his first entry is, "Nov 28 1662, Mary daughter of Mr George and Mrs Mary Lapthorne who was borne Oct 31st." From 1662 to 1676 he baptized in all thirty, the highest number in any one year being four. After this latter date the baptisms are more numerous, and reach to as many as fifteen in 1690, averaging ten annually. The last entry is on the 7th of May, 1696, and he died suddenly on the 15th. There are three entries of marriage: "Marryed by mee Nicolas Sherwill 1662 Sept 17 Mr Walter Trowt and Mrs Katharine Crampron at Stonehouse. 1663 July 15 Matthew Greet and Ruth Hingston at Brixton. 1670 May 3 Mr Abraham Sherwill and Mrs Joanna Fortescue of Spridleston at Plymton Morris." Interments took place of course in the parish churchyard, and there are no entries of burials. There are, however, entries of "funerall sermons preached by mee Nicolas Sherwill." The first was on the 15th August, 1662, the week before Bartholomew-day, at Staverton or Harberton. The next was on February 12th, 1670, and thence they continue down to September 8th, 1695. It is very evident that Sherwill was a man of note in those days. In 1672 he preached a funeral sermon for Walter Trowte at Exeter; in 1677 (September 21st) that for his friend the Rev. Thomas Martyn; on the 29th May, 1692, for the Rev. Mr. Henry Flamank at Tavistock; and on June 11th of the same year for Samuel Martyn at Liskeard. The text for the two Martyns was Daniel xii. 3; that for Flamank Hebrews xiii. 7.

Thomas Martyn commences his register of baptisms in the same book as Sherwill, but in a preceding page, June 12th, 1672, with the baptism of "Benjamin ye son of William and Mary Woodmason;" and of twelve baptisms down to the 11th September of that year, most are stated to have taken place at "Greene House neare Charles Church in Greene Street." I have little doubt that this was Sherwill's private residence, as I have discovered that he lived in this exact locality. The entries in Martyn's handwriting cease in September, 1673, but are continued in another hand down to February 3rd, 1675. It has been generally supposed that Martyn died in 1673; but there is the evidence of his funeral sermon by Sherwill that he died in 1677. As the book in which Martyn and Sherwill made their entries is marked "Register booke 1672," it is quite probable that at that date Martyn copied in his previous baptisms from another record.

THE HEBREW COMMUNITY.

THE land on which the Synagogue in Catherine Street stands was originally the property of the Corporation, by whom it was leased. It was then a garden; and the original lease to the founders of the present Synagogue was in 1762, the lessees being J. J. Sherenbeck, gentleman, of Plymouth, and G. J. Emdon, shopkeeper, of Devonport, the two elders of the Hebrew community at that date. The Synagogue was then built; and subsequently the freehold was acquired. One of the most liberal benefactors of modern Plymouth was a Jew, and a native of Plymouth—Mr. Jacob Nathan. His bequests were—

£1,000, the interest to be given half-yearly to the following: Israel Myers, Joseph Abrahams, Ann Isaacs, Bella and Esther Levy, and Harriet Bellem, and on their demise to the Hebrew Soup Kitchen, Aldgate, London, and the Guardians of the poor Hebrews, London; £1,200, interest of, to the Hebrew Blind Asylum, London; £1,000, interest of, to the poor of Jerusalem; £3,000, interest of, for establishing a school to be called the Jacob Nathan School, for teaching Hebrew, expounding the Holy Scriptures, and elementary education; £600 for establishing the Jacob Nathan School; £1,000, interest of, for the maintenance of the Hebrew public worship—Plymouth congregation; £500 for a burial-ground for Hebrews, Plymouth. The interest of the following sums also to be applied to the purposes named: £400, to be divided on different holidays to the Jewish poor, Plymouth; £200, for clothing children attending the Jacob Nathan School; £100, for supplying coals to Jewish poor, Plymouth; £100, for Jewish Ladies' Benevolent Society, Plymouth; £150, Jews' Free School, Greek Street, Soho, London; £200, for the Jewish Hospital, Norwood; £200, for Jewish Free School, Westminster; £200, for Jewish Orphan Asylum, Tenterground, Goodman's Fields, London; £200, Jews' Infant School, London; £200, Jews' Free School, Bell Lane, Spitalfields; £200, Jewish Institution for Diffusion of Knowledge; £200, Jewish College, Finsbury Square; £200, Jewish West Metropolitan School, Red Lion Square; £200, Philanthropic Society, London; £200, Hand-in-Hand Asylum, London; £50, Hebrew Benevolent Society, Bristol; £60, Jews' School, Birmingham; £50, Ladies' Benevolent Society, Liverpool; £50, Hebrew School, Newcastle; £60, Jewish Mendicity Society, Portsmouth; £200, South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital, Plymouth; £200, Public Dispensary, Plymouth; £150, Female Orphan Asylum, Plymouth; £150, Blanket Society, Plymouth; £150, Eye Infirmary, Plymouth; £60, Lying-in Charity, Plymouth; £50, Branch National Life-Boat, Plymouth; £50, Humane Society, Plymouth; £50, Sailors' Home, Plymouth; £50, Female Penitentiary, Plymouth; £50, Blind Asylum, Plymouth; £70, Female Home, Plymouth; £50, Industrial School, Plymouth; £50, Ragged School, Plymouth; £150, Orphan Asylum, Stoke; £150, Public Hospital, Devonport; £50, Blind Institution, Devonport; £200, Metropolitan Hospital, Devonshire Square, London; £200, London Hospital, Middlesex; £60,

British Asylum, Clapham; £60, British Home for Incurables, Clapham; £50, Deaf and Dumb Asylum, London; £70, National Orphan Asylum, Ham; £50, Deaf and Dumb Asylum, Exeter; and, absolutely, £19 19s. to the Society for Preventing Cruelty to Animals, Plymouth; the like to the Plymouth Soup Kitchen; and £30 to the Plymouth Benevolent Society.