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NINE FAMOUS BIRMINGHAM MEN

Nine Famous Birmingham Men

Lectures Delivered in the University

Edited by

J. H. Muirhead, LL.D

Professor of Philosophy in the University of Birmingham

"Not walls but men make a City."
—*Thucydides.*

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PREFACE

It hardly needs to be said that these are only a few of the men who have been the spiritual builders of the city of Birmingham as we know it, or who have otherwise lent it lustre. Besides those selected for the present course, the names of Boulton, Sturge, Cox, Vince, Bunce, Shorthouse, Lightfoot, Benson (to confine ourselves to the past) readily occur. Of the nine, only a few are Birmingham men in the sense of having been born in the town. But there is no reason why a city should not take as much credit for attracting as for giving birth to distinguished men. Birmingham has had a happy gift for this method of attachment.

The Course was arranged somewhat hastily by the Social Study Committee of the University as a contribution to the programme of the Workers' Educational Association for the session 1908–9. Its aim was, while doing honour to great names, to show how it takes all sorts of

men and movements to make a great modern city. College lectures may aim at education in more than one way. They may seek to inform and organize thought on a particular subject, or they may aim at touching feeling and inspiring the will. While some of the lectures which follow may, it is hoped, prove contributions to the literature of the subjects of which they treat, all of them are a call to the younger generation of Birmingham citizens to remember to what manner of city they belong and to what manner of men they owe it.

A fear was expressed by some that the Course might raise controversies foreign to education and thus introduce elements of discord into the movement it was intended to help. The Committee was confident that the fear was groundless. They believed that Birmingham men and women had sufficient magnanimity to come together to do honour to great names without respect to party or creed. They remembered Carlyle's saying of himself and John Sterling that "they were agreed in everything but opinion," and felt convinced that the general result would be the wholesome recogni-

tion of the insignificance of theoretic differences in view of practical agreement on the great ends and issues of life.

Thanks are due to the generosity of a well-known citizen of Birmingham, who desires to remain anonymous, for enabling the publishers to add the portraits which accompany the lectures, without adding to the cost of the volume. These portraits may be regarded as his gift to the working men and women of Birmingham.

BIRMINGHAM, *March*, 1909.

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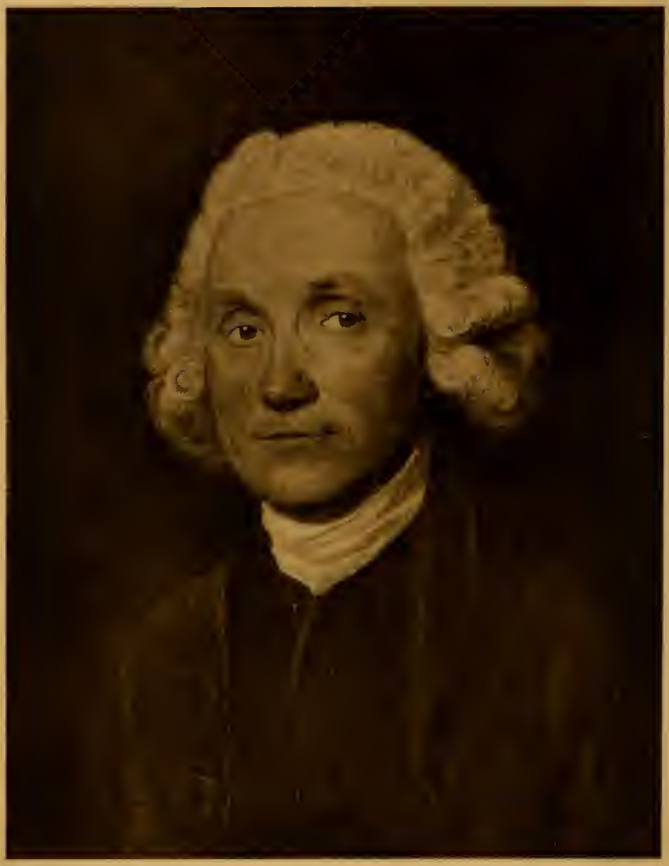


JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

Born near Leeds, 1733. Died in Pennsylvania, 1804.
Lived in Birmingham from 1780 to 1791.

By Oliver Lodge

One hundred and five years ago, Joseph Priestley died in America, whither he had been driven by persecution and popular clamour. But the greater part of his life was spent, and his work was done, in England; America was merely a refuge for one whose ideas were too advanced for his native country, which would not allow him reasonable freedom of speech; the popular notions of freedom in England, at that particular time, being of the most rudimentary character.

His life has a double aspect. On one side he was an experimental chemist: on the other a religious teacher and civil reformer. He never seems to have taken any share in party politics, technically so-called, but he was always on the side of civil and religious freedom; and his earnest religious spirit forbade him to keep silent at a period when men's prejudices were

violently agitated by the occurrences of the French Revolution, and when a bigoted attitude in both Church and State was far more prevalent than it is now. He never made himself the least obnoxious to the law, but he did lay himself open to the lawlessness of his countrymen. And unfortunately the ignorant mob of those days was at the beck and call of the party of superstition and bigotry, being only too ready to carry out its behests and to persecute any conspicuous person who was disapproved of by that protean party. To this persecution therefore it is impossible for any one treating of Priestley's life to shut his eyes. It would be absurd to treat him as if he were only a chemical philosopher; for although his services to experimental chemistry were astonishing, his constant and dignified pleadings for civil and religious liberty were of even more value.

On this head I will quote the testimony of a man of science, Dr. Thorpe, F.R.S., himself the author of a very useful small *Life of Priestley* in the "English Men of Science" series:

Such is the irony of circumstance, that Priestley's name mainly lives as that of a chemical philosopher. When men have desired to do him honour, and have sought to

perpetuate his memory by statues in public places, he is generally represented as making a chemical experiment.

In reality, great as Priestley's merit is as an experimentarian philosopher, his greater claim on our regard and esteem rests upon his struggles and his sufferings in the cause of civil, political, and religious liberty.

Priestley's father was a manufacturer of home-spun; and he and his ancestors were simple, honest, religious folk—hand-loom weavers for the most part—living in the country near Leeds, owning a small piece of land and a horse or cow: in fact they belonged to that solid homely conservative class which our townsman, the Right Honourable Jesse Collings, is endeavouring to establish in greater numbers among us. Joseph was born in Yorkshire, in 1733. At school he learnt Greek, and in the holidays made an effort at acquiring Hebrew; while after leaving school, he taught himself the chief modern European languages. He was to be trained for the Ministry, and at the age of nineteen was sent for that purpose to Daventry—where was a small educational institution of importance in the history of English Nonconformity. Concerning it, and speaking as a Dissenter, Priestley expresses himself as follows:

Shutting the doors of the Universities against us, and keeping the means of learning to yourselves, you may think to keep us in ignorance and so less capable to give you disturbance. But though ignominiously and unjustly excluded from the seats of learning, and driven to the expedient of providing at a great expense for scientific education among ourselves, we have had this advantage, that our institutions, being formed in a more enlightened age, are more liberal and therefore better calculated to answer the purpose of a truly liberal education. Thus while your Universities resemble pools of stagnant water secured by dams and mounds, ours are like rivers which, taking their natural course, fertilize a whole country.

Fortunately this accusation cannot with truth be made now, against either the ancient or the modern Universities.

Priestley's marked mental characteristics were a sturdy independence of thought, resolute regard for truth, and repudiation of dogmatic authority. These intellectual traits dominated his character, gave it strength, and ultimately brought upon him his misfortunes.

His first ministry was at Needham Market in Suffolk, where he seems to have been wretchedly poor, partly because he would not receive contributions from those members of his congregation with whose opinions he did not agree. His income we are told was thirty pounds a year. His preaching also, though

weighty and vigorous, was hampered by a stammer, with which he had to struggle through the greater part of his life. So after three years he migrated to Nantwich, where he conducted a school. Here he was better off, and acquired some philosophic instruments as well as books; notably an air-pump and an electrical machine, which he taught his pupils to use and to keep in order, though at that time he had no leisure to make original observations.

At the age of twenty-eight he was removed to Warrington, to become a teacher in the Warrington Academy for the education of young men of every religious denomination for the Christian ministry or as laymen. Here he became able to marry and to take up the more serious study of Natural Philosophy.

But what particularly impressed him, as a practical educationist, was that, whilst most of his pupils were designed for situations in civil and active life, every article in the plan of their education was adapted to the learned professions; and at a later date he proceeded to trace the cause of this anomaly:

Formerly none but the clergy were thought to have any occasion for learning. It was natural, therefore, that

the whole plan of education, from the Grammar School to the finishing at the University, should be calculated for their use.

Besides, in those days, the great ends of human society seem to have been but little understood. Men of the greatest rank, fortune, and influence, who took the lead in all the affairs of State, had no idea of the great objects of wise and extensive policy, and therefore could never apprehend that any fund of knowledge was requisite for the most eminent stations in the community.

This state of things to a great extent still persists, among leaders of society and some of the governing classes, not excepting the average Member of Parliament; but a more reasonable and comprehensive plan of education is fortunately being initiated, and ultimately, it is to be hoped, will permeate even more of the Government Offices than at present.

It was from Warrington that Priestley paid his first visit to London. He seems to have spent a Christmas there at the end of the year 1765, and to have encountered not only John Canton, an admirable experimental philosopher, but also that exceptionally great man, Benjamin Franklin, then about sixty years of age. Franklin and Priestley seem to have become close friends; and the result was a stimulated interest and keenness in Natural Philosophy on the part of Priestley.

On his return to Warrington he made some notable electrical discoveries concerning the discharge of a Leyden jar round a long circuit. Among other things he discovered—what I myself happened to rediscover in 1888, thinking they were new—the two series of experiments called respectively "the alternative path" and "the side flash." A conductor transmitting a current of great magnitude and suddenness is able to spit off a spark even to an insulated body in the neighbourhood; which conductor however is not thereby charged, for it is instantaneously discharged again. The spark is, in fact, a double one, both in and out. Even an electroscope is hardly affected at all by such a spark —proper precautions being taken to prevent any permanent or residual effect, due to imperfect earth connexion. This 'side flash' is a phenomenon of importance in connexion with lightning conductors.

The discovery of the other experiment—that of "the alternative path"—led in his case, as in my own, to a large number of measurements of the *impēdance* of conductors, of various shapes and of many materials; the alternative spark length across an air-gap being a measure

of the potential required to force the current round a closed circuit. The theory in his day was, of course, not understood, because the data were not available, as they were in 1888; the whole subject of "self-induction," which dominates the phenomenon, being completely unknown—unknown till Faraday made his experiments and Maxwell gave the essential mathematical features of their theory.

These and other experiments of Priestley revived in this country the use of large electrical machines and batteries of Leyden jars—together with other experiments which had also been most energetically carried out by Franklin in the American colonies.

It was probably in connexion with these observations that the University of Edinburgh conferred upon Priestley the Honorary Degree of LL.D., and he thus became Dr. Priestley.

At the age of thirty-four he was invited to leave the school at Warrington, where he had been very successful, and take charge of the congregation of Mill Hill Chapel at Leeds; his stammer having been, by pertinacious care and personal trouble, very greatly reduced in intensity.

From Leeds he issued a number of pamphlets, vindicating the cause of civil and religious liberty, and standing up for Nonconformist principles against what he considered the prejudices of his countrymen. He was well aware that some of these pamphlets were obnoxious to people in authority, and that he ran the risk of some personal danger by their publication; for he says in one of his letters:

> I am about to make a bolder push than ever for the *pillory*, the *King's Bench Prison*, or something worse.

It is thought that he is here referring to a pamphlet that he wrote on *Wilkes and Liberty* in connexion with the struggle between the electors of Middlesex and the House of Commons of that day.

The most important fact in connexion with Leeds, however, is that he there began his chemical experiments on gases,—and published what he called *Enquiries into the doctrine of air*; by which series of experiments he became one of the greatest chemical discoverers of his time.

It must be understood that the name "gas" had not then come into use, and all kinds of gases were called "airs." Indeed the doctrine

of the four elements, "earth," "air," "fire" and "water," still persisted. Even now many minerals are spoken of as "earths," as if they were varieties of the one element. Some liquids are still popularly spoken of as "waters," like "aqua fortis" and "aqua regia"; oils and spirits being also recognized—for instance "oil of vitriol," and "spirit of nitre"; though there is neither water, oil, nor spirit in the composition of any of them. Even to this day only one variety of "fire" is popularly recognized—that due to combustion,—but we know that the heat of the sun and of the electric spark and arc are independent of combustion. Indeed it is not very easy to specify what is meant by the "temperature" of an electric spark or of the discharge in a vacuum tube.

Anyway, in Priestley's time the gases were called "airs"; one of the best known being the "fixed air" or "choke damp" of the mines; another kind being "fire damp" or "inflammable air." "Fixed air" was what we now call carbonic acid or carbon dioxide; "inflammable air" was either hydrogen or marsh gas or any other undiscriminated hydrocarbon that burnt with a flame. The word

"damp" is used in middle English for gases, and is still found in German for vapour.

Priestley's first experiments on 'fixed' air were made with the gas which was given off by fermenting wort, at a neighbouring brewery. He wrote a pamphlet on the impregnation of water with fixed air, which was translated into French and excited a good deal of interest. He advocated the use of a condensing engine for pumping the gas into water; and, what is more surprising, succeeded in getting the Admiralty to fit two warships with apparatus for the production of what we now call soda-water, in order, as he thought, to prevent the ravages of scurvy on board ship.

He became a Fellow of the Royal Society about this time; and the Council of the Society so much appreciated the invention of soda-water as to bestow on him, for this and his other experiments, the Copley Medal; which is now, and presumably was then, their highest honour!

When Priestley left Leeds, at apparently the age of about forty-six, he entered the service of Lord Shelburne; after the fashion of those days, when a nobleman was usually accepted as the patron of a man of letters or a man of

science, as the case might be,—facilitating his researches and sharing some of their interest and fame. With Lord Shelburne he travelled about Europe and met many people of importance. What struck him was the prevalent atmosphere of agnosticism, which was evidently very marked during the latter half of the eighteenth century. He reports that the company which he met at Lord Shelburne's for the most part hardly knew what Christianity was, and they considered it very remarkable that a man of whose understanding they had some opinion could profess to believe in it.

Priestley was thus led to write his *Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever*, hoping to be able to combat their prejudices with advantage: indeed he felt that the prestige of his philosophical pursuits was chiefly of value in enabling him to be listened to, when he defended the principles of Christianity and tried to free it from those corruptions which prevented its reception by thoughtful people.

He also wrote on *Natural and Revealed Religion*, and a *Harmony of the Gospels*.

But the result of these publications was other than he had expected, and indeed other than

any one at the present time could imagine to be likely. His efforts at conciliating unbelievers and bringing them towards something like orthodoxy (like similar efforts in our own time, known under the title of Modernism) were the subject of bitter attack and outcry from the rigidly orthodox, and from their numerous though barely qualified disciples. He was attacked in almost every periodical, was regarded as an unbeliever in revelation, and was spoken of as little better than an atheist.

This outbreak of mistaken bigotry had the effect of separating him from Lord Shelburne; for though they parted amicably and with mutual esteem, and though Lord Shelburne paid him a liberal pension or annuity to the end of his life, the patron did not care to be any longer associated with a philosopher who was liable to be so rabidly abused.

Priestley went to London, and there met with help from Parker, the optician, and from Josiah Wedgwood, the great potter, who kept him supplied with the appliances that he wanted in order to continue his chemical experiments, which otherwise, in his comparative poverty, he would have been obliged to suspend. He

also saw a good deal more of Franklin, and his testimony to the attitude of this great man in connexion with the rupture between England and the American Colonies is of value; because it is often thought that Franklin wished to separate the two countries, whereas his real desire was to unite them into one great and glorious Empire. The following is Priestley's testimony to Franklin:

> The unity of the British Empire in all its parts was a favourite idea of his. He used to compare it to a beautiful china vase which, if ever broken, could never be put together again; and so great an admirer was he of the British constitution that he said he saw no inconvenience from its being extended over a great part of the globe.
>
> I can bear witness that he was so far from promoting, as was generally supposed, that he took every method in his power to prevent, a rupture between the two countries.

In fact, what Franklin was working for was the ideal towards which so many are nowadays quietly striving, namely the effective Federation of the English-speaking race.

In 1780, at the age of about forty-seven, Priestley came to settle in Birmingham. Here, says Dr. Thorpe, he had friends prepared to welcome him, and a society in every way sympathetic and congenial. Moreover, he was

desirous of resuming his ministerial duties, which had been intermitted for the past six or seven years; and an opportunity of doing so, with a congregation not less liberal than he had served at Leeds, offered itself, owing to the approaching retirement of Mr. Hawkes from the charge of the "New Meeting." As regards his philosophical pursuits, he had the convenience of good workmen of every kind, and he could count upon the practical sympathy and interest of men like Watt and his partner Boulton, Keir, Withering, Wedgwood, Erasmus Darwin, and the Galtons—all at that time living in Birmingham or in its vicinity. These men and their friends constituted a cultured society without a parallel in any other town in the kingdom, except possibly the Metropolis.

He became a member of a society founded by Matthew Boulton and Erasmus Darwin, called "the Lunar Society," which consisted of ten or a dozen members, who met at each other's houses once a month, regulating their meetings by the full moon, so that they might be able to see their way home, since the illumination of the streets and roads in those days was exceedingly defective. They occasionally had

friends to visit them, and among others we find not only Wedgwood, but also Sir William Herschel, the astronomer, and Smeaton, the designer of the Eddystone Lighthouse.

In this society, says Priestley, we had nothing to do with the religious or political principles of each other; we were united by a common love of science, which we thought sufficient to bring together persons of all distinctions—Christians and Jews, Mahometans and heathens, Monarchists and Republicans.

No wonder they were interested in science, for it was an epoch of great activity—the era of Black and Cavendish, of Laplace and Herschel.

One of the chief subjects for discussion was Priestley's new experiments in pneumatic chemistry, and many were the controversies between him and James Watt as to the composition of water; for, difficult as it is to realize, even the composition of water was in those days unknown Chemistry, truly, was in its infancy.

Not only with Watt did he have controversies, but also with the French chemists, under the leadership of Lavoisier, to whom he had shown some of his experiments while on a visit to Paris. The experiments were Priestley's, but

the insight into their meaning was Lavoisier's. Priestley, in his theoretical views, ran aground on an unprofitable and unproductive doctrine of " phlogiston "—an imaginary entity whereby he thought that metals differed from their ores or *rusts*. It is difficult to explain what phlogiston is now, because it does not exist ; and it is needless therefore to try to reconstruct the ideas of those times. The ideas are only of interest as showing with what difficulty even the elementary facts of chemistry were understood and assimilated. Priestley thought that an ore was turned into a metal by pumping into it phlogiston or the property of inflammability ; and that when any metal, say iron, lost its phlogiston it crumbled into powder or turned into rust.

Lavoisier weighed the rust, and found that it weighed more than the original metal, thus showing that it had gained something ; and his doctrine was that the metal had combined with some other material (which later on he called oxygen) so as to form an oxide. In fact, he gave the true explanation. But Priestley and the believers in phlogiston were not perturbed by the experiment and demonstration of

the increase in weight when a metal is oxidized. They admitted the increase, but claimed that phlogiston was the principle of *levity*, that it was therefore opposed to gravitation, that it tended upwards as flame did, and therefore that the more a thing lost of it the heavier it naturally got.

The controversy, you see, lay between the gain of a positive substance and the loss of a negative or hostile principle ; and it is not always easy to decide between alternatives such as these.

The same kind of controversy seems likely to occur in connexion with the effect of vegetation on the soil—an effect which renders the rotation of crops a necessity. Continual growth of one variety of crop exhausts the soil: but why does it exhaust it ? Is it because it has taken something out, essential to the growth of future crops of the same kind ; or is it that it has secreted a poison or something hostile to the growth of the same kind of crop ? This latter has been suspected ; and it is a moot point which of these two opposing views is true.

Accordingly we are in this matter in the position of the controversialists of the Priestley-Lavoisier period : we do not know what the

deleterious influence is due to—whether it is due to the introduction of a poison, or to the removal of a healthy and sustaining element; or whether there is truth in both assertions. It is a matter for experiment and investigation; and doubtless in another ten years or so an answer may be given. I only quote it as an instance of a similar kind of difficulty, in order to show that the error which Priestley made was not an unnatural one, and that all the difficulties of the men of old time may be generally paralleled by something which in our present state of knowledge seems equally difficult and uncertain.

The following is an extract from a letter of Boulton to Wedgwood, dated March 30, 1781:

> We have long talked of phlogiston without knowing what we talked about: but now that Dr. Priestley hath brought the matter to light, we can pour that element out of one vessel into another; can tell how much of it by accurate measurement is necessary to reduce a calx to a metal, which is easily done, and without putting that calx into contact with any visible thing. In short, this goddess of levity can be measured and weighed like other matter. For the rest, I refer you to the doctor himself.

And Priestley himself speaks as follows:

> My experiments are certainly inconsistent with Mr.

Lavoisier's supposition of there being no such thing as phlogiston, and that it is the addition of air, and not the loss of anything, that converts a metal into a calx.

That mercury in its metallic state does contain phlogiston or inflammable air is evident from the production of nitrous air by the solution of it in spirits of nitre, and I make *nitrous air* from nothing but *nitrous vapour* and inflammable air; so that it indisputably consists of these two ingredients.

The "calx," or oxide, on which Priestley made his most famous experiment, was the red oxide of mercury, obtained by heating metallic mercury in contact with air. Some of this red powder, which in his view had lost its phlogiston, he put into a test-tube with some mercury, and inverted it in a small bath of quicksilver, so that its open mouth was submerged and the red powder collected at the upper closed end of the tube. Upon this powder he then concentrated the rays of the sun with a burning glass, with the intention of putting back the phlogiston and re-converting it into metallic mercury. The red powder slowly became metallic mercury, under the influence of the solar heat, and at the same time the quicksilver was forced down the tube by the exhalation of a kind of air, which in reality was oxygen—viz. the oxygen which the red powder had

possessed in combination, but which was now expelled. This is the experiment represented by the statue in Victoria Square, Birmingham. With the "air" so given off from the calx or oxide of mercury—what he called "dephlogisticated air," and what we call oxygen—he made many famous experiments—such as are to this day repeated in elementary courses of chemistry, and are familiar to all, even junior, students of the subject.

Priestley called it dephlogisticated air because he thought that phlogiston had been removed from it and transferred to the metallic mercury. Lavoisier called it "oxygen" (acid-producer—the Germans similarly call it *Sauerstoff*—the essence, of sourness) under the idea that it was responsible for the generation of acid properties when it entered into compounds. That idea about its acid-generating property, though it survived for more than half a century, later on was abandoned and, when I learnt chemistry, was practically extinct.

Curiously enough, there are signs, within the last year or two, of a revival of this idea; at any rate there are one or two chemists who see reason for supposing that oxygen is really, after

all, the acid-generating principle, and not hydrogen, as had been thought in the interim. I do not for a moment say that this view is right, or express any opinion upon it: it is not a matter to be discussed except by experts; I only instance it as a curious example of the way in which scientific theory winds itself round in spirals, so that to the scoffer and man of ignorance it may appear as if there were no progress, whereas really there is very essential progress all the time, and each turn of the spiral is a great deal higher than the one which preceded it.

What we ought to learn from the facts I have narrated is never to be contemptuous of old and extinct views, but always to keep our minds open to recognize the germ of truth that may underlie them. It is that germ of truth which gave them their vitality; and when they have had time to shake off the admixture of error which confused and enshrouded them, they may emerge at length the better and brighter for the experience—all the clearer for the rest and peace pertaining to obscurity.

At this stage I think I had better give a list of the gases which Priestley discovered; and

some of the experiments by which he manufactured them I will repeat before you.

But first I will quote his remarkably accurate anticipation of the uses of the new gas, oxygen or dephlogisticated air. The following is an extract from his writings:

> Nothing would be easier than to augment the force of fire to a prodigious degree by blowing it with dephlogisticated air instead of common air. Possibly *platina* might be melted by means of it.
>
> From the greater strength and vivacity of the flame of a candle, in this pure air, it may be conjectured that it might be peculiarly salutary to the lungs in certain morbid cases. . . . But perhaps we may also infer from these experiments that though pure dephlogisticated air might be very useful as a *medicine*, it might not be so proper for us in the usual healthy state of the body: for, as a candle burns out much faster in dephlogisticated than in common air, so we might, as may be said, *live out too fast*, and the animal powers be too soon exhausted in this pure kind of air. A moralist, at least, may say that the air which Nature has provided for us is as good as we deserve. . . . Who can tell but that, in time, this pure air may become a fashionable article in luxury. Hitherto only two mice and myself have had the privilege of breathing it.

That is excellent, and typical of his genius and shrewdness; but unfortunately his very ingenuity helped him to retain wrong ideas. In theory he had no instinct for guessing right, such as the great men of science have had—an

intuitive feeling for the right end of any stick: he may almost be said to have had a predilection for the wrong end; and that fact alone puts him out of the first flight of scientific men. He was a skilful and painstaking experimentalist, and possessed scientific ability of a high kind, but never does he approach the level of Faraday or of James Watt. These men, and especially Faraday, had an instinct for being right; while as to Sir Isaac Newton—the accuracy not only of his theories but even of his guesses strikes us now as almost superhuman.

Of Priestley's oxygen memoir Dr. Thorpe speaks as follows:

> This paper is in certain respects one of the most noteworthy of Priestley's productions. The experiments are original, ingenious, and striking, but as an example of his inductive capacity, or as an indication of its author's logical power, or of his ability to try judicially the very issue he has raised, it is significant only of the profound truth of his own words that "we may take a maxim so strongly for granted that the plainest evidence of sense will not entirely change, and often hardly modify, our persuasions; and the more ingenious a man is, the more effectually he is entangled in his errors; his ingenuity only helping him to deceive himself by evading the force of truth."

Indeed Priestley often speaks of Lavoisier's arguments as so plausible and ingenious that

he feels nearly upset by them; but he calls his own ingenuity to his aid, and once more successfully resists, or, as he himself says, "evades" the force of truth—not of course recognizing it for a moment as such. In fact, his attitude is a standing caution to scholars against wrong-headed scientific dogmatism. His experiments were admirable, but his perception of their theoretical relations was entirely inadequate and, as we now think, quite erroneous. It needed a good deal of ability to adhere so forcibly to the wrong and therefore the cumbrous view.

Of all the gases which Priestley manufactured, some he is held to have discovered; others, although he made them and examined their properties, are not identified with his name, because he did not sufficiently discriminate them from others. For instance, he made carbonic oxide, and said it burned with a blue flame; but he called it inflammable air, and did not seem to know that it was really different from hydrogen and marsh gas. So also with phosphuretted hydrogen and chlorine: he prepared them, but did not follow the matter up. The gases which he is really held to have dis-

covered are the following,—and a remarkable list it is :—

1. Nitrogen, which he called phlogisticated air, and which he obtained by burning hydrocarbons in a closed vessel and then absorbing the carbonic acid produced, leaving a gas which would no longer support combustion, but which was not soluble in water, and did not precipitate lime—as fixed air did. The simplest substance to burn, for the purpose of thus isolating atmospheric nitrogen, is phosphorus.

2. Nitric oxide (NO), which he called nitrous air, and made from copper and nitric acid in the usual way.

He also showed that on bubbling oxygen up into this gas, collected over water, fumes were formed, which rapidly dissolved, leaving the gas less than before ; and he remarks on the astonishing phenomenon of one gas thus swallowing up another and destroying it. He even used this method for incipient quantitative analysis, showing that it enabled the amount of oxygen present to be estimated, thus beginning the subject of Eudiometry.

3. Nitrous oxide (N_2O) which he called dephlogisticated nitrous air.

4. Hydrochloric acid (HCl), which he called marine acid air.

5. Ammonia (NH_3) which he called alkaline air, and showed that these last two, when put together, destroyed each other and formed a solid cloud.

6. Sulphurous acid (SO_2), which he called vitriolic air.

7. Oxygen, which he called dephlogisticated air.

8. Silicon Fluoride ($Si\ F_4$), which he called Fluor-acid air, and showed its singular property of coating itself over with stone or flint when bubbles of it were sent up into water.

9. Sulphuretted hydrogen, which he called sulphuretted inflammable air.

He likewise made experiments on the effect of different gases on sound, by ringing a bell in an air-pump receiver, filled with the gases.

But one of his most weighty and important observations consisted in discovering the effect of vegetation upon air; which he published in a paper under the title *On Air in which a candle has been burned.* For in this air he had put a sprig of mint, and he found that after a few days of sunshine the air which had extinguished

a candle could once more support combustion and also life. He had to prove that this was not a peculiar property of mint: so he next tried balsam, and found that it acted in the same way. But it might be argued that these were stimulating and spicy kinds of plants, which might be expected to recuperate an exhausted substance. He therefore tried common weeds like groundsel, which also acted in the same way; and vegetables like spinach, which he found specially competent. He also took water plants and exposed them to sunshine under water, so as to see the cloud of little bubbles rising under the action of the solar rays. These bubbles he collected and proved to be dephlogisticated air, or oxygen. He thus arrived at the important conclusion that the air which was spoilt by animal life was renewed by plant life—that the two acted in opposite directions, and so kept the atmosphere of constant quality—a matter clearly of the first importance.

One short paragraph I will quote from his writings, indicating what now seems to us an amusing sort of ignorance at the time; namely a paragraph relating to indiarubber:

Since this work was printed off I have seen a substance

excellently adapted to the purpose of wiping off from paper the marks of black lead pencil. It must therefore be of singular use to those who practise drawing. It is sold by Mr. Nairne, mathematical instrument maker, opposite the Royal Exchange. He sells a cubical piece of about half an inch for three shillings, and he says it will last several years.

It is necessary now to give some indications of the position of Priestley as a Political Philosopher, and to exhibit his importance in the history of Sociology. But as this falls within Professor Muirhead's province, and he may be able to do it, I hope, without undue trouble, I have asked him to insert here a few paragraphs, either from one of his Courses of Lectures, or from some other store, illustrative of Priestley the citizen and his Political ideals.

For a full account of the ideas which Priestley expounded in his Essay on the *First Principles of Government*, and his other political writings it would be necessary to go at some length into the political conditions and opinions of the time. It must be sufficient here to recall that the chief need of the eighteenth century in the latter half of which he wrote was the assertion of individual rights against misguided interference

of the government; while that of the nineteenth century (the ideas of which Priestley partly anticipated), was the assertion of the common good against institutions which were based either on mere right of prescription or on the interest and influence of a section of the community. Hence it was that the watchword of the one was the "natural rights of the individual," that of the other was the "good of the whole." Priestley represents the transition between these two movements. Sir Oliver Lodge has shown that he had little instinct for true theory in chemistry, and even showed a lamentable faculty of getting hold of the stick by the wrong end. There is a similar want of clarity in his political theory. He may be said to have got hold of the stick by both ends and not to have known which was the right one. Yet two points stand clearly out in connexion with each of the above affinities, establishing his claim to honour in political and moral philosophy as well as in chemistry.

1. He asserted the claim of the right of private judgment and the principle of toleration with a completeness and consistency that excelled even John Locke and his own distinguished

contemporary and brother-at-arms in the same cause, Dr. Price. "The whole system of uniformity seems to me to be founded on very narrow and shortsighted views of policy"; "unbounded freedom in thinking upon all kinds of subjects may certainly be attended by some inconvenience, but it cannot be restrained without infinitely greater inconvenience"; "let us be free ourselves and leave the blessings of freedom to our posterity"; "I stand in need of liberty myself, and I wish that every creature of God may enjoy it equally with myself," are some of his most characteristic sayings.

2. To him belonged the merit of striking the note which Bentham took up and extended with such power and variation in his Utilitarian philosophy. Writing of the growth of his own opinions Bentham tells us that it was by a pamphlet of Priestley's that "light was added to warmth. In the phrase 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number,' I there saw delineated for the first time a plain as well as a true standard of whatever is right and wrong, useful and useless or mischievous in human conduct, whether in the field of morals or politics."[1] In a more picturesque reference

[1] *Works*, vol. x. 69.

Bentham tells us he came on Priestley's pamphlet in a London coffee-house and rose from the table crying "Eureka!"

While clearly indicating the Utilitarian principle, Priestley brought with him, what was uncommon in those times, the caution of a scientific observer into the field of politics. Any governmental interference, he held in true Utilitarian spirit, may be justified if it be for the good of the Community, yet legislation is a high and difficult art, "We are so little capable of arguing *à priori* in matters of government that it may seem experiments only can determine how far this power of the legislature ought to extend." This speculative caution is perhaps the reason why he failed (as Bentham elsewhere accuses him of doing) to make any adequate application of the principle he had the honour of formulating. Be this as it may, there is a pleasure in tracing the hospitable tolerance of all forms of religious opinion, and the sane collectivism in politics that have always been characteristic of Birmingham to the teaching of one of the earliest of its famous men. (J. H. M.)

We must now turn to the remainder of his life. His time in Birmingham was not wholly devoted to science: much of it was given to theology, to preaching, and to public work. Of his preaching, the following is written by a member of his congregation:

> I look upon his character as a preacher to be as amiable as his character as a philosopher is great. In the pulpit he is mild, persuasive, and unaffected, and his sermons are full of sound reasoning and good sense. He is not what is called an orator; he uses no actions, no declamation; but his voice and manner are those of one friend speaking to another.

His Birmingham congregation is described as the most liberal in England. And a member of it describes him thus:

> A man of admirable simplicity, gentleness, and kindness of heart, united with great acuteness of intellect. I can never forget the impression produced on me by the serene expression of his countenance.
>
> In the domestic relations of life he was uniformly kind and affectionate. Not malice itself could ever fix a stain on his private conduct or impeach his integrity.

While in Birmingham he wrote a book *The History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, in which he attacked many of what we now see to be the errors and superstitions which grew round the simplicity of the early Gospel. He could hardly expect this book to pass unopposed;

in fact it was received with a storm of disapproval, and at Dordrecht on the Continent it was burnt by the common hangman. The contentions contained in it were, however, what we should now consider to be of a reasonable and sensible character, and have been summarized thus:

> The New Testament, in Priestley's view, is not to be construed as a book of enigmas which might belong to any age. It is not dropped straight out of heaven into the hands of the man of to-day for him to make what he will of it. It belongs to a specific period; it was written for a given class of persons; it was written to be understood.
>
> Accordingly, it is the whole object of Priestley's histories of doctrine to get at the mind of the common Christian people in the first age; to make their primary understanding of Scripture the norm for its true interpretation.
>
> The plan was novel, the conception original, the whole endeavour strictly scientific in its method and basis.

Another ground of offence appears to have been the enthusiasm with which he supported the Sunday-school movement. We are told that this movement began in Birmingham in 1784, and was favoured by most denominations. It was opposed, however, by certain people who insisted that all children should attend the worship of the Established Church.

It must be admitted that the times were

desperately narrow, and I regret to have to refer to them. I am making no appeal to prejudice or sectarian animosity: it is merely a question of history. We can congratulate ourselves, I hope, in recognizing how different the atmosphere is now, and how out of date such controversies are.

Another service which Priestley achieved, of benefit to any community with whom he resided, was the establishment of a library. I believe that the Old Library in Birmingham, as well as the one in Leeds, owes its initiation to him. But I regret to say that even popular access to books was at that time strongly objected to: it was said to tend to the spread of Rationalism, and the library with its contents was vigorously abused by the orthodox.

Nevertheless Priestley considered that his time in Birmingham was the happiest period of his life, and in an autobiographical sketch he speaks of it as follows:

> I esteem it a singular happiness to have lived in an age and country in which I have been at full liberty both to investigate, and by preaching and writing to propagate, religious truth; for though the freedom I have used for this purpose was for some time disadvantageous to me, it was not long so; and my present situation is such that

I can, with the greatest openness, urge whatever appears to me the truth of the Gospel, not only without giving the least offence, but with the entire approbation of those with whom I am particularly connected.

But alas, this peaceful period was not to continue. Indeed, almost as he was writing, preparations must have been made for that mad outburst of popular passion which eventually drove him to America. It seems to have begun on the first anniversary of the taking of the Bastille in Paris. The fourteenth of July, 1791, was celebrated in several towns, among others in Birmingham. What party it was that stimulated the rising of the mob I prefer not to inquire, but certainly those who instigated and directed the outrage soon lost all control over the forces which they invoked; and the result was a riot or series of riots of the most disgraceful as well as of the most alarming character.

The controversial methods of those times seem to have been miserably unfair, no attempt being made to understand the position of an opponent; phrases divorced from their context, and employed only in a symbolical sense, were quoted as if they had been intended literally. A notable instance of this is a quota-

tion from one of Priestley's *Familiar Letters Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham,* where Priestley compares the process of free inquiry to the action of gunpowder, in a passage which concludes thus:

> The present silent propagation of truth may even be compared to those causes in Nature which lie dormant for a time, but which in proper circumstances act with the greatest violence. We are, as it were, laying gunpowder, grain by grain, under the old building of error and superstition, which a single spark may hereafter inflame, so as to produce an instantaneous explosion; in consequence of which that edifice, the erection of which has been the work of ages, may be overturned, in a moment, and so effectually as that the same foundation can never be built upon again.

This paragraph became to the enemies of the Dissenters a common topic of allusion, and was read in the House of Commons as an unquestionable proof of the dangerous designs of that body with respect to the constitution of this country. Hence the mischievous thinkers found no difficulty in persuading the unthinking actors that the real intention of the Dissenters was to destroy the churches.

By this kind of false witness it became possible to rouse the passions of an ignorant mob, and it is clear that some who ought to have

known better were not altogether averse from a lesson being read, by some sort of mob violence, to people whom they considered schismatics and revolutionaries. They did not indeed intend that it should go to the length to which it actually went, but as usual the forces they had aroused soon got beyond their control; and however much they might wish to stop the outbreak when it got beyond a certain point, they found themselves quite unable to do so.

It seems to me that whoever, in support of any cause, appeals to the prejudices and passions of a mob, is committing a crime. It is a very dangerous thing to have a mass of violent ignorance in our midst, and the effort of all educationists, and all social workers, is to endeavour to remove this ignorance; but so long as it exists, its stirring up is a great responsibility. So far as I am able to judge from the past, a mob has generally been utilized in favour of the forces of vested interests and what is called "reaction" or putting back the clock.

Mob law is always bad law. A mob is actuated by prejudices and superstitions, not by intelligence and reason. A mob stirred up

by priests is liable to be an agent of cruelty and blasphemy; and, from the days of "Crucify Him" until now, has always—I think always—taken the wrong side.

The immediate outbreak at Birmingham began in connexion with a public dinner at an hotel, presumably "The Olde Royal," in Temple Row. A number of gentlemen met there to celebrate the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille—the beginning of the French Revolution, which many enlightened people in this country, including the poet Wordsworth, regarded as a movement fraught with hope and goodwill to mankind. The excesses and crimes of the later revolution, and its collapse into military empire, could not of course be foreseen.

Priestley, as a matter of fact, did not go to the dinner: he appears to have had nothing to do with it, but was playing backgammon at home with his wife in his own back parlour.

But the mob assembled outside the hotel, all the same, and at a given signal (the signal being the cry "Church and King") the windows in front of the hotel were broken. Then, being assured of Priestley's absence, they swept away

to the New Meeting House, which they assailed, we are told, with incredible fury.

> The gates and doors were soon burst open, the pews demolished, the cushions and fragments carried out and burnt in front of the building, and at length fire was carried in which consumed it to the outer walls. The mob was now roused to frenzy. Some of the magistrates strove to quell the riot, and even those who had connived at the outrage grew alarmed at the dangerous temper which they had aroused. But the infuriated rabble by this time was thoroughly out of control, and no sufficient force was at hand to cope with it. The Old Meeting-house was next demolished, with the regularity of workmen employed for the purpose. A party armed with crow-bars, bludgeons, etc., tore down the pulpit, pews and galleries, and burnt them in the burying-ground, afterwards setting fire to the body of the meeting-house.

By no means satiated with these exploits, they now marched in a body to Priestley's house at Fair Hill, the cry of "Church and King" being again raised; and though it did not belong to Priestley, but to a gentleman who, we are told, was deservedly a favourite of the poor, yet, because it was the dwelling of Dr. Priestley, it was doomed to destruction, and was attacked with the most savage and determined fury.

Priestley's personal escape was due to the foresight of a friend, Mr. Samuel Ryland, who had just managed to hurry him and Mrs.

Priestley into a chaise, and on to the house of a friend at a small distance, Mr. Russell. Here a room for the night was prepared, and the doctor was expressing thankfulness in being permitted to lie down in peace and comfort, when Mr. Russell hurried in to say that the mob had become more violent than ever ; that they now swore to find Dr. Priestley and take his life, and were coming in search of him with shouts of "Stone him." The chaise was again brought out, and they drove off, scarcely knowing whither to go. Next day he intended to set off on horseback for Worcester, to catch the London mail ; but the fugitives lost their way on a common between Heath Forge and Bridgenorth and wandered about all night. They managed however to reach Kidderminster in the early morning, and were there met by Mr. Ryland, so that ultimately they got away to London.

As a result of the activity of the mob, "Showell Green was destroyed, as were Bordesley Hall and Moseley Hall, and other houses in the vicinity of Moseley ; Mr. Ryland's house at Easy Hill, and Mr. Hutton's house in High Street and his country seat at Washwood Heath."

Ultimately, the magistrates being powerless to deal with the rioters, the soldiers were sent for, and the mob retreated to its dens.

The attitude exhibited to these events by people in authority indicated a curious mixture of disapprobation and satisfaction; and, reading between the lines, one perceives that the result was not whole-heartedly regretted. For instance, the King, George III, writing to Mr. Secretary Dundas in approval of dragoons having been sent to Birmingham to quell the tumult, thus continues:

> Though I cannot but feel better pleased that Priestley is the sufferer for the doctrines he and his party have instilled, and that the people see them in their true light, yet I cannot approve of their having employed such atrocious means of showing their discontent.

The attitude of Priestley himself to these extraordinary persecutions, which overburdened his wife with anxiety and permanently ruined her health, is indicated by the following letter or Memorial which he addressed to his late co-citizens:

> To the Inhabitants of the Town of Birmingham.
>
> "My late Townsmen and Neighbours,—After living with you eleven years, in which you had uniform experience of my peaceful behaviour, in my attention to the quiet

studies of my profession and those of philosophy, I was far from expecting the injuries which I and my friends have lately received from you. But you have been misled. By hearing the Dissenters, and particularly the Unitarian Dissenters, continually railed at, as enemies to the present government in Church and State, you have been led to consider any injury done to us as a meritorious thing; and not having been better informed, the means were not attended to. When the *object* was right you thought the *means* could not be wrong. . . .

You were prepared for every species of outrage, thinking that whatever you could do to spite and injure us was for the support of Government and especially the Church. In *destroying us* you have been led to think *you did God* and your country the most substantial *service*.

Happily the minds of Englishmen have a horror of *murder*, and therefore you did not, I hope, think of *that*, though by your clamorous demanding of *me* at the hotel it is probable that at that time some of you intended me some personal injury. But what is the value of life when everything is done to make it wretched? In many cases there would be greater mercy in despatching the inhabitants than in burning their houses. However, I infinitely prefer what I feel from *the spoiling of my goods* to the disposition of those who have misled you.

You have destroyed the most truly valuable and useful apparatus of philosophical instruments that perhaps any individual in this or any other country was ever possessed of, in my use of which I annually spent large sums, with no pecuniary view whatever, but only in the advancement of science, for the benefit of my country and of mankind. You have destroyed a library corresponding to that apparatus which no money can re-purchase, except in a course of time. But what I feel far more, you have destroyed *manuscripts*, which have been the result of the

laborious study of many years, and which I shall never be able to recompose; and this has been done to one who never did, or imagined you, any harm.

And that there was something more in the disturbance than merely mob violence, at any rate in the opinion of contemporary people of importance, is indicated by the following letter from Josiah Wedgwood to Priestley:

If the brutality had arisen merely from the ungovern'd madness of a mob [composed of] the lowest order of our species one would then lament all its effects like those of a storm or hurricane, but if there is reason to believe that the rabble were acted upon and encouraged to such proceedings by those who should be their superiors, one cannot but perceive the too evident spirit of the times, or of the place, at least, by which you and so many of your worthy neighbours have suffered.

The times, however, were naturally somewhat violent. The French Revolution must have been exciting intense interest, and, I should suppose, a good deal of alarm among the Party who at that time imagined itself to represent aristocratic opinion. For instance, Mr. Matthew Davenport Hill tells us of an instance which shows that feeling ran high, and that even so apparently loyal and harmless a toast as "Church and King" had become an instru-

ment of offence;—which is not to be wondered at, seeing that it was that cry to which the riotous mob had responded on the occasion just described, for reasons which to its intelligence, if it had had any, would have been quite unintelligible.

"The years following the riot of 1791," he writes, "witnessed various displays of hostile sentiment. At a municipal dinner shortly after that event . . . Dr. Parr was present, though the sturdy divine must have surmised that he would be the only representative of his opinions. The cloth being drawn, the chairman proposed, as the Doctor no doubt expected, the toast of 'Church and King.'

"Parr instantly started to his feet, proclaiming in a stern voice his dissent. 'No, sir,' said he, 'I will not drink that toast. It was the cry of Jacobites, it is the cry of incendiaries. It means a Church without the Gospel, and a King above the Law.'"

Such was the trouble of the times that even in London Priestley's position was very insecure. He could hardly persuade a landlord to take him as a tenant, for fear his house would be demolished; and though he tried to continue his chemical work and his preaching, the rancour of his enemies made life intolerable. He was, in point of fact, boycotted; servants were afraid to remain long with him, and the tradespeople hesitated to take his custom. He

was several times burnt in effigy, with Thomas Paine; and gross caricatures, in which he was described as "the treacherous rebel and Birmingham rioter," were exhibited. He received insulting letters likening him to Guy Fawkes, and to the devil; some coming from people calling themselves ministers of the Gospel. In one of these he was threatened with being burned alive before a slow fire.

Burke inveighed against him in the House of Commons, and many of his associates in the Royal Society shunned him.

In those days the Government did not hesitate to take strong measures against any unpalatable reformer; and a Mr. Thomas F. Palmer, a highly respectable gentlemen in Bedfordshire, had been sent to Botany Bay for seven years because he had published a paper in favour of Parliamentary Reform.

In answer to remonstrances, and urgings to leave the country, from his friends, Dr. Priestley writes as follows:

After the riots in Birmingham, it was the expectation, and evidently the wish of many persons, that I should immediately fly to France or America. But I had no consciousness of guilt to induce me to fly from my country. Ill-treated as I thought I had been, not merely by the

populace of Birmingham, for they were the mere tools of their superiors, but by the country in general, which evidently exulted in our sufferings, and afterwards by the representatives of the nation, who refused to inquire into the cause of them, I own I was not without deliberating upon the subject of emigration.

I hoped to have had no occasion for more than one, and that a final, remove. But the circumstances above mentioned have induced me, though with great and sincere regret, to undertake another, and to a greater distance than any I have hitherto made. . . . And I trust that the same good Providence which has attended me hitherto, and made me happy in my present situation, and all my former ones, will attend and bless me in what may still be before me. In all events the will of God be done.

Further life in England had now become intolerable, and emigration had to be faced. Accordingly on April 8, 1794, Priestley and his wife set sail from London, and on June 4 they arrived in New York.

His friend and scientific opponent, Lavoisier, had met with even worse treatment at the hands of his ungrateful country. Sentence had been pronounced upon him, with the infamous ejaculation "the Republic has no need of chemists," and Lavoisier was executed by the guillotine.

Such was the treatment bestowed on the best of their citizens by two nations which considered

themselves as without exception the most civilized and enlightened in the world.

At New York Priestley was well received; addresses of welcome were presented to him, and he was offered the Professorship of Chemistry in the University of Philadelphia. But he preferred to live in the country; and his wife, who had never recovered from the shock of the Birmingham riots, needed rest and quiet. He declined therefore to take up any teaching work again, but spent his time in the laboratory or study—for the most part composing theological works, and repeating with enthusiasm and eagerness the experiments of Volta then being published.

He was now, however, aged seventy, and it was evident that his end was not far off. He was anxious to live six months longer, he told his physician, in order that he might complete the printing of his works.

On February 4, 1804, he finally took to his bed; though he was still able to read proof sheets and check Greek and Hebrew quotations. In the evening he had his grandchildren brought to his bedside, saying that it gave him great pleasure to see the little things kneel.

He lingered through the night, and in the early morning requested his son to take down some additions and alterations he wished inserted in his proofs, dictating as clearly and distinctly as he had ever done in his life. When these were read to him he said, "That is right, I have now done." Shortly afterwards he put his hand over his face and breathed his last, so easily that those who were sitting close to him hardly perceived that he had passed away.

In 1874 a statue of Priestley was erected by the inhabitants of Birmingham, and on that occasion Professor Huxley gave an address which appears as the first of his Essays on *Science and Education*. To everything in that volume I heartily commend the attention of readers, and with some of the opening words of that address we may fitly conclude this biographical sketch.

If the man to perpetuate whose memory we have this day raised a statue had been asked on what part of his busy life's work he set the highest value, he would undoubtedly have pointed to his voluminous contributions to theology. . . .

In this cause he not only cheerfully suffered obloquy from the bigoted and the unthinking, and came within sight of martyrdom; but bore with that which is much harder to be borne than all these, the unfeigned astonishment and hardly disguised contempt of a brilliant society, composed of men whose sympathy and esteem must have been most dear to him, and to whom it was simply incomprehensible that a philosopher should seriously occupy himself with any form of Christianity.

If appears to me that the man who, setting before himself such an ideal of life, acted up to it consistently, is worthy of the deepest respect. . . .

But our purpose to-day is to do honour, not to Priestley the Unitarian divine, but to Priestley the fearless defender of rational freedom in thought and in action: to Priestley the philosophic thinker; to that Priestley who held a foremost place among "the swift runners who hand over the lamp of life," and transmit from one generation to another the fire kindled, in the childhood of the world, at the Promethean altar of Science.

GEORGE DIXON

Born, 1820. Came to Birmingham, 1838. Died, 1898.

By George H. Kenrick

George Dixon, the son of a Whitehaven man, was born at Gomersall, Yorkshire, in 1820. He was educated at the Leeds Grammar School, and spent two years in France learning the language. In 1838 he came to Birmingham with his brother and joined the firm of Rabone Bros. In 1844 he was made a partner and subsequently became the head of the firm in which he remained all his life. In 1855 Mr. Dixon married the daughter of the late James Stansfeld, judge of the County Court of Halifax. In 1863 Mr. Dixon entered the Council as member for Edgbaston Ward. Three years later he was elected Mayor, November, 1866. In July of the following year he resigned his office to become a candidate for Parliament on the death of Mr. William Scholefield, and was duly elected on the 23rd of that month by a majority of 1,605 votes. In 1873 Mr. Dixon was elected on the School Board and became chairman in 1876,

when he was compelled to retire from Parliament, owing to the state of Mrs. Dixon's health. In 1885 he contested the Edgbaston Division of the Parliamentary borough and was returned by a majority of 1,191, and he continued in Parliament until his death in 1898.

Such is the brief chronicle of the life of one whom Birmingham may well regard as one of its greatest citizens. It is to me at once an honour and a pleasure to be allowed to speak of one whom I regard as a kind of educational godfather, since it was he who introduced me to public life in relation to education. And, indeed, it is as an advocate of education that Mr. Dixon will be recollected in the future. Had it not been for this bent of his mind he might well have been remembered as typical of the best kind of commercial greatness. Keen, broadminded, well informed, scrupulously honourable, he was well fitted to raise the tone and enlarge the sphere of commercial dealing, and he speedily put his firm in the front rank of Birmingham merchants. As a town councillor, and subsequently Mayor, he showed himself by his generous sympathy and by his wise actions to be possessed of all those qualities that have

distinguished the great English towns in their admirable self-government, and on his election to Parliament he was probably the most popular man in Birmingham.

But his devotion to education overshadowed all these things, and in the future George Dixon and the people's schools will always remain connected. No doubt, were he living to-day the secondary school and the University would have his constant attention and devotion, but in his day the problem of the education of the masses forced itself to the front, and pushed aside all other educational problems.

The first intimation we have of the interest of Mr. Dixon in the question was shown when he was Mayor in January, 1867. He then summoned a private conference at his house, at which it may be said all the leading men of the town without distinction of party or sect were present to consider what could be done to remedy the want of education, then so striking a feature of our great towns. My father was present, and I well recollect his telling us how surprised he was at finding so many discordant elements joined in a common cause. The time was ripe for the movement, and in March of the

same year a public meeting was held in the Town Hall, at which was formed an Education Aid Society similar to one at that time existing in Manchester.

The Society raised a considerable annual income, most of which was spent in paying the school fees of the children, for the schools of Birmingham, deficient in number as they were at that time, were by no means crowded. There were places for about 30,000 children, but another 25,000 places were required before it could be said that there was room for every child in the town. But the Society did much towards ascertaining the actual facts concerning these matters, and still more in rousing public opinion.

Mr. Jesse Collings became the honorary secretary of that society, and I need not tell you that the Society did not go to sleep. Mr. Dixon himself, in some most remarkable words used by him at the meeting in 1867, showed that he at any rate fully grasped the magnitude of the situation. These words—more or less varied—have been used by so many speakers since then that they have become almost the watchwords of education in England, and I make no apology for quoting them again.

It was most important that they should seek in all educational work that they took in hand, to make the ultimate end of that work a gradation of schools—schools that is, not uniform, not of the same character, but so diverse that they should be adapted to the wants of every class of the community, from the richest down to the very lowest, and that they should be so easy of access from the lower schools to the higher that they should feel that there was not one boy in Birmingham, however low in the school, or however indifferent his parents might be to his education, if he had really those natural powers which would enable him to profit in an extraordinary degree by the advantages offered, who would have anything in the shape of a barrier put in the way of his progress upwards, even to the highest honours of the University.

It would have been an immense pleasure for Mr. Dixon to have been told that his views, so clearly and so early expressed, have since then been realized, and that one at least of those boys coming from the bottom of the elementary school has gained the highest honours of the University of Cambridge.

It was not long before the Education Societies had prepared the way for a much bolder scheme, and in 1869 the "National Education League" appeared with Mr. Dixon as chairman, and Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. George Dawson, Dr. Dale, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. William Harris and many others among its local supporters, and a

fund of £14,000 subscribed by twenty gentlemen for the furtherance of its objects.

Its objects were concisely stated as "The establishment of a system which shall secure the education of every child in the country," and the means recommended were admirably clear.

1. Local authorities shall be compelled by law to see that sufficient school accommodation is provided for every child in their district.
2. The cost of founding and maintaining such schools as may be required, shall be provided out of local rates, supplemented by Government grants.
3. All schools aided by local rates shall be under the management of local authorities and subject to Government inspection.
4. All schools aided by local rates shall be unsectarian.
5. To all schools aided by local rates admission shall be free.
6. School accommodation being provided, the State or the local authorities shall have power to compel the attendance of

children of suitable age not otherwise receiving education.

To show what leading people thought of the plan it is enough to state that before any public meetings were held, 2,500 names were on the roll of the Society. Then local committees were formed in all the large towns, and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. The League had a subscription of over £6,000 a year, besides sums raised locally.

The first general meeting of the League was held in October, 1869, in the Birmingham Assembly Room, when Mr. Dixon presided. Archdeacon Sandford moved the adoption of the report, and warned the members that they must be prepared for opposition, saying, "I am quite satisfied that very many severe things will be said of your platform. We shall be told no doubt that it is a godless scheme; that it is a revolutionary scheme; that it is a scheme utterly unsuited to the taste and feeling of the British people; that it cannot succeed; and that if carried out it will flood the land with atheists and infidels."

Later in the meeting a resolution was carried urging that a bill should be prepared for presentation in the next session of Parliament.

The conference ended with a great meeting in the Town Hall, when Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Mundella and Professor Fawcett were among the speakers.

Mr. Dixon threw himself into the campaign with enthusiasm, sometimes presiding at the meetings—there were over 100 held before the introduction of the Bill—and always counselling the numerous adherents of the League in which his parliamentary experience served him well.

It would take too long to go further into the work of the League. It lasted for eight years, and in its earlier period it was actively served by many prominent citizens of Birmingham, including of course Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Jesse Collings, and not forgetting Mr. Bunce. Perhaps few movements of modern times had so much work put into them in so short a time, and its fiery activity soon had the effect of starting opposition "Unions," one in Birmingham and one in Manchester.

Archdeacon Sandford's prophecy was soon fulfilled, and the controversy was long and strong. But in the end the programme of the League has triumphed, and of its six articles as enumerated above, all but one are

now in force, and even that one, "all schools aided by local rates shall be unsectarian," applies to about half the schools in England and Wales.

Nothing to my mind is a clearer proof of the sound sense and the foresight of Mr. Dixon than the acceptance by him of this programme at a time when he at least knew all about the opposition that it would invoke. Mr. Dixon had spent a good deal of time in Australia, and it is probable that he found there conditions regarding education among English people—for at that time they were more English than they are now—suggesting to him what might be acceptable in time even in England itself. At this time Mr. Gladstone's government of 1868 was in power. It was a Whig government, and had but little of the democratic spirit which has since permeated both political parties, but the influence of the agitation could not be denied, and Mr. Forster, the Vice-President of the Council representing the educational policy of the Government, undertook to introduce a bill dealing with the whole subject. Thereupon Mr. Dixon, who had been preparing with the officers of the League a bill upon the subject, and had an-

nounced his intention in Parliament of proceeding with it, undertook to suspend further action pending the production of the Government bill.

It seemed, indeed, as though the League were extraordinarily fortunate. It had only been in existence for a few months, and here was the Government of the day about to introduce under the guidance of Mr. Forster, a Nonconformist, and in those days a Radical, a measure which was to carry into effect the principles which it had been advocating. It sounded too good, and events soon proved that it was a very different matter from what was expected.

I do not propose to traverse at great length the discussion and eventual passing of the Bill. It was, no doubt, a momentous period in Mr. Dixon's life, for he was one of the protagonists in the fight, not so much as an ardent supporter—the position he hoped to occupy—but as a critic and the mover of amendments.

The Government Bill was hesitating and inefficient. Compulsion was left to the localities; School Boards were only to be created where there was manifest want of schools, and the denominations were given one year of grace

in which to supply deficiencies; fees were to be continued, but under certain conditions School Boards could grant remission. But worst of all, instead of conferring with the League, Mr. Forster had consulted the "Unions." He had, in fact, bought off the opposition, but had paid too high a price.

Mr. Dixon, with the assent of the League, moved an amendment on the second reading, and it was seconded by Mr. Illingworth, a most unusual course for a supporter of the Government, and one that did not fail to call forth complaint from Mr. Forster.

Three nights were occupied in its discussion, and in the end, after the promise of certain concessions, Mr. Dixon withdrew his amendment.

In Committee Mr. Dixon was untiring in his efforts to persuade the Government to accept more of the programme of the League, one of the results being the celebrated Cowper-Temple clause, whereby in what we now call provided schools, no dogma nor catechism peculiar to any denomination can be taught at the public expense, and another being the application of the ballot in the election of School Boards.

On August 9 the Act received the Royal

Assent, and during the autumn of 1870, the first School Boards were elected.

It is perhaps difficult now to understand the bitter disappointment of the friends of the National Education League, but that it was both deep and wide may be gathered from the subsequent party history, and also from the fact that Mr. Forster, in his own constituency, had to submit to the following vote of censure:

"That this meeting, having heard Mr. Forster's account of his parliamentary services during the past session, and fully recognizing his previous services to the Liberal cause, regrets its inability to approve of the educational measure passed mainly by his exertions, and deeply deplores the means resorted to, to secure its adoption in a Liberal House of Commons."

Nevertheless, bearing in mind subsequent events, it appears that Mr. Forster took a truer view of the whole situation than did the leaders of the National Education League, who, if they had persisted in their programme might have delayed any substantial Education Act for another ten years. Mr. Forster's Act, hesitating and feeble as it was, did lead to an immense activity in education, and to an expenditure

certainly far greater than was expected by Mr. Dixon and his friends.

Since that date two important measures, the Bill of 1896 and that of 1906, although proceeding from different sides of the House, have both been withdrawn, owing to the strong opposition roused by them, and the Act of 1902, while it admittedly has done much for education, has also laid the foundation of a widespread discontent, which every one agrees must be dealt with and satisfied before very long.

It is not too much to say that education, harmless and attractive as it appears, is a deadly subject for the politician, and this is explained by the fact that the feelings aroused in connexion with it are among the strongest that exercise men and women. It is now nearly forty years since the Act of 1870 was passed, and the struggle emphasized by the "Leagues" and "Unions" of those days still goes on, and apparently must go on until our system of education is of a more national character than it is at present. But at the same time education goes on and has stretched out until it has reached every child in the kingdom, and indeed until a generation of those trained in public elementary schools, has

arisen, of whom it may be said that their education, for the most part, is equal to what passed for secondary education thirty years ago. Moreover, under the Act of 1902, a vast amount of the secondary education in the kingdom has passed under the control of elected bodies and become subject to a very careful inspection by the Board of Education. There has thus been opened up from the elementary school to the University the path so clearly indicated by Mr. Dixon in 1867, that may be followed by those who have the natural powers to enable them to take advantage of it.

It is always interesting to speculate how the situations of to-day would have been dealt with by those who are no longer with us, but to whom we know that such situations would have strongly appealed.

It may well be asked how Mr. Dixon would have regarded our problems, and it may be worth while referring to some of his speeches in order to ascertain from them his views.

In the first place, let us consider what may be called the problems. They are mainly two.

1. The question of rate contribution to schools only partially under local control.

2. The future position of all public schools.

Since the Act of 1902 there has always existed a strong feeling against rate contribution under these conditions in certain influential quarters. This has manifested itself in the passive resistance movement, and has moved the present Government to introduce two bills, with the object of overcoming the difficulty.

Now, the Education League did not find itself contemplating the present position of affairs. It provided that "all schools aided by local rates shall be unsectarian," but while doing so evidently expected that many schools would not be so aided, and this was exactly what happened until 1902.

In 1876 Mr. Dixon introduced a bill to establish School Boards, in areas already provided with sufficient schools, with power to accept the existing schools just as they were, and apparently without the Cowper-Temple clause, and among his arguments in favour of this plan he urged that it might be accepted now, but later on the Nonconformists would probably object to it, and demand that in every such district a school should be built of the ordinary Board School type of that day.

Mr. Dixon, therefore, suggested that the Church of England party should make haste to accept such an offer while it was still available.

The bill was rejected by the House, but found a considerable number of supporters, and to me it is quite clear from this that Mr. Dixon would have been prepared to accept any proposition that moved in the direction of his idea as to the ultimate position of the education question.

What was that position?

There is no doubt that Mr. Dixon expected a very large diminution of the denominational schools in regard to which he invented the phrase, "painless extinction," that will always be associated with his name, meaning that from time to time as the transfer of such schools became less repugnant to the managers, such transfers would be made. His continual use also of the phrase a "national system" clearly indicates that he contemplated the great majority of schools being conducted under public management on undenominational lines. But he was far too good an educationist to wish to crush individuality where it was really strong and vital, and he was far too good a student of human nature to desire to curb every effort of

strong natures by the steel of one uniform code. I think he would have been well satisfied if 75 per cent. of the schools had fallen into line, and would have been tolerant as to the remainder, provided that the education given was always up to the mark and did not become slack under the guise of being religious.

Looking through some of his earlier speeches on the subject of education, I have been struck with one or two particularly interesting remarks.

Speaking at Rochdale in 1873, he says:

> There is no greater loss of wealth to a country than an uneducated people; never, therefore, let the idea of economy come between you and a high class and universal education.

In 1874 speaking locally and on the question of an increase of rates:

> The educational rates will rise and possibly some little regret will be expressed about it. That will be the time for you to be no longer silent, but to tell such persons that the education thus being provided for the children of the present generation was an education not merely worth the money paid for it, but worth any sum the town could pay for it. Whatever we are called upon to pay we shall receive back again.

In 1876, in Parliament, when introducing his Bill he said:

> But it always appeared to me that it was a great advantage in any district that there should be only one

governing body and not a multiplied number of governing bodies. I should be very glad if in our boroughs all the powers of the Town Council, the School Board and the Board of Guardians were thrown into one body and if in the country districts also we could have one governing body into which you could throw the duties of administering the affairs of the whole locality.

Also in 1879 à propos of increased rates he said:

In the event of the voluntary schools in Birmingham being handed over to the Board 1*s.* 2*d.* might be reached, but I do not think that would be exceeded, in fact it would probably not be reached because all the schools would not be handed over.

The schools are not handed over now, but the expenses are, and these, together with secondary and evening schools and other items not existing when Mr. Dixon spoke, have raised our rate to 1*s.* 6½*d.* for 1908.

Passing from these political topics, it is a relief to come back to the subject of local administration in which Mr. Dixon took a prominent part since he was a member of the School Board from its beginning in 1870 until he resigned in 1896, and became chairman when Mr. Chamberlain went into Parliament in 1876. Birmingham was one of the towns in which the largest deficiency of school buildings was found, and

no time was lost in erecting buildings in various parts of the town, nor was there any difficulty in making them of a size which has continued to be the type of Birmingham schools ever since. The schools are for about 1,000 children.

With so large a number of important schools under its management, the Birmingham Board was able to take a leading part in guiding other Boards throughout the country, and with Mr. Dixon at its head there was no difficulty in shaping a policy liberal in its views, but very full of common sense in working out its problems.

Mr. Dixon was always for providing whatever was considered best at the time, feeling, no doubt, how much behindhand we were, even in our ideas, and foreseeing the time when our first schemes would be considered quite too paltry, and would require remodelling. In this he was abundantly justified, and the plans of many of the schools have been altered at the request of the very Department which twenty years before would never have allowed such alterations to be made.

Another maxim of Mr. Dixon's was that of experiments. He said that it was always necessary to be making experiments in every

branch of life; many of them, perhaps most of them failed, but without experiment there was no life and no progress.

One of his experiments was that of the Bridge Street Technical School. Mr. Dixon said he would find the building if the Board would allow some of the brighter boys from the elementary schools to be drafted into this building where they might be taught science and mechanics, and remain beyond the usual leaving age.

The Department consented, and even helped Mr. Dixon by promising substantial grants, so that little cost might fall upon the ratepayer. The school was a great success. Clever boys were readily found, and they received an excellent training in science, which at that time was hardly to be found in any secondary school. The experiment was repeated elsewhere, and School Boards in most of the large towns took up the work with enthusiasm, so that secondary schools of a new and valuable type were set up in many parts. At a later period came the Technical Instruction Act, which enabled Town Councils to provide education of this character, and when this Act was endowed with the "beer money" it became a fruitful source of education

of a new kind, including instruction in the evening. Mr. Dixon's school was largely responsible for this, for it clearly indicated that talent existed, and plenty of it, if it could only be allowed to find its way to the right place.

A blow at this kind of education was given by the Cockerton judgment, but that only made it easier to insert in the Act of 1902 certain very wide provisions, regarding secondary education, of which large advantage has been taken.

To any one who knew Mr. Dixon, to say that he was "thorough" would be superfluous. No one could talk with him without seeing that he completely grasped every problem before he dealt with it, and although it might cost him much time to really get at the bottom of things, he did not grudge such time, and never forgot what he had acquired. As a leader of a party he was a model. Always ready and eager to greet the success of any of those working under him, he never relaxed his own efforts, and was always spurring us on to fresh activity. I well remember when he asked me to become a member of the Board that he pointed out that I should find plenty to do in two fields. "Look after the games and exercises," he said; "there is

nothing being done in that direction—and look after the attendance, it is very poor."

To-day games and exercises are constantly being pressed upon us by the Board of Education, though not, perhaps, so much in Birmingham, for we have had them for many years. As for attendance, that of the elementary school is now pretty much up to the standard of the secondary school, and whereas we used to be content with anything over 70 per cent., now we expect something over 90 per cent.

When in 1885 Mr. Dixon again returned to Parliament, his long apprenticeship to the administration of elementary schools gave him immense advantage, and he was constantly referred to as an authority on all such matters.

Mr. Dixon's courtesy towards all those with whom he came in contact was always a theme upon which people in Birmingham loved to dwell, and it undoubtedly contributed to that trust in his honesty and fairness which prevailed throughout the city.

There was also a simplicity in his character that was very charming, and he frequently told stories at his own expense, into the enjoyment of which he thoroughly entered.

When at length his illness compelled him to retire from the Board, he still retained his interest in what was going on, and was glad to see his old colleagues, and hear what was being done, and this intense love of what had been the work of his life he retained up to the end.

I said at the beginning that Mr. Dixon would be regarded as one of Birmingham's greatest citizens. I hope that I have said something to induce you to share that feeling, and I believe that many years will elapse before we shall be able to boast of one who devoted his talents and his fortune so wisely to the city of his adoption.

GEORGE DAWSON

Born in London, 1821. Came to Birmingham, 1844.
Died, 1876.

By A. W. W. Dale

I

It is a true instinct—if I may venture to say so—that has led those who arranged for this course of lectures to set us to speak about men rather than movements or events; for it is men who make the City or the State, not laws, not institutions. Men make the convictions that the laws express, and without men to work them, the best of institutions is but an engine without the power that moves it.

You have asked me to speak to you about one of those who helped to make this city what it is, and I will try to tell you what I can of George Dawson; what kind of man he was, what kind of work he did, and what of aim, ideal, example and inspiration, he has left to those who come after him.

How clearly, how vividly, he stands out in memory! The mass of iron-grey hair heavily

streaked with white, nearly covering his ears, quite covering his broad, low forehead; bushy eyebrows nearly straight, and beneath them dark brown eyes that twinkled and flashed and blazed and melted; the nose straight or nearly so; the mouth partly hidden by a straggling beard,—firm, but not so firm that it could not curve with scorn or quiver with emotion. The face was lined and seamed—the face of a man who had known many sorrows, who had carried his own burden of care, and the burden of others also. His voice, when he spoke to you, was full and deep and rather husky—the voice of a man who had struggled and suffered, who had known disappointment and defeat in the service of great causes and in the pursuit of noble ideals. There was a note of scorn in it at times, a note of pity in it always. The man himself of middle height, broad and sturdy, slow in the movements of the body, swift in the movements of the head. And, lastly—one of the little things—almost always a velvet coat, or at least a velvet waistcoat, with a necktie that was any colour but white. In short, a man thoroughly unclerical, unprofessional, unusual, altogether unlike ordinary men. If you saw him in a crowd, you would

have marked him out; if you had heard him speak, you would have watched him and waited for him to speak again. In other words, a man with strong, attractive—one might say magnetic—power. Such was George Dawson in the later years of his life. But he was a young man when he came to Birmingham, and he came with the fire and freshness of youth. All that need be said about the history of his life can be put into a few sentences: the life itself was neither eventful nor long.

II

He was born in London on February 24, 1821, in one of those obscure streets that converge on Brunswick Square. London, no doubt, is an overrated place; but Birmingham, after all, owes something to it, for London gave Birmingham three, at least, of the men who, in recent times, have done most to shape its life and thought—George Dawson, Joseph Chamberlain, and a third whose name I need not mention.

George Dawson's father, Jonathan Dawson, conducted what was then known as "a high-class academy"—we should call it a good private

school,—and for more than thirty years he prospered in his calling. He was a Baptist, a man of simple faith and simple life. It was natural that the son should be brought up in his father's school, and he remained there till he was sixteen. It was natural, too, that he should be drawn into the Baptist ministry, for seventy years ago there were few other callings open to the son of a Nonconformist who loved books and all that books stand for.

So, Oxford and Cambridge being closed to him as a Nonconformist, Dawson went North, entered the University of Aberdeen, and then, a year later, transferred himself to Glasgow where he spent three years, 1838–41, graduating with honours at the close of his course. Then, for the best part of two years, he served in his father's school as an assistant master—"usher" they would have called it then. During that time he preached occasionally in various Baptist meeting-houses, and among others in a little chapel at Rickmansworth, in Hertfordshire. In 1843 he was invited to become its pastor, and accepted the invitation. He was never ordained to the ministry, and he never took any systematic course in theology as a preparation for it—

two facts worth remembering, for the second, at any rate, throws some light on his later history.

At Rickmansworth he spent only a few months, for on August 4, 1844, he preached his first sermon in Mount Zion Chapel, Graham Street, afterwards to be associated with the work and memory of Charles Vince, the best-beloved, perhaps, of all the Birmingham ministers of his time. When the office-bearers of the church asked Dawson on what terms he would come, his reply was characteristic:—"Bread and cheese for the first year," he said, "afterwards what I am worth." He was not the man to drive a bargain, and he had faith enough in himself and his powers to feel sure that when a church—an intelligent church—had found what he had to give them, they would be eager to offer what he would have been slow to ask. In the ministry, at any rate—the ministry of all churches—the man who covets money is not the man who gets it.

And then trouble came. The Graham Street church had trust deeds; the trust deeds contained a creed; and Dawson soon found himself in revolt against the creed that he was bound to teach. You will not expect me to enter into

the theological differences that arose. The substance of them may be stated briefly. The creed of the church laid stress on the salvation of man by our Lord's death : Dawson laid stress on the salvation of man by our Lord's life. The church thought of Him as the divine Mediator : Dawson thought of Him as the divine Example. That is a rough and ready statement of facts, but you may take it as fairly accurate. As a rule, theological differences, when they arise, produce more heat than light, and controversy is apt to bring out the baser and meaner side of the best of men ; for, unfortunately, it is true that all gentlemen are not Christians, and, still more unfortunately, that all Christians are not gentlemen. But this case was an exception, and both those who stood by the church and those who stood by the minister parted, at the end of 1845, without rancour and without malice, which did honour to both sides alike.

His friends—and he had made many in less than eighteen months—were determined not to let him go. They joined together to build a new chapel for him under conditions that should ensure perfect freedom, and in August, 1847, the Church of the Saviour was opened, based on

these principles: that no pledge should be required of minister or congregation; that no form of theological belief should be implied by membership; that difference of creed should be no bar to union in practical Christian work. In that church George Dawson carried on his work for nearly thirty years. How the principles worked out in practice, and to what extent his pastoral work was lasting, I do not attempt to inquire. It is enough to know this —that he drew round him hundreds and thousands of men and women who would have found no religious home elsewhere; and that from his teaching they gained such strength, and such hope, and such repose of heart as they needed, and such hold as might be on the things that belong to eternity and not to time.

And now he settled down to the work of his life—his religious work in the church, as preacher and pastor, his intellectual work as a lecturer and teacher, his public work as a citizen and a patriot. It will be convenient to deal separately with these three fields or provinces of service. But you must allow me to handle them broadly rather than in detail, leaving much to be filled in by yourselves.

III

First, let me speak of his work in the pulpit and the church. If I were to pass it by in silence it would be a sorry compliment to you; for it would suggest unwillingness to listen to opinions that you may not share: it would be a dishonour to him; for it would degrade the work in which he manifested his finest powers to a secondary and subordinate place. And so I shall make bold to speak freely, but, I hope, with no lack of sympathy or of charity.

It must be remembered that Dawson was not a trained theologian. He had never been put through a course of systematic theology. It may be doubted if he ever constructed for himself a definite system of belief. He cared more for spirit than for substance—more for feeling than for form. He would have sympathized with the words of a great German divine who denounced the exhibition of what was known as the Holy Coat of Treves—"The Founder of the Christian religion bequeathed to His apostles and disciples—not His *coat*, but His *spirit*. His coat belongs to the executioner."

Dawson was less unorthodox than many people imagined. But against tradition—the tradition

that benumbs and petrifies—he was ever in revolt. His first impression on the public mind, when he began his ministry, was made by attacking Evangelicalism—the traditional, though not, perhaps, the real faith. Far be it from me to disparage or to underrate what the Evangelical Revival had done for the spiritual life of the nation in earlier days. It flooded the world with a new ardour of devotion. It transfigured and transformed the souls of men with the passion that inspired the faith of the early Church. When the Wesleys and Whitefield went through the kingdom with the Gospel that had come to them, the divine grave, open in the ages of faith and sealed in the ages of doubt, was open once more; and the churches which they quickened recovered the strong and simple faith of the Church of the Resurrection. But the divine fire died down. The revelation that had inspired one generation became the orthodox tradition of the next. What once had been a living faith degenerated, in part if not altogether, into a thing of words, phrases, conventions. Dawson saw the surface, though he did not see the heart; and he hated and despised what he saw. He struck for reality—for reality in every part of

life ; for reality in religion, which is the crown of life. He knew that no generation can thrive merely on the religious experience of those who have gone before ; that to keep the soul strong and sound, a man must get his spiritual food day by day. So was it with the manna which the children of Israel gathered in the wilderness, " the corn of heaven," as the Psalmist calls it—" when man did eat angels' food." It was of the day, and for the day : if kept to the morrow, it " bred worms and stank." That is a law, an abiding law, of the spiritual life. Dawson's revolt against the Evangelical tradition was due not to any want of faith, but to his conviction that religion, if it is to be of any avail, must be intimate, spontaneous, natural, and direct. And this should be reckoned to him for righteousness.

There was another line of cleavage. It would be rash to assert that the earlier Evangelicals held that religion had nothing to do with conduct ; but the tendency of the school, among its later adherents, was to lay stress on the negative, rather than on the positive side of the principle. If a man did not dance, did not play cards or billiards, did not go to the theatre, did

not read plays or novels, he was accounted a religious man. If he did any of these things, he was set down as a worldly man. Dawson made short work of these artificial distinctions and of the ingenious compromises that grew out of them. To his mind, what a man did was far more important than what he abstained from doing. "What doest thou *more*?" is the question that we have to answer—not "What doest thou *less*?" A man might obey the law of prohibition—the law "Thou shalt not"—in its minutest details, and yet be far from the kingdom of heaven; for true unworldliness is not of the letter, but of the spirit. He would have accepted, without reserve, the definition of unworldliness that some of you may have read elsewhere: "Unworldliness does not consist in the most rigid and conscientious observance of any external rules of conduct, but in the spirit and temper, and in the habit of living created by the vision of God, by constant fellowship with Him, by a personal and vivid experience of the greatness of the Christian redemption, and by the settled purpose to do the will of God always, in all things, and at all times." That was the substance of Dawson's own teaching

from the very first. But when he began his ministry, the men and women who had been trained to walk in the old ways were not ready to grasp the new truth.

There was another element in Dawson's preaching that should not be overlooked—the vigour and the force with which he dwelt upon the everyday duties of life. One who heard him often in his early days used to recall Dawson's freedom and freshness in dealing with the common faults and failings of common people. Religion, as Dawson understood it, was concerned, not with a bit of a man's life, but with the whole of it. There are seven days in the week, and not one; and Dawson's sermons were not for Sunday alone, but for week-days as well. Hugh Latimer did not shrink from plainness of speech in the pulpit, neither did he.

He would talk to his congregation about scales and about yard measures, about tea and sugar, about adulterated mustard, and about butter half of which was fat, about stock-taking and long credit, about dressing shop windows, about all the details of the doings of a scoundrel who had been tried a day or two before for his transactions in connexion with a fraudulent stock company, about dress and jewellery, about dinners and evening parties, about all the follies and sins and vanities of the day.

He spoke of the facts of life as they were; of the world as it was, and not as some people would have liked it to be, with half the grim facts of experience suppressed and ignored. For if life is to be made sound and straight, we must know the moral and physical laws by which life is governed. We must know the law and understand the law if we are to obey the law; and it is only in obedience that we find our safety and our strength. His preaching was effective because it was in touch with realities, and because he was real himself. And the inner secret of his power was this—if I may borrow a sentence from my old friend, Mr. G. J. Johnson—that Dawson "was not a preaching man, but a man preaching." Or, to put the truth in another way, he preached not "as a dying man to dying men," —that was the old idea of preaching—but as a living man to living men who found life no simple or easy matter. Preaching of that type was a new thing at that time. Since then, others have learnt the secret; and I venture to say that in two such books as *The Ten Commandments* and *The Laws of Christ for Common Life*, you will find the fruit and the flower of the seed that George Dawson had sown.

Some people then held that a sermon, to deserve the name, should deal only with such themes and mysteries as—

> Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate;
> Fixed fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute.

They held that to bring the business of the week into the stillness of the sanctuary was to profane the temple. And others resented such preaching from baser motives. There was an American minister who went down into the Southern States after the war, and for obvious reasons set himself to preach a good deal about morality. He began to expound the Ten Commandments. When he had reached the fourth or fifth, a deputation came to him from the congregation. They thanked him for all that he had done, and expressed their deep personal esteem for him; but they asked him whether he would mind preaching his sermons on the rest of the Commandments at the week evening service, when only the devout were present, instead of on the Sunday when saints and sinners were mixed; "for," said they, "we think—

> Religion never was designed
> To make our pleasures less."

There were some in Birmingham who might have said the same; there were others who, if they had said what they thought, would have altered a word in the old lines:

> Religion never was designed
> To make our *profits* less.

To such as these his preaching was unwelcome. But the mass of the people heard him gladly; for he spoke to them as one who knew their difficulties, their temptations, and their struggles; and he had a gospel to give them by which they could live.—All men are grateful for that.

IV

Let me next speak of Dawson's work as a teacher and lecturer. However opinion may differ as to the effect of his preaching, there can be little difference as to his unrivalled power to awaken and enlighten. I say this, not forgetting the fact that on three separate occasions he became the editor of a daily newspaper —the *Mercury* in 1848, the *Daily Free Press* in 1855, and the *Morning News* in 1871. But it may be said in extenuation that these

lapses were brief and at long intervals, and that the newspapers which he edited soon came to confusion, if not to liquidation. No one—not even the most thorough-going of his admirers—would claim for him that he was a great editor. But no one who heard him would deny his charm as a lecturer. Charles Kingsley, who had little love for Nonconformists, and even less knowledge of them, described Dawson as "the greatest talker in England"; Mr. Johnson, whom I have already quoted, said that "talking came to him as easily as breathing." He was a talker, not an orator. He attempted no sustained intensity or elaboration of utterance —not even the elaboration that achieves simplicity. In speaking, whether in the pulpit or on the platform, he spoke as he might have spoken to half a dozen friends gathered round the fireside. The style was easy, natural, intimate, unstudied, and direct. The tone varied, and so did the mood. He might slip from indignation to pathos, or from humour to disdain, in swift succession; but he never shouted and he never stormed. It was talk—talk at its best; it was not declamation. And the talk was never hazy, but always clear.

Some men think in a fog and speak in a fog, and the fog soon spreads from the man who speaks to the men who listen. For if you are to have any chance of making yourself understood by others, the first condition of success is that you should understand yourself. Now Dawson always understood what he wished to say at the time when he said it ; and those who heard him —if they were persons of ordinary intelligence— understood it too. What he thought, what he said, this week might be different from what he would think and from what he would say next week ; for his estimates and judgments varied with his moods, and though his balance was not an unjust balance, the scale that sank down heavily to-day might kick the beam to-morrow. It was sometimes difficult to reconcile what he was saying with what he had said before—partly, no doubt, because he was content to say one thing at a time, without much heed of qualifications and conditions ; but there was never any difficulty in following what he said while he was saying it. For he had learnt one thing that some men never learn—the relation of the speaker to the listener. What was said of John Bradford, the old Puritan preacher, might have been

said with equal truth of George Dawson. Bradford, we are told, "was a master of speech, but he had learned not to speak what he could speak, but what his hearers could hear. He knew that clearness of speech was the excellency of speech; and therefore resolved like a good orator to speak beneath himself rather than above his audience." Aim low if you mean to hit your mark: that is the speaker's first law.

Dawson commenced to lecture, in 1845, and he went on lecturing to the very end of his life. It would be an exaggeration to say that like Bacon he took all knowledge for his province; but there were few subjects in literature or in life that he did not touch. I spare you a catalogue in detail, though I could take up several minutes with the list. When I say that he ranged from Calvin at one end to Benvenuto Cellini at the other, from Rousseau to Beau Brummel, from Tennyson to Voltaire, from "Ill-used men" to "Church decoration," from the music of Mendelssohn to the pictures of Holman Hunt, you can form some idea of the ground that he covered; and if there was a great movement stirring the

hearts and the hopes of men, or a great event that seemed likely to become a landmark in history, Dawson had his say about it. He went up and down the country with his lectures, and his voice was heard in every city throughout the land.

In those days when books and magazines and newspapers were far fewer and less accessible to ordinary people than they are to-day, his coming was an event, and he quickened the minds of those who heard him in little country towns with a force that lasted and leavened long after he had gone away. He taught people, not of set purpose, but by suggestion, what to read and how to read ; and he took them to the great books that are best worth reading. For a great book not only teaches and inspires, it reveals. At the heart of every great book is a man ; and the book reveals the man who wrote it to the man who reads it. It also reveals the man who reads it to himself. And the harvest of a great book is not only what we find in it, but what it helps us to find in ourselves. Dawson was the most skilful of interpreters, in showing men what to look for and where to find it.

When he died the *Spectator* described him as

the most famous intellectual "*middle-man*" of his day. If it spoke without any deliberate contempt, it certainly spoke with a certain air of patronage, such as we are accustomed to expect in a newspaper that has always had a Moses of its own to go up into the mount on every Thursday afternoon and to bring back with him the infallible oracles of heaven for Saturday's "leader." But to be a "middleman"—even in literature and philosophy—is no reproach. The man who can make plain to the many the thought of the one, who can enable them to hear, each in his own tongue, the words of wonder (which are the works of wonder)—such a man, to fulfil his mission, must be endued with a double gift of insight, wisdom, and sympathy. For he must be able to think and feel, and speak, not in one world, but in two. He must be akin to genius, the genius of the poets, prophets and sages of our race, on the one hand, and akin to poor commonplace humanity on the other. And he must be able to express the mind and the emotion of the immortals in the bare and broken speech that belongs to the creatures of a day. That was what Dawson did for thousands of unlettered men and women.

And as they listened their eyes were opened to the glory of the world :—

> Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
> And all creation widened on their view.

There is another service that Dawson rendered in broadening thought and sympathy to which I must refer in passing. When he began his public work, the average Englishman, still under the influence of the reaction that followed the French Revolution and the wars of Napoleon, knew little, and cared less, about the movements for liberty and enlightenment in other lands. He believed that freedom was good for Britons, and that "Britons never should be slaves." But as for other nations—"the nations not so blest as we"—he was not quite sure that they were fit for freedom, or that they could be trusted to use freedom if they got it.

But Dawson believed with his whole heart that freedom was good for all, and not only for Englishmen. He was the first man in Birmingham to study and to understand foreign politics, and to raise a genuine interest in the affairs of Hungary, Italy and France. He welcomed Kossuth, the great Hungarian leader ; he was

the friend of Mazzini, and of Garibaldi, who together helped to make the free and united Italy of to-day. His heart went out to the men in France who led the ineffective revolution of 1848; and to those who withstood the tyranny and the corruption that were avenged at Sedan. He was a patriot; but there was nothing parochial in his patriotism; he gave others something of his own broad outlook. And a man's convictions and enthusiasms are fullest, deepest and strongest, when they are fed, not from the narrow range of personal, or local, or even national experience, but from the wide watershed of the world.

V

And now, in the last place, I pass on to speak of the debt that this city owes, as a *city*, to Dawson's work and teaching. It is the hardest part of my task, because there is so much to say, and also because it involves some knowledge of municipal history. But if you will bear with me for a few minutes more, I shall do my best to put the case briefly before you.

Dawson came to Birmingham in 1844. Five

years before, in 1839, the borough had received its charter of incorporation. But the validity of the charter was contested. The overseers refused to levy a borough rate. And it was not until August, 1842, that the charter of incorporation was finally confirmed by statute. Even then, power was still divided between the borough council and other local authorities; for there were four sets of commissioners who exercised control in different parts of the town for various purposes; and it was not till 1851 that the powers hitherto vested in those separate bodies were consolidated and transferred to the town council, establishing it as the sole governing authority for municipal purposes.

The conflict had been long and severe. The reformers, when they had won their victory, were worn out and exhausted. They had neither spirit nor strength left to initiate a new and vigorous policy and to enter upon a fresh campaign to carry such a policy into effect. They were content, for the moment, to encamp upon the ground that they had won. The Town Council itself had little energy or enthusiasm. It was not without men of character and ability; but they had no definite aim, and no bond of union.

Their policy—if it can be called a policy—was to move slowly, and to do as little as they could.

Those of you who have read the report on the state of the town drawn up by Mr. Rawlinson for the Board of Health in 1849, will know how much there was to do. Even in the better parts of the town the sanitary conditions were disgraceful. In Hagley Road and in Bristol Road house drains discharged into the open gutters of the street. In George Street—as it was then called—the sewage of the houses ran into the canal. Many houses in the same district drew their water supply from wells that were separated only by a few feet from a cesspool or a midden. And in the less prosperous parts of the borough the state of affairs was even worse. Duddeston and Nechells had a surveyor of their own. They paid him £30 a year. He described himself as a "universal genius," though, as he said, "he never had no instruction," and "never could see that there was any art in laying down sewers." He did not know how to use a spirit-level, and took his levels with three sticks. Even in the centre of the town the streets were mean and sordid, badly paved, and badly lighted. Two gas companies supplied

the town, but on such terms that prices were not lowered by competition. Further out, row upon row of grimy dwarf houses extended in all directions; and behind the streets lay two thousand close courts, each approached by a narrow passage and doorway—for the most part without pavement or drainage, as indecent within as they were unwholesome. The burial grounds attached to the churches and chapels of the town were full to overflowing. Wells contaminated by the filth that was left to soak into the soil supplied two-thirds of the population. A water company supplied the remaining third on two days in the week. Disease was rife, and the death-rate high. Whole districts in the heart of the town were abandoned to vice and to crime.

That is a dark picture, is it not? Dark, but not over-coloured: every line in it is confirmed by bluebooks, reports and records: if you will examine the evidence for yourselves, you will agree that I have exaggerated nothing. Birmingham in those days was nothing better than an overgrown and ill-governed village.

There was work enough for the most ardent of municipal reformers. But Dawson's vision

passed beyond the limits of conventional reform. To him a city meant something besides the policeman and the scavenger: it had larger and higher functions than to maintain public order and to provide for the public health. For a city, as he conceived it, was a society, established by the divine will, as the family, the State, and the Church are established, for common life and common purpose and common action. It was not a bundle of individuals—not "a mere aggregation of individual bipeds," as Coleridge puts it, but an organism with definite functions to discharge; functions that grow in range and in importance as the city rises from its humble beginnings, and advances in power and dignity and fame. This truth was one that he held and set forth and maintained throughout his public life. In the noble address that he delivered at the opening of the Reference Library in 1866 he said only what he had often said before. That library, as he viewed it (I give you his own words), "was the first-fruits of a clear understanding that a great town exists to discharge towards the people of that town the duties that a great nation exists to discharge towards the people of that nation;

that a town exists here by the grace of God; that a great town is a solemn organism through which should flow, and in which should be shaped, all the highest, loftiest, and truest ends of man's intellectual and moral nature."

"Not by bread alone"—we all know that. Man does not live by bread alone, nor by law alone, nor by politics alone. And when we have done all that we can for his comfort, his health, his security, and for the health, comfort and safety of those who are dear to him, we have touched only one side of his nature, have not ministered to all his wants, have not given him all that he has a right to claim: mind and spirit have needs of their own as well as the body; and those needs must be satisfied. This means that the city which is a city must have its parks as well as its prisons, its art gallery as well as its asylum, its books and its libraries as well as its baths and washhouses, its schools as well as its sewers: that it must think of beauty and of dignity no less than of order and of health.

Such was the task that Birmingham had before it when Dawson first set himself to preach the new municipal gospel; some of it obvious,

even then, and some of it at that time a dim and distant ideal. You know in what wonderful ways it has been put into practice. You can estimate for yourselves how much Birmingham owes to Dawson for his share in the achievement. Let me indicate—it is all that I can do—the lines on which he worked.

In the first place, he stoutly maintained that the principle of individual freedom must be supplemented by the principle of collective responsibility, and that the policy of "*let-alone*," at that time the dominant idea, was bad for the city and bad for the state. The voluntary system, he was convinced, has its limits. Public duties are not to be left to private enterprise. In the administration of justice, private enterprise degenerates into Lynch law. In other cases private enterprise means that men shirk their share of burdens that belong to all, and leave the whole burden on the shoulders of a few. If a man will not do his duty by love, "then," said Dawson, "make him do it by law." To "the fat, double-chinned prosperous people who have no public spirit in them, and who take all they can get from their country, and give nothing for it," the rate-collector and

the tax-gatherer are ministers of grace. Interference with the liberty of the subject? That is why he liked it. He rejoiced to see that kind of liberty—liberty to shirk public duty—curtailed. "Bondage is better than liberty," said he, "if liberty means the shirking of duty, the neglecting of other people, and simply the getting all you can out of your country, and putting it into your own pocket and giving none."

In the second place, he laid stress upon the duty of personal service. If a man had leisure, if he had wealth, if he had been trained in the management of affairs, those advantages, those privileges, carried with them duties to correspond. If a man had the ability to serve the town in public work, he was bound to serve. For the city needs its best men; and if the best men hang back and hold aloof, then the business of the city will not be done as it should be. Inferior men are not the men to lead. "Never send a man into the Council," said Dawson, "whom you would not like to be Mayor." If a man is not fit to lead, the interests of the city are not safe in his hands.

Thirdly, he insisted that the business of the town should be transacted not only with hon-

esty but with dignity. Those of you who are old enough to remember how and where public affairs were discussed and settled in earlier days will understand how necessary it was to drive that principle into men's minds.

I have told the story of the *Woodman* elsewhere: but to some of you it may be new, and I shall venture to tell it again. Even after the old system had begun to pass away, it was still the custom of certain prominent members of the Council to meet at the *Woodman*, a well-known tavern in the town, and to discuss the Council business in a kind of informal caucus. There was nothing against the house. It was not a drunken *Woodman*, or a dissolute *Woodman*; but it was a beery and a gin-and-watery *Woodman*. The habit was, to say the least, undignified, and it was keenly resented by the men of the new school. Direct protest would have done more harm than good; but at last an opportunity for protest came. It was at the time when the country rose in arms to support Mr. Plimsoll's demand that the Government should take action against unseaworthy ships. A town's meeting was held in the Town Hall, presided

over by the Mayor. Mr. Vince—who always fought smiling—was one of the speakers. He reminded the meeting that the sailor's whole life was bounded by his ship. It was his home and his prison, his free library and his art gallery. "And if, Mr. Mayor," he continued, "he wants to spend an hour in the parlour of the *Woodman*, the ship must be his *Woodman* too." The Mayor of the day was understood to be one of the most regular frequenters of the tavern, and the thrust was received with a tumult of laughter. Then suddenly the laughter stopped; the audience saw the reproof that the jest veiled, and with one impulse they began to applaud steadily—I might say solemnly, and they continued to applaud for several minutes. The hour of judgment had come for the *Woodman*, and all that the *Woodman* stood for. That night the town set up a new standard of dignity for its public men.

I shall not try to follow the course of the movement. It began, as all such movements do, in the dream of solitary and silent hours. Then it made its way into the minds of a few men of kindred spirit. And the dream became an ideal; and the ideal grew into a conviction; and con-

viction flamed into enthusiasm ; and enthusiasm took shape in policy, and passed from the study and the club to the platform and the pulpit, and swept through the wards of the city, and fired men's minds and kindled their hearts, until the ideal that had once been a dream had become a reality. Those years in which the new gospel began to spread and to prevail—those glorious hours of crowded strife—can we ever forget them ?

> Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive ;
> But to be *young* was very heaven.

Other men had their part in the work. Others did more to apply principles in practice. But Dawson came *first*. He led the way where others followed. And for myself, I hold in highest honour the man who is first to see when a great reform is needed, and first to point out how reform may be effected. Others may flock round the standard he has raised ; others may devise methods and details of policy ; others may inscribe the new law in the statute-book : we are debtors to all of them. But we owe most to the man who first believed—and taught others to believe—that reform was possible. Such is the debt that this city owes to

George Dawson for what it has achieved in perfecting and purifying its municipal life, and for the nobler ideals and aims of civic duty that it has followed with steady purpose and unfaltering faith.

VI

And now that I have spoken of the man and his work, let me ask you how you are acknowledging, how you are repaying the debt that you owe him? Is the old spirit still alive in this place? May a man still say the thing he will, and be sure of a hearing, even if he confronts alone the prejudice and passion of the hour? Are your best men still ready to spend themselves in the service of the city? And when the best offer for service, do you accept the offer that they make? When you have chosen your leaders, do you give them your hearts with your votes? And do you stand by them staunchly and loyally, through good repute and through evil, through water and through fire? Are there still among you some men, many men, who care little for the things that concern the pocket, and much for the things that concern the mind and the spirit? Have you a few men still

who dream dreams and see visions, and who uplift the lives of others by their loftier ideals? Are your hearts tender for the armies of the homeless and unfed, for those who are out of the way, and for those who are ready to perish? Are you eager, in a spirit of divine compassion, to seek and to save? If this be so—if "the silent voices of the dead" are the voices that you heed and obey, then George Dawson's work abides, and he has served not only the generation for which he laboured until he fell on sleep, but generations untold that are yet to be.

JAMES WATT

Born in Greenock 1736. Came to Birmingham 1774.
Died in Birmingham 1819

By F. W. Burstall.[1]

Before I proceed to deal with James Watt I want to give a picture of the times before his great engine was invented.

The idea of using the elastic force of steam was not new, as it had been proposed for the purpose of draining mines by the Marquis of Worcester in the time of Charles II, but only in a vague form which never reached the practical stage.

Papin was the first to propose the use of the piston working in a cylinder, and shortly afterwards Savery used an ingenious arrangement of vessels which were alternately filled with water and steam for the purpose of pumping:

[1] Professor Burstall's lecture loses more than any of the others owing to the impossibility of reproducing the admirable series of slides with which he illustrated it. With his permission I have inserted short passages (pp. 111–114, 116–117, 117–118), chiefly on the authority of Smiles's *Life of James Watt*, in further explanation of some of the circumstances mentioned in the text.

the Savery engine is still used for low lifts under the name of the Pulsometer.

The first real pumping engine which was successfully employed was that invented by Newcomen, a Devonshire blacksmith, which became widely used throughout Devonshire and Cornwall for draining the copper and tin mines and to some extent for pumping in the coal mines of the Midlands.

The engine consisted of a cylinder fitted with a movable piston and connected to the boiler by a pipe and valve. During the outward stroke of the piston the valve was opened, so that steam filled the cylinder; at the end of the stroke the steam valve was shut and a jet of cold water injected into the cylinder which produced a vacuum and forced down the piston. At first the two valves were opened and shut by a boy attendant. Later Humphrey Potter arranged for the engine to become self-acting.

The Newcomen engine was brought to a high pitch of perfection before the time of Watt. Smeaton built several of large size, one of which had a fifty-inch cylinder and was used for draining the Chasewater mine in Cornwall.

The great objection to the Newcomen engine was the enormous quantity of coal that was consumed, which made it a question as to whether it was not better to close down the mine rather than keep the engine working.

James Watt was brought up to the trade of an instrument maker, and learned his trade in London making compasses, sextants, and other instruments required in navigation. He then went to Glasgow, his native town, to set up for himself as an instrument maker.

In spite of all that is said in praise of modern civilization and of modern industrial methods, it is sometimes urged that the workers have made no substantial advance towards individual liberty. The early struggles of James Watt tell a different story. Before going to Glasgow he had experienced the hardships that could be inflicted upon the working-man by an imperfect system of police and by the regulations of a trade guild. We can hardly realize the terror inspired by press-gang men and by kidnappers in the employment of the East India Company and the planters of America. Like other peaceable citizens at that time Watt lived in dread

of seizure, legal and illegal. In London he had found a berth in the shop of a mathematical instrument maker, though without binding himself to the usual seven years' apprenticeship. But between the press-gang and the guild regulations he was kept in constant fear of capture and exile. In 1756 he wrote to his father, "They now press anybody they can get, landsmen as well as seamen, except it be in the liberties of the city, where they are obliged to carry them before the Lord Mayor first, and unless one be either a 'prentice or a creditable tradesman, there is scarce any getting off again. And if I was carried before my Lord Mayor I durst not avow that I wrought in the city, it being against their laws for any unfree man to work even as a journeyman within the liberties." It was doubtless the opinion of the time that these restrictions were necessary to safeguard the workers' standard of life. But the fact that they have all been swept away, that the worker's standard is higher and more secure to-day than ever before, suggests that we ought not to be too dogmatic respecting the necessity of any particular means for the attainment of such a desirable end.

The same obstacle that threatened Watt in London threatened him again in Glasgow. In trying to learn his trade he was again beset with difficulties. He tried to establish himself in business only to find himself a "stranger": he was neither the son of a burgess nor had he served an apprenticeship within the borough. There were at that time no makers of mathematical instruments in the town, yet the Guild of the Hammermen, jealous of their rights, refused to allow him to open a business. In vain he besought the Guild to permit him at least the use of a small workshop in which to experiment. Fortunately a way was opened from another quarter. At this stage in his career the University of Glasgow, to its lasting credit, came to the rescue of the future inventor. Within the precincts of the University buildings the Professors exercised an absolute authority. Watt was already known to the Professor of Natural Philosophy, by whom he had been employed to repair some instruments that had recently been bequeathed to the University. The Senate now determined to offer him an asylum from the tyranny of the Guilds, and a workshop was fitted up for him in a room in the inner quadrangle. This room was

kept sacred to Watt until, in my own undergraduate days, the University was removed to its present site. In addition a shop was appropriated to his use in the front of the College buildings which faced the High Street. The University, it is pleasant to think, was dedicated to freedom of work as well as freedom of thought.

It was this accident very largely which caused Watt to turn his attention to the steam engine. It so happened that one of the professors, named Anderson, had among his models one of the new engine, which was out of order, and this was sent to Watt so that he might repair it for Professor Anderson. Most ordinary mechanics would, no doubt, have acted very differently. Having repaired it they would have returned it and thought no more about it. But James Watt was one of those men who could not resist the temptation to find out what was inside. He made repeated attempts to get the model to work but could not succeed, because the quantities of steam were insufficient for the purpose. He mentioned this to the celebrated Dr. Black, who enlightened Watt on the theory of the weight

of steam and gave him a scientific insight into its general properties. A great deal was done to get the model to work, but nothing came of it.

James Watt tells the story how he came to make the invention. He relates how as he was walking down the College Green towards Greenock the thought suddenly came into his head—why not separate the condenser from the cylinder? It was thus that he made the first great step in his invention. This was in 1765. The next step was to make this invention into a commercial possibility, and here were all the drawbacks and all the difficulties which every inventor has to meet. It was impossible for him to go very far. To construct an engine to demonstrate its usefulness, meant capital, and Watt himself was a poor man.

The first man to take up the invention was a Dr. Roebuck, who was then trying to start the Carron Ironworks. Roebuck encouraged Watt and found a considerable amount of capital. A small engine was constructed, but here came the great difficulty which handicapped Watt in his efforts to bring his engine to completion. There were in those days no tools of precision. The workmen were unskilled in

manufacturing models to the degree of nicety that was required to make the engine a success, and the whole of the first set of engines that was supplied was a failure owing to the fact that he could not get his piston steam tight. There were no boring tools available; the methods were of the roughest description, and to produce accurate work was very nearly an impossibility. From 1765 until 1769 the engine dragged on a more or less miserable existence. Watt himself rapidly lost heart, being by nature timid and cautious, and easily depressed by failure. Roebuck, on the other hand, was a very sanguine man and encouraged him to go on.

It is recorded that as far back as the time of the Ancient Britons, swords were forged in Birmingham. In 1533 Leland the antiquarian found "many smiths in the town that use to make knives and all manner of cutting tools." A century later we are told that the place was "full of inhabitants and resounding with hammers and anvils." Later still, finer work, buckles, buttons, clasps and all sorts of ornamented metal-ware were manufactured. Burke spoke of Birmingham as the great toy-shop of Europe. Hutton,

the bookseller and historian of this town, came to it in 1740 and he recalls the look of the passing workmen. "I had been among dreamers, but now I saw men awake. Their very steps shewed alacrity." Doubtless this busy hum attracted Watt.

It would appear, however, that he had in any case decided to leave his own country to take the road which Dr. Johnson called the finest in Scotland, the road that leads into England. This is no matter for surprise. In one of his letters, written just before his departure, we read: "There are too many beggars in this country, which I am afraid is going to the devil altogether. Provisions continue dear and laws are made to keep them so." "Luckily," he adds, "the spirit of emigrating rises high and the people seem disposed to shew their oppressing masters that they can live without them."

In 1769 we get the first meeting between Boulton and Watt when Watt was inspecting the Soho works, which were one of the finest in Europe. At that time they employed a large number of people in making metal articles generally, but not engines.

Before turning to the latter, it is interesting to notice that Boulton was not merely a manufacturer. He loved beauty for its own sake. He saw that metal work "is a large field for fancy," and resolved, so far as he was concerned, to rid Birmingham of all reproach. "The prejudice," he writes, "that Birmingham hath so justly established against itself makes every fault conspicuous in all articles that have the least pretensions to taste. How can I expect the public to countenance rubbish from Soho while they can procure sound and perfect work from any other quarter?" He was thus a precursor in the movement that established our School of Art and would have resisted, for the sake of Birmingham and the future of its manufacture, any departure from the highest standards of artistic training.

Boulton was then seeking for something to drive his factory. Up to that time it had been driven by water power, but that was quite impossible when they had a dry summer, the result being that the factory had to be stopped. Boulton at first was very reluctant to undertake the manufacture of the engine. He was engaged

in a large number of concerns, his time and capital were fully occupied, and but for the fact that in 1774 Roebuck became involved in the Carron Ironworks it is very doubtful whether Boulton would have joined the firm. When Boulton found the amount of money that had to be spent he saw difficulties and Watt and his concern were taken over as a bad debt. The engine was then removed to Soho, where it was put up and another attempt was made to start it. This was in 1772.

During this time an interesting figure comes on the scene—one of the greatest and in some respects most remarkable inventors we have had—whose name is little known—William Murdock (*Scoticé*: Murdoch). The story of his introduction to Boulton will, I think, bear telling. Murdock came from Glasgow in order to get work at Soho, which was a very famous place. He was introduced to Boulton, who told him that he wanted no fresh hands at that time. At the same time Boulton was looking very carefully at a hat which Murdock was rather nervously twitching about in his hands, and his curiosity was at last so great that he asked him what the hat was made of. Murdock

replied "that it was made of timber turned on a lathe," and Boulton at once saw that a man who could turn a hat to such a shape was no ordinary individual. Murdock was taken on and remained until the end of his life in 1839 in the service of Boulton and Watt.

Nothing is more remarkable in considering the career of Watt than the rapidity with which he produced an invention when it was wanted for any purpose. Practically every feature of the steam engine to-day has either been invented or prophesied by Watt. He it was who prophesied the application of steam to "fire carriages." He saw it would be applied to the propulsion of ships. To have forecast the expansive working of steam is perfectly wonderful when you consider that when he took up the subject there was nothing whatever known about it. The main slide valve of to-day is one of Watt's inventions. The parallel motion is again one of Watt's inventions. He invented quite a number of other things which people commonly think were not invented at all but somehow grew. You are all acquainted with the process of copying letters. That was the invention of James Watt, and he got it out because he

did not care for the process of writing two letters by hand. The copying press was resisted by the merchants of the day because they thought it would facilitate forgery, and it was with great difficulty that Boulton induced them to take it up, but by 1800 it had come to be generally used.

After many difficulties the Watt engine became a firmly established commercial success. In 1778 the Chasewater engine was built and put to work. Chasewater was then the deepest mine in Cornwall, some sixty-six fathoms down. There are some very interesting letters from Watt to Boulton, telling how the engine was getting on, and he makes the remark that the captain of the mine would not have the engine throttled down as he appeared to think that it was not doing its work unless it made a terrible noise. The miners came in from all parts of the county to see this wonderful engine fork the water from the deepest levels. The term "fork" instead of pump was then used, but the derivation of the term, like many of those in engineering, is not known.

The economy of the Watt engine over the Newcomen was proved, as it used only about one-third of the coal. It was then mainly used in

Cornwall, and there were a great variety of conditions which made it extremely difficult for the engine to get its fair chance. Watt and Boulton, the adventurers as they were called, were poor men, and having formed a company for the engines they held out as long as they could, but many, many times they were hanging on the verge of bankruptcy, and the letters to Boulton from Watt for years and years reflected the agony of mind of James Watt at the little success which the engine had then achieved. He is repeatedly saying that the best part of his life had gone without any sign of success. It is really a most interesting thing to read and recall the struggles of the man who is perhaps one of the greatest inventors the world has ever seen; and it ought to encourage the younger men to think that even then the greatest things were not got at once.

Watt's patent taken out in 1765 would normally run out in 1779. Boulton saw, however, that unless something was done they would simply do all the work and their competitors would share with them the profits. The result was that after a good deal of opposition an extension was secured, and this undoubtedly was the saving

point of Boulton and Watt. In those days, even as now, commercial honesty was not perhaps quite what it ought to be, and there were a number of people who seized on every point they could to build other rival engines. We find several contemporaries—Horncastle of Bristol and Bond the Cornish engineer—repeatedly declaring that they had got engines as good as Boulton and Watt, with the result that the "adventurers" were only able to establish their rights after a great deal of litigation.

The first engine outside their own works was built for Wilkinson, an iron founder, to blow his bellows. In the next few years several engines were erected round about London.

You must remember that in those days factories were practically unknown, and there was no great demand for power. Most men worked their own small concern and did not require an engine of any sort. There were, however, some cases in which power was required, the most important being the making of flour, which up to then had been carried on with water mills. In the north of London the number of manufacturers was comparatively small, and all the power they wanted was got from water in the

form of water mills. The first engine to demonstrate the power of steam for general factory purposes was the engine built for the Albion Flour Mills in London. This was in 1786. It was a complete success in grinding the corn at a rate at which no corn had ever been ground before.

In those days people were not particularly enlightened, and the report was spread about that the engine was taking the bread from the workers' mouths. Not long after the mills were destroyed by a fire which was set down to the malice of the operatives.

William Murdock very soon rose to a more important position in the works of Boulton and Watt. He was a remarkably clever mechanic, and what seemed in those days a rather difficult thing to get, he was steady and trustworthy. I should say that the working man of to-day is an infinitely better creature than in those days.

In 1790 Murdock made and constructed a small steam engine to work on the road, and this was the first mechanically propelled vehicle that was ever produced.

There are a good many stories of the fright of the simple-minded Cornish people when they

met Murdock with his fire engine going along the road. The times were against the development of mechanically-propelled vehicles. It took rather over a hundred years before people were convinced that the roads were suitable for fire carriages.

Another of Murdock's simple inventions was coal-gas lighting. It is to Murdock alone to whom the whole credit must be given for the production of illuminant gas. In 1805 at the celebration of the Peace of Amiens the Soho Foundry was illuminated by coal gas, and before 1820 the use of illuminating gas was extended to nearly all the large cities. Unfortunately for Murdock he did not take out any patents, so did not profit by his invention. He also among other things invented the transmission of power by means of compressed air. It is now in use in every part of the world. He drove a little engine in the pattern shop by compressed air, and showed how the air could be transmitted through pipes.

Boulton was the first to show how copper coinage could be produced. He it was who really inaugurated the modern system of coining, but it took him nearly ten years before he

could persuade the Government to give him the power of making a copper coin. It is worthy of note that the French Republican Government actually had large quantities made for it by Boulton. This coin was withdrawn from circulation after the destruction of the Republic by Napoleon.

Another important invention by Boulton was a method of producing pictures in colour. By some process which has now become quite extinct, Boulton made a copy of a picture in colours. It has been suspected that it was a photographic process, but the probability is that it was a simple press process. Some of the copies are still in existence.

In comparison with Watt it is almost inevitable that Boulton should to some extent be overshadowed; yet Boulton's business capacity and knowledge of how to manage men certainly was a large factor in the success of the engine.

Boulton was the first captain of industry, and in his day, one of the most important citizens of Birmingham. It is certainly a matter for regret that no public memorial of Boulton exists in the city which he did so much to advance.

In 1800 the partnership between Boulton and Watt came to an end. Watt was then 64 and Boulton was about 72. Watt himself was a man, as I have tried to show, who hated business but loved mechanical pursuits, and he took the earliest opportunity of retiring from active business, leaving it to his son, James Watt, junior, who carried on the firm with the aid of Matthew Robinson Boulton—Boulton's son. Watt himself then retired to Heathfield Hall, and spent the remainder of his life apparently much happier in working out all kinds of mechanical devices. Besides being the great father of power production he was a versatile man inasmuch as he was a great linguist and keenly interested in science. At the same time he had all the instincts necessary for the practical application of his ideas. Such a man as he was had not come before. There had been scientific men who had ideas, and there had been practical men, but the combination was a new one, and in Watt it was realized more perfectly than it has ever been since. As Lord Brougham observed after his death, Watt was a creator. He was a man who went further than a mere improver. He was able to origin-

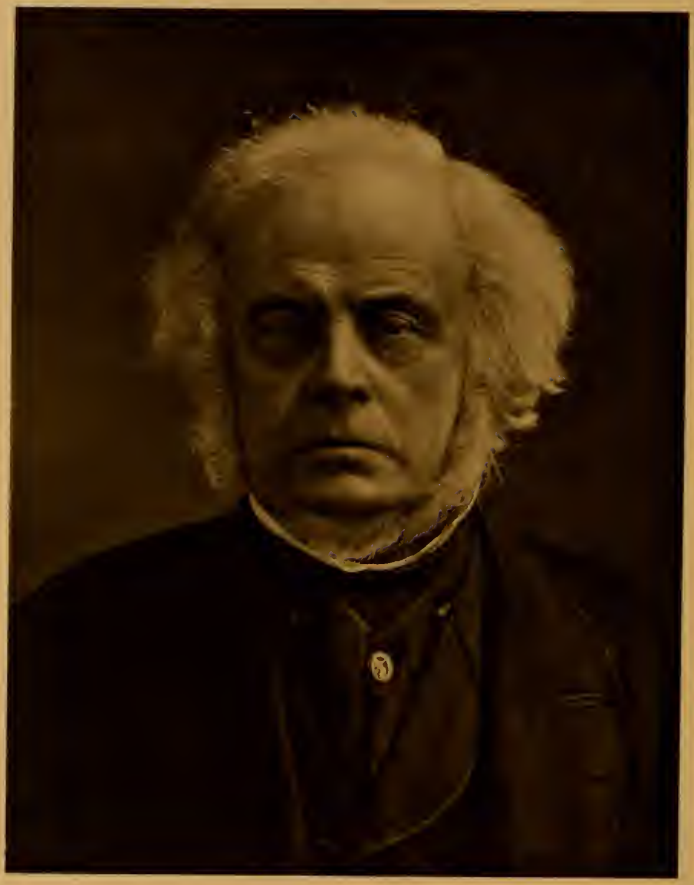
ate things in an extraordinary way. The improvements which have been made in the engine since his death are all quite small in comparison to the details that he devised. Had he had the appliances of to-day there is not the slightest doubt that Watt would have done everything we are doing now. His successors were mere pigmies in comparison with himself. George Stephenson and Robert Stephenson, to whom is given the credit of the locomotive railway engine, only took Watt's schemes and put them on four wheels. It was quite a minor arrangement. But the engine cylinder, the valves, the methods of driving, the separate condenser, the governor, remain the same now as they were in his day. Yet with all this he was so retiring and modest that at the end of his life when he was offered a baronetcy he declined it, saying he wanted to live out the remainder of his life in peace and quietness. And we must admire the man who refused such an honour. He was above a title of that sort. James Watt could afford to remain plain James Watt to the end of time; he could have no higher title. Murdock remained with the younger Watt until about 1830, when he retired

and died in Handsworth after a long and arduous life.

The interesting point to our minds is to notice how Boulton, Watt and Murdock between them left the mark of cleavage as between the old methods of manufacture and those of our own day. Before that time there had been no organized manufacture of any kind. These three men, working together, practically made all the modern machine tools, and they were the first to collect large numbers of men in one organization. At their best the Soho works employed nearly one thousand men in various operations, a number far greater than had ever been engaged together in manufacture before. Moreover, they practically originated the same methods as are used to-day in factory organization, with its managers and foremen. All the organization of that kind was developed by Boulton, and I think that it is only right that occasionally at meetings such as this some credit should be given to these almost forgotten people.

The present generation engaged in manufacturing and engineering has very scanty respect for its predecessors, but it is necessary to look

upon the work of those who have gone before with some reverence, because they had nothing to begin with. They originated and brought out of chaos all the means which we find available and convenient, and this should be brought occasionally to our minds. Above all we ought here to be very grateful to them, that the world-wide power which has made the present civilization possible originated within three miles of the centre of Birmingham.



JOHN BRIGHT

Born, 16 Nov., 1811; first elected Member for Birmingham, 10 Aug., 1857; died, 27 March, 1889.

By C. A. Vince

Of the nine eminent men whose names are included in this series of lectures, John Bright is the only one who at no time was resident in Birmingham. His connexion with our city began when he was already a person of national importance, and the leader of an army of politicians scattered over all parts of the United Kingdom. He made the acquaintance of Birmingham men at a time of life when friendship rarely ripens into intimacy. His visits were not very frequent; and he never took much interest in our local concerns. To the last in addressing his constituents he never spoke of Birmingham as "our city," but always as "your city." Birmingham in fact never supplanted Manchester in his heart, though it was the fickleness of Manchester that gave the opportunity for the more steadfast affection of Birmingham.

Nevertheless, we can easily justify our claim to treat Bright as a Birmingham man; and we may hope that the name of our city will be for ever associated in history with whatever is enduring in his renown. He represented Birmingham in the House of Commons continuously for the last thirty-two years of his long life (1857–1889). Our Town Hall was the scene of not a few of the great orations that have taken their place among the classical achievements of English eloquence. The men of Birmingham were joined with Bright as pioneers in the most arduous enterprise of his life, and shared his greatest triumph. He drew from the support of our burgesses, given with the unchanging loyalty which we claim as a characteristic virtue, no small part of the strength he needed for the struggle which he described as a long battle against privilege. The influence which he exercised throughout those thirty years over the movement of the popular mind in the political province can hardly be overestimated; and we know that, whenever the silver trumpet sounded, the most alert and whole-hearted response came from the workingmen of Birmingham. Nor is the force of that

influence yet exhausted; though it be undeniable that, in more directions than one, the disciples have transgressed the limits of political purpose and action laid down by the master.

If, then, Bright moulded to his will—though never wilfully, never for selfish or ambitious purposes—the political impulses of Birmingham, can we claim that Birmingham exercised any reciprocal influence on Bright's own career? That is not a question to be answered confidently. But I think that we can discern that, for whatever reason, Bright's faith in the people grew stronger, and the democratic side of his purposes more prominent from and after the time of his first association with Birmingham. In order, however, to make good this point, I will now introduce such a brief account of Bright's earlier career as seems necessary for our purpose.

John Bright was born at Rochdale on November 16, 1811. Thus he came of age in the memorable year 1832—the year of the first Reform Act. Two facts that belong to his heredity as well as his personality should constantly be borne in mind by the student of his career: he, and his immediate ancestors, were

Nonconformists—members of the Society of Friends—and they were manufacturers. Bright was the first Protestant Nonconformist, and one of the first of the manufacturing class, to become a cabinet minister. His earliest public speeches were made in defence of the refusal of Rochdale Dissenters to pay church rates; and it is not surprising that throughout his life he was never so likely to be betrayed into asperity of language as when he had anything to say about the privileges of the Established Church. When the Anti-Corn-Law League was formed (1839) he, like many other Lancashire men of his class, offered his services to the League. In September, 1841, he dedicated himself to public work. He related more than once, in language of the most touching pathos, how in that month Richard Cobden visited him at Leamington, and urged this vocation upon him when he was mourning the recent death of his young wife. His way was made easy by the public spirit of his brothers, who generously liberated him from his share in the work of the family business. Thenceforward he was the trusty lieutenant, and soon the most intimate personal friend, of the great leader of the Free Trade movement.

He entered Parliament as member of the city of Durham in 1843, and four years later was rewarded for his share in the triumph of 1846 by his election for Manchester, the home of the League.

His eloquence won the attention of the House of Commons from the first; and he gained great renown by his popular speeches, delivered in every part of England and Scotland. His more emotional rhetoric admirably supplemented the vigorous argumentation of Cobden, whose speeches are still the best extant model of the popular presentation of a chain of reasoning. Cobden made men think as he thought; Bright made them feel as he felt. Nevertheless, it was no doubt by a wise discretion that the editor of his Speeches included only one of the League speeches on Free Trade. There is abundant testimony that at this time his eloquence was already stimulating and effective; but it was only by degrees that it attained the force, the dignity, and the matchless felicity of phrasing and rhythm that compelled admiration in the maturity of his genius.

Bright never ceased to look back with satisfaction on the part he had taken in establishing

the FreeTrade system ; and many of the speeches of his old age were filled with reminiscences of that old contention, designed to strengthen the faith of his hearers in economical principles which he believed to be of lasting and universal validity. This is not the place for any discussion of the principles of the League ; but there are two observations that are of some importance as bearing on Bright's later career.

First, the struggle for the repeal of the Corn Law was of the nature of a contention between two powerful orders—the landowning aristocracy, whose influence was still predominant in both of the great parties, and the new order of wealthy manufacturers, the magnates of machinery and the factory system,—the cotton spinners, as they were often called,—the whole class taking its name from the most conspicuous example of wealth rapidly acquired by the new mechanical inventions, and the substitution of great mills and factories, with their life-blood of capital, and their complex organization of industry, for the old independent handicrafts. It is difficult for us to realize the bitterness of this feud. The landowners reproached the manufacturers with the miseries of the fac-

tory system, the overcrowding of towns, the hard life of the mill-hands, the scanty wages of nursing mothers and children of tender years. The manufacturers retorted by pictures, equally distressing, and equally true to life, of rural poverty and dependence. The landowners suspected the manufacturers of desiring the repeal of the Corn Duty, and the ruin of agriculture, in order that the labour of the mills might be cheaper; the manufacturers demanded the removal of a system, miscalled protection of native industry, which protected the rents of the squires, but left the labourer unprotected against competition. The one imputation may seem to be partly justified by the strenuous opposition which many Free-traders, notably Peel, Bright, Cobden and Villiers, offered to legislation for the control of the factory system, —e.g. to Fielden's Ten Hours Bill (1846); the other by such maladroit defences as that of the protectionist who clinched the argument by asking how country gentlemen could provide dowries for their daughters if the Corn Laws were repealed.

Bright, at any rate, who then and always regarded the doctrines which Cobden learned

from the economists, and expounded with matchless skill to Parliament and people, as convincing to any ordinary intelligence, believed that, in resisting repeal, the landowners were sinning against the light, levying tribute on industry, and maintaining for selfish purposes a system that impoverished the nation. Thus he entered politics as a sworn enemy of oligarchical privilege. By the reciprocation of this enmity Bright was held up as an extremist, a revolutionary, an overturner of institutions. Yet I believe that a candid examination of his speeches and letters will reveal him as a man whose habit of mind was essentially and fundamentally conservative. No reformer was ever less of an idealogue ; none more distrustful of violent or disorderly methods.

While this epoch-making strife was waging between the old aristocracy and the middle class, the class of wage-earners was divided or indifferent. Artisans interested in politics for the most part went with the Chartists, who were not friendly to the League. A significant incident in Bright's early career was a debate at Northampton (1844) between him and the leader of the Chartists, Feargus O'Connor,

who supported the Corn Law. Thus, although Bright delighted in large popular audiences, there was nothing in the work of the League to make him what he became later as member for Birmingham, the leader of a movement for the admission of artisans to full citizenship.

Secondly, the victory of the Anti-Corn-Law League was also a victory of Economists, of men disposed to measure national prosperity in terms of money earned and saved, zealous for the national wealth, and for a scientific theory of the national wealth. It was natural that such men should be economists in another sense, complaining of the waste of the resources of the nation by taxation larger than was necessary for the legitimate needs of the State. Here Bright worked with Hume and Molesworth, the spokesmen of the Philosophical Radicals in this matter. Many of you may remember that, when rooms were decorated in his honour, one of the mottoes was always "A Free Breakfast Table"; he wished the State to dispense with all taxation on common articles of food. Nay more, he went so far as to assent to the policy of a Financial Reform Association, which desired to abolish all indirect

taxation, and would have given us not only free (i.e. untaxed) food, but also free beer and free tobacco.

This—the cry for retrenchment—is the connecting link between the first and the second of Bright's enterprises. The results of the Reform of 1832 had disappointed the Economists. The middle-class Parliament had indeed abolished the corn duties, accepted the principle of Free Trade, reformed the Poor Law, and rendered other services to sound economics; but it had failed to curb the rapacity of the Exchequer. In 1849, when the Economists put their protest on record, they were able to complain that the national expenditure had increased by nearly £10,000,000 in fourteen years, and had reached the alarming amount of £54,000,000. Bright conceived the hope that a new reform of the Parlimentary system would produce a House of Commons better disposed to check national extravagance. To this proposal Cobden assented with some reluctance—for his faith in the middle-class régime was less easily shaken than that of Bright.

Bright's advocacy of a new measure of Parliamentary reform began as early as 1848; but

the popular movement of which he was the leader may be said to have been initiated by the first speech that he made to his new constituents—almost exactly fifty years ago (October 27, 1858). As I mention that speech I cannot but recall vivid descriptions of its extraordinary effect which I heard from the lips of two Birmingham politicians who have since followed Bright into the eternal silence—Mr. Powell Williams and Mr. Bunce. Mr. Bunce was at that time editor of a Tory newspaper here. When he heard Bright his conscience began to trouble him; he found conviction of sin; he resigned his occupation, and Birmingham might have lost one of its most useful citizens but for a fortunate vacancy in the editorship of the *Daily Post*. Remember that the part taken by Birmingham in the agitation for Free Trade had been inconsiderable, but that in the earlier struggle for Parliamentary reform our city had led the country. Many of the veterans of that conflict, the men who, as Bright phrased it, had "shaken the fabric of privilege to its base," survived to welcome the new leader to Birmingham; and in their presence, appealing to their white

hairs, he called on their sons to join him in a new campaign against the old enemy.

But here an inevitable question compels another digression. How did it come to pass that the Lancashire statesman, the friend of Richard Cobden, Alderman of Manchester, the champion of the cotton spinners, came to Birmingham at all? The cause of Bright's rejection by the Liberals of Manchester was, in general, his persistent antagonism to Palmerston—one of the two Whig aristocrats who competed for the lead of the Liberal party, and at that time the only man competent to form a Liberal administration; and, in particular, his vehement opposition to the policy that had involved the country in the Crimean War. Bright and Palmerston were in character and disposition most strongly antipathetic; and so long as Palmerston was a Liberal leader, Bright found it impossible to be a loyal member of the party. Bright always held and expressed the strongest aversion to a policy of fidgety interference in European affairs, and cherished a special hatred for a phrase that was then often on the lips of statesmen—the "balance of power"—which seemed to him to serve as a

pretext for a great deal of perilous and provocative intermeddling. Such intermeddling, in Bright's view, had often endangered peace; and now it had at last brought its natural consequence in an international embroilment, and a war waged at the other end of Europe for the sake of a quarrel in which the interest of this country was remote, if not illusory. It cannot be stated too distinctly that neither in 1854, nor at any other crisis, did Bright, as a politician, lay down the principle of peace at any price. His maxim was: No interference with other nations, except where British interests were directly involved. Time does not permit me to discuss the question whether or not Bright was justified in the view that war might have been averted without dishonour; but I do not think any one can read Bright's speeches, and compare them with Kinglake's narrative of the diplomatic proceedings, without admitting that Bright successfully convicted Lord Aberdeen's Government of some grave errors, of vacillation and inconsistency, of slovenly definition of their purposes, and of weakness in letting themselves be twisted out of the straight path by the obstinacy of

their ambassador, and the cunning of their disreputable ally. We now know from Greville's Diary that Bright's view of the diplomatic blunders was shared to the full by a competent, well-informed, and unbiassed observer.

The five Crimean speeches—four of which are to be found in Thorold Rogers's edition—are in my judgment the finest flower of Bright's incomparable eloquence—forcible in argument, measured in denunciation, and glowing with an emotion that is generous, humane, and most assuredly patriotic. Note also, as a proof of his courage and candour, that the Government that made the war, the Government that he denounced as an "incapable and guilty administration," was the first Government formed on a Free-trade basis, being composed of a coalition of Liberals with Conservatives, like Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone, who had separated from their own party for the sake of Free Trade.

If these speeches won immortal renown for Bright's eloquence, they imperilled his popularity, and exposed him to cruel opprobrium. How bitter was the resentment he provoked you may judge from three well-

known lines in Tennyson's poem "Maud." This fragment of satire was universally believed to have been aimed at Bright until we were informed in Tennyson's biography that the poet himself disowned the application. The internal evidence, however, appears to me to be decisive; and I prefer to believe that the poet's memory misled him when his wrath had subsided. The hero of the poem, a glorifier of the war policy, goes to a peace meeting and listens with much disgust to a speaker whom he describes as—

> The broad-brimmed hawker of holy things,
> Whose ear is stuffed with his cotton, and rings
> Even in dreams to the chink of his pence.

Remembering that the only two politicians of the first rank who protested against the war were Cobden and Bright, observe, first, that the person here satirized was a Quaker—"broad-brimmed." For many years both before and after this time, Bright, and no other public man except Bright, was always represented in *Punch* as wearing a broad-brimmed hat, though in fact he did not advertise his opinions by means of his head-gear, but wore

hats of any shape that was in common use. Secondly, he was a cotton-spinner—"*his* cotton"; and "his ears were stuffed with his cotton," that is, his interest in the cotton trade made him deaf to the voice of patriotism. Thirdly, he was a "hawker of holy things"; a phrase which the future annotator of Tennyson will have no difficulty in explaining by reference to Bright's characteristic habit of appealing to the moral law, and especially of citing the words of Holy Scripture in political speeches. That habit exposed him to malevolent imputations; but in a thoroughly genuine character there was nothing more genuine than the simplicity of his piety. It may have been a Puritan, but it was not a Puritanical, habit; what Bright inherited was the earnestness of the real Puritans, not the hypocrisy of the sham Puritans. Our commentator may also remind the reader how Palmerston had recently insulted Bright by calling him "the hon. and rev. gentleman." Fourthly, "his ears rang even in dreams to the chink of his pence." No accusation was more constantly brought against Bright than that his zeal for national thrift made him negligent of

national honour; that he judged policies by asking which was the cheapest.

With such a view of Bright's political character prevalent even in his own class and within his own party, we may claim the virtue of magnanimity for the Birmingham which elected him without a contest so soon after his rejection by Manchester. I have said that Bright's democratic sympathies developed rapidly from the time of his association with the men of Birmingham; no doubt the war, and the odium he incurred by opposing the war, strengthened his distrust of middle-class government, and his determination to look for sympathy to the unenfranchised thousands who were knocking at the door of the constitution. He no longer demanded reform chiefly for the sake of retrenchment, but as one desiring democracy for its own sake. In his earlier speeches he had laid most stress on such a redistribution as should give more power to the industrial towns, and less to rural districts; now his chief purpose was to strengthen the State by the enrolment of an army of competent citizens. To treat the settlement of 1832 as final was, he said, "to erect the middle class into a sort of

oligarchy." "The class which has hitherto ruled in this country has failed miserably. If a class has failed, let us try the nation. That is our faith, that is our purpose, that is our cry: Let us try the nation!"

Neither of the two parties professed hostility to Reform; neither seemed to be in earnest about Reform. The Liberal Government in 1852, the Coalition Government in 1854, the Conservative Government in 1859, and the Liberal Government in 1860, all brought in Reform Bills, and then dropped them. Finally, the Liberal Bill of 1866, which was really meant to pass, was defeated by the Adullamite secession, and the opportunity passed to Disraeli. All this time a popular party was forming that demanded the new enfranchisement with a resolution that grew in intensity; and of that party Bright was the acknowledged leader. Never was there a more peaceable agitation; never such astonishing success in arousing popular enthusiasm to the highest degree of fervour, yet restraining it within the limits of good order. The Reform Bill of 1867 was in truth the crowning triumph of Bright's career. The Bill was Disraeli's Bill, as the Bill that

repealed the Corn Law had been Peel's Bill; but just as Peel in 1846 insisted on handing the laurel wreath on to Cobden, so with equal propriety Disraeli might have hailed Bright as the real victor of the long battle for reform. Both the two parties had been aristocratic coteries; Bright had democratized the Liberal party by sustained effort, and Disraeli had democratized the Conservative party by a single stroke of genius—unless indeed you prefer to attribute both achievements to the unseen and impersonal forces of progress.

The view of Bright's career which I desire to submit to your consideration is this. He is a figure of first-rate importance in the political history of the Victorian Era, because, both before and after 1867, he was the chief political educator of the men who in that year were called to the full duties of citizenship. The apprehensions with which men, who were neither foolish nor ill-instructed, looked forward to the results of the leap in the dark, may be read in the speeches of Lowe and Salisbury, the leaders of the recalcitrant Liberals and the recalcitrant Conservatives, or, more conveniently, in Carlyle's furious pamphlet, "Shoot-

ing Niagara." None of you, I hope, will assent to Carlyle's view that the achievement of "John of Bromwicham" had been "the calling in of new supplies of blockheadism, gullibility, bribeability, and amenability to beer and balderdash"; but on the other hand, perhaps none of you will deny that there must always be grave perils in any new democratic experiment. I beg you to reflect how much more distasteful the immediate results of reform might have been to those who desire an orderly, secure, and measured progress, if the hero of triumphant democracy forty years ago had not been a man of moderate aims, of equable temper, void of personal ambition, and singularly immune from the temptations that beset a successful demagogue.

The victory of 1867 made a great change in Bright's career. He had hated Palmerston, and he had not loved Russell; but at last he had found a leader whom he could follow without misgiving, and thenceforward until the catastrophe of 1886, he was content to serve his country as a loyal member of the Liberal party. He became a Minister of the Crown with much reluctance, and would have declined

office but for the urgent remonstrances of his friends. He exposed himself to some reproach by refusing the office of Secretary for India, for he had been an unsparing critic of the faults of the British administration of India. But in truth he was not well qualified for any office that required diligent attention to details of business. He was constitutionally indolent, and a hard worker only under the stimulus of a strong sense of duty; and he had already been warned by illness that mental exertion was perilous to him. We have the testimony of his colleagues to the value of his counsels in the deliberations of the Cabinets; but as an administrator he gained no new distinction. One important legislative achievement is put to his credit. He had been the earliest and most persistent advocate of state-aided land purchase by tenants as a remedy for Irish agrarian troubles. The clauses in the Irish Church Act and the Irish Land Act by which this experiment, since so largely developed, was initiated, are known as the Bright Clauses.

In other ways, no doubt, Bright contributed to the successes of the first and second Gladstone administrations; but—let me repeat it—it is

as a political educator that he has a place in history. He brought to that task an over-mastering earnestness of purpose, unsuspected integrity and candour, generous sympathy, an untroubled faith in the doctrines of the Philosophical Radicals, and that luminous and persuasive eloquence that entitles him to the first place among the orators of his century. The words of his speeches are on record; and many of you can recall the dignity of his manner, the melody of his voice, the refinement of his noble features, the restraint of his gestures. Those who never saw him may read something of his manner and character in the fine portrait that adorns our Art Gallery; or they may try to imagine a man as different as it is possible to conceive from the coarse-featured, bawling, gesticulating demagogue of the *Punch* cartoons.

The most important part of Bright's political teaching may be summarized under four heads: Democracy, or trust in the people; Religious Equality; Peace, or non-interference abroad; *Laisser-faire*, or non-interference at home. Of his services to democracy I have said all I wish to say. As for Religious Equality it is sufficient to remind you that he witnessed and

helped to forward four important enactments based on this principle, viz., the abolition of Church rates, the admission of Jews to Parliament, the abrogation of religious tests at the ancient Universities, and the Act which established the rights of Nonconformists in parish churchyards. He lent his eloquence to the service of the Liberation Society; and his only disagreement with Cobden, who was a Churchman, was when he opposed, and Cobden supported, the increase of the Maynooth Grant.

To what has been said about his protest against the war with Russia, it has to be added that in 1882 he resigned office immediately after the bombardment of Alexandria; and that he was always on the alert to raise his voice against any adventurous policy that reminded him of the bad days of Palmerston. He would not tolerate any intervention that might possibly lead to bloodshed, even when it was represented that humanity required British aid for the oppressed; Britain, he protested, had no vocation to be "the knight errant of the human race." It is true that he once said "Perish Savoy"; it is not true that he ever said "Perish India." I will not venture

to estimate to what degree he succeeded in indoctrinating the democratic mind with his principle of non-intervention; but it may at least be said that the people will never allow Great Britain to go to war without some stronger reason than was considered sufficient in 1854.

It is when we contemplate Bright's ardent devotion to the old Radical doctrine of *laisser-faire* that we realize how far we have drifted from his moorings. He was by no means content with the application of this doctrine to the fiscal or commercial system. "Most of our evils," he declared, "arise from legislative interference." He opposed the Ten Hours Act as illegitimate interference with freedom of contract, although his friend Mill had distinctly excepted the regulation of hours of labour from the general doctrine. When further factory legislation was proposed he said he would prefer to "leave the country and go somewhere else where capital and labour were allowed to fight their own battle on their own ground without legislative interference." He resented the extension of the Truck Act. He objected to compulsory vaccination, not because it was vaccination, but because it was compulsory;

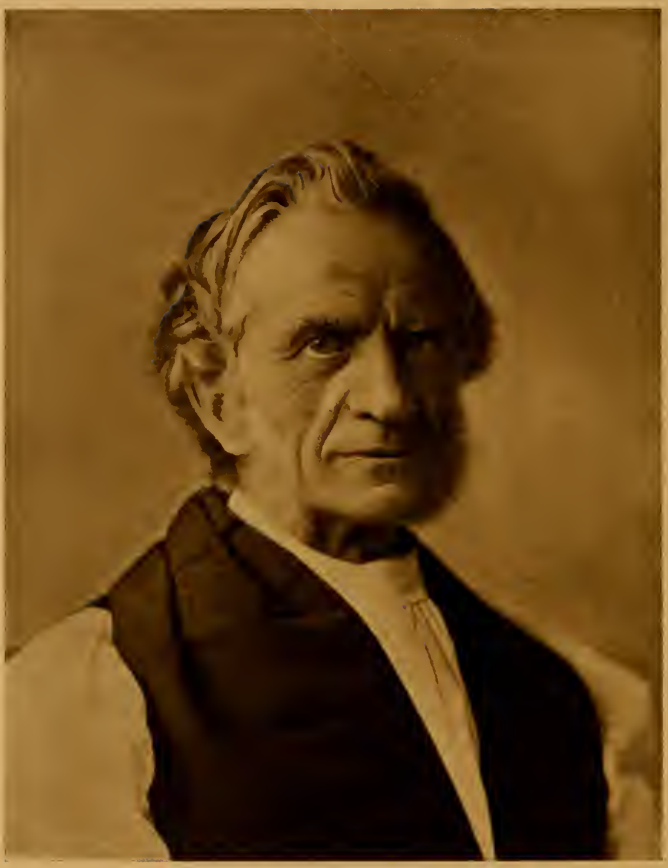
and he did not like compulsory education. He was for many years one of the advocates of a voluntary system of education, i.e. a system under which schools should be neither controlled nor supported by the State or the municipalities. This opinion he changed; but it is probable that he was saved from a disagreement with his Birmingham friends by the illness that secluded him from public work in 1870. He warned the Trade Unions that it was impossible to keep up wages by combination. He was a friend of temperance, but refused support to temperance legislation. The officials of the Board of Trade told Mr. Chamberlain that, when Bright was President, he rarely interfered with their discretion, and when he did do so it was always to countermand, never to direct, the exercise of the powers of the Department.

It is impossible to avoid burning questions in dealing with the career of a man whose work consisted of the enunciation of very emphatic opinions on topics of which many are still controversial. Bright's confident assertion of his judgments exposed him to the charge of being intolerant and dogmatic; but looked at from the other side this characteristic will appear

to be the virtue of a man too honest for compromise and caring more for principles than for tactics. Observe also that no man more often enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing proposals which he had supported as one of a small minority adopted by general consent. Such an experience tends to fortify self-confidence.

Yet it seems safe to conjecture that, even in an audience so diversified as this, there is no man or woman who does not dissent from some of the opinions which Bright advanced in his uncompromising way. Such indeed must be the posthumous fate of all political teachers, when the eternal truths of one generation have become the discarded errors of the next. Bright had a great multitude of admiring disciples; but the successful educator is not the man whose pupils turn his sayings into articles of faith, but he who has inspired them with the spirit of honest inquiry and independent judgment. Bright was the preacher of a political creed, but he was also the apostle of a political religion, —and religions live longer than creeds. He taught the men of Birmingham to treat politics, the art and science of national well-being, as a study worthy of the most earnest attention;

he never spoke without lifting them above the pettiness and flippancy of daily political contention; and he never allowed them to forget one central doctrine, which really is an eternal verity, though all the maxims, and watchwords of all the parties should perish, that the moral law was enacted for states and empires as well as for men and citizens, and that even in politics the path of righteousness is the way of salvation.



BISHOP WESTCOTT

Born in Birmingham, 1825. Died, 1901.

By J. H. B. Masterman

There are two kinds of citizens that a city like ours ought to delight to honour. There are the citizens who, often coming into the city from outside, have spent their lives in its service; and there are the citizens who, equipped here, have gone out into the world and played their part in shaping the life of the nation.

Bishop Westcott belongs to the second class. After he left school his connexion with Birmingham virtually ended, though he never ceased to think with gratitude of the early lessons learnt here.

King Edward's School, Birmingham, gave to the Church of England three of her greatest leaders in the last generation. And these three leaders represent in a very interesting way the many-sidedness of Church life. Lightfoot's special province was the past. His vast range of historical knowledge threw light on much that was obscure in the early history of

the Christian society. Benson's special province was the present, his great desire was to make the English Church an effective instrument for meeting the actual needs of to-day. But Westcott's special province was the future. There was something of the prophet's vision always in those keen eyes of his. In a very real sense he watched all his life long for the coming of Christ.

The outer facts of Westcott's life can be soon told. He was born in Birmingham in 1825. His father, a man of retiring habits, was a keen botanist, and was for some years lecturer on Botany at the Sydenham College Medical School—the precursor of Queen's College, and therefore of the Medical Faculty of this University. From him the Bishop inherited his great love for flowers. In due course young Westcott proceeded to King Edward's School, then under Dr. Prince Lee. There he won the respect of his schoolfellows by his intellectual ability and—perhaps even more—by his high moral character. From early life Westcott's religious instincts were strong. One of his school friends notices his habit of talking about " points of theology, problems of morality and the ethics

of politics." But though studious and thoughtful beyond his years, young Westcott was not a "prig."

The period of Westcott's childhood was one of political ferment in Birmingham. Among his earliest recollections was one of Thomas Attwood leading a great procession of men to a Political Union meeting in 1831. A few years later Chartism led to serious disturbances in the city and Westcott referred long afterwards to the deep impression made on him by the experiences of that time.

From the school he passed to Cambridge, where he won many academic honours. After taking his degree he stayed up for some years, and among the pupils with whom he read during this time were two old King Edward School boys of a younger generation, with whom he kept up a lifelong friendship—Joseph Barber Lightfoot, afterwards the great scholar and Bishop of Durham, and Edward White Benson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Another of his pupils was F. J. A. Hort, who was destined to be his colleague in one of his greatest tasks—the revision of the text of the Greek New Testament. A few words may be said here about

Westcott as a teacher. All his teaching work was marked by two special characteristics. The first of these was his intense enthusiasm for his subject—an enthusiasm comprehensive enough to include Greek particles and social reforms. It was noble, yet also pathetic, to hear Dr. Westcott trying to awaken in a classroom of undergraduates the same enthusiasm that he felt for the subtler meaning of some Greek construction or the views of some unfamiliar Christian Father. The best men responded to the stimulus of such teaching, and even the more unresponsive carried away the startling impression that it was possible for a man to feel the same intense interest in matters of scholarship that we most of us bestow on other, and perhaps less worthy objects. The other characteristic of Dr. Westcott's teaching was its thoroughness. It would almost be true to say that he and Lightfoot introduced a new standard of thoroughness into English theological work. While rivalling the great German scholars of the time in minuteness of research, they brought to the task of the commentator a breadth of view that we often miss in German theological work. A remark once

made about Lightfoot would be equally true of Westcott—where he has reaped, little is left for the gleaners.

A remarkable example of the patient labour of the true scholar is afforded by the so-called Cambridge Text of the Greek New Testament. In 1853 Westcott and his friend Hort decided to prepare a revised text of the New Testament. Twenty-eight years passed before the now famous volumes that announced the completion of their task saw the light. During these years every variant reading had been subjected to a detailed investigation such as had probably never before been given to it, and whatever may be the ultimate verdict of criticism on Westcott and Hort's text, it will remain one of the finest products of English scholarship of the last century.

In 1852, being anxious to marry a lady whom he had known from early boyhood, he accepted a mastership at Harrow, where he stayed for nearly eighteen years. His work at the school left him leisure for theological writing, and during these years he produced a number of theological works of first-rate importance. At a time when many Churchmen still regarded

historical criticism and modern science with distrust, Westcott was prepared to accept both. He believed that the remedy for rash conclusions lay not in obscurantism but in long and patient investigation.

In historical criticism it is specially important to realize that the most startling and revolutionary opinion is not necessarily the truest. At the time when Westcott's earlier books were written, the accepted conclusions as to date and authorship of the books of the New Testament were being challenged with great confidence. He lived to see a large body of the most competent scholars returning to the more conservative views that he had defended.

No account of Westcott's life at Harrow would be complete without some reference to a scheme that at one time greatly attracted him. He abhorred the growing luxury of modern life, and desired to see a simpler standard of living. But he felt that this simpler standard must be exhibited in family and not merely in individual life. So he suggested what he called a "Coenobium," a kind of College of families living a common life under simple rules of work, devotion and expenditure.

The old monastic rule of poverty, chastity and obedience was to take the form of a pledge of poverty, study and devotion. He wrote an article on the subject in the *Contemporary Review*, and corresponded about it with his friends. He was, as his son says, "very much in earnest" about it, but, like Coleridge's Pantocracy and many other similar schemes, it never reached the stage of practical experiment.

In 1869 Westcott accepted a Canonry at Peterborough under Bishop Magee; and it is an interesting comment on the current ideas of fat livings and comfortable Canonries that it was only by banishing meat from the family breakfast-table that the future Bishop managed to live within his income. After a time, largely through the influence of Lightfoot, he was elected to the Regius Professorship of Theology in the University of Cambridge, and returned there to do much important service in the organization of the theological work of the University. For a time he held this office in conjunction with a Canonry at Westminster, and then, in 1890, he was called, at the age of 65, to succeed his old pupil and friend, Lightfoot, as Bishop of Durham.

It was during his eleven years at Durham that the Bishop's deep interest in social and labour problems became known to the public, though his friends and pupils knew that for many years he had thought deeply about these things. The most striking event of these years was his successful intervention in the great Coal Strike. I need not tell the story in detail, but it illustrates the kind of service that an impartial and sympathetic outsider can render in trade disputes. The Coal Strike had lasted about three months, and directly affected over 80,000 workers. Unwillingness on both sides to "give in" prevented any settlement, though the North of England was suffering acute distress. What was wanted was the intervention of some wise counsellor, whom both parties could trust, to smooth the friction that made negotiations difficult. Here was the Bishop's opportunity. He had won the confidence of the Durham miners, and his character and position secured for him the respect of the employers. At the Conference that met at Bishop Auckland, under his chairmanship, he laid down the principle, the recognition of which alone, in his opinion, could secure last-

ing peace—the principle that the true relation of capital and labour was not hostility but fellowship. After much discussion, the workers' representatives agreed to a reduction of 10 per cent. and the establishment of a Conciliation Board to avert future discord.

Will you bear with me if I say just a word about the lesson that seems to me to be taught by this incident? Many Churchmen believe—as Bishop Westcott certainly did—that the present industrial system, by which the worker is divorced from any effective responsibility for the organization of the industry to which he contributes the only capital he has—his own life—cannot be regarded as a satisfactory or permanent solution of the industrial problem. But though it is the duty of the Church to bear witness, in season and out of season, to those principles of brotherhood and social justice out of which alone any better solution can come, any attempt to identify the Church with particular schemes of reconstruction, and to make the Christian society an instrument of industrial revolution, can only mean the loss of priceless opportunities of effective social service. The future must grow out of the

present, not by embittered contest and the upheaval of the foundations of society, but by the awakening power of ideal sthat make selfishness manifestly ignoble and idleness and luxury disgraceful. Prince Lee's last words to his old pupil—" Be not afraid, only believe "—may seem tame as a watchword of social progress. But courage and faith constitute a mightier agent of social regeneration than we have yet learned to recognize.

I cannot spend much time in speaking of Bishop Westcott's lifelong work as a theological teacher. Every student of the Bible is his debtor for years of strenuous labour on the text of the New Testament, and for his commentaries on the writings of St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews. But the distinctive feature of Westcott's teaching was his effort to keep theology in touch with life. I began my career at Cambridge just after he had left for Durham, and I found his influence still potent among the younger men who had grown up under the inspiration of his guidance. The ideal he had impressed on us all might be summed up in the one word " Service." The true measure of life's wealth was not in what

it gets but in what it gives. "Shall I stay in Cambridge as a don or go abroad as a missionary?" "Shall I become a schoolmaster or a curate in a slum parish?" To all such questions he taught us to apply the one test—the test of service.

And this idea of service was not narrowly restricted within ecclesiastical hedgerows. All civic life spoke to him of the same ideal. In a sermon at the Birmingham Church Congress in 1893, on "Citizenship, Human and Divine," he referred to the great public buildings of our city that had grown up here since the days of his boyhood:

> Every great building which represents the social life of the city—a city, alas, still without a Cathedral—schools, libraries, art galleries, halls, council chambers, courts of justice, have arisen since then. Taken together, this splendid array of municipal institutions is an impressive witness to the fulness of life. Each one ought to be, each one may be, a sanctuary in which fellow-citizens of the saints meet to prepare for their work and to fulfil it. Each one—whatever occasions may seem to have been lost—is still a sign and a call to men who are citizens of heaven and earth.

Westcott had no sympathy for the man whose religion did not rouse in him the sense of civic duty. He felt that the great social evils of

our time were a trumpet-call to the Christian Society. Speaking in Hartlepool about the problem of overcrowding he said:

> The facts as to overcrowding and the consequences of the facts, are not always in evidence, and we have dull imaginations. I plead then in the name of our Faith, I plead on behalf of those who by God's will are "joint-heirs with us of the grace of life" that in every urban and rural council some from amongst us should learn the facts as to overcrowding and make them known. The evils will then be met. The awakened Christian conscience will find no rest till the remediable causes of moral infection are removed. To corrupt the development of life is not less criminal than to maim the body. We are guilty of conniving at the defilement of temples of God till we faco the problem according to our opportunities and strive te solve it.

But all social service needs knowledge as well as zeal, and it was the realization of this truth that led Bishop Westcott to take a leading share in the establishment of the Christian Social Union, of which he was the first President—an office in which he has been succeeded by our own Bishop of Birmingham. For the object of the Christian Social Union is not to issue manifestos or organize movements, but to gather Churchmen together for the careful study of actual facts. It exists to persuade clergymen to read bluebooks, and district

visitors to study Acts of Parliament, and churchwardens to explore slums. It seeks to educate the conscience of the Christian Society. And no one who is in touch with the Church life of to-day can fail to recognize the awakening of the English Church to a new consciousness of her social mission.

Few movements awakened a stronger sympathy in Westcott than the University Extension movement. He cared for it because he saw in it the beginning of a new bond of sympathy between the University and the larger world outside. In a Conference at Cambridge twenty years ago he drew a glowing picture of the time when "miners in Northumbrian coalfields, artisans in Midland factories, toilers in the country and in the cities, will repeat with glad pride what is not our motto only but their motto also, when they find their lives enlightened and purified, I will venture to say ennobled and hallowed, by the conception of higher education which it has been the privilege of this University to bring home to them."

Had he been alive to-day, and able to revisit his native place, I am sure that two things would have specially rejoiced his heart—the fulfil-

ment of his cherished hopes in the establishment of a bishopric of Birmingham (and, may I add, the appointment of his old Harrow pupil, Dr. Gore, as the first bishop), and the establishment of our University as a centre for the educational life of the Midlands.

What he would have said to us is, I think, indicated by some words of his at a meeting of the London University Extension Society in 1888 :—

"Special training is not the work of a University, and, if I may speak my whole mind, I confess that I am alarmed and ashamed when I hear the results of science treated as instruments for successful competition ; when I hear the language, the methods, the aims of war transferred to the conditions of commerce and the circumstances of daily life. No University will lend itself to the pursuit of such an end. Universities exist to maintain and propagate a nobler faith. So far as we have entered into their spirit, we believe, and we strive to spread the belief, that life is as the man is ; that if a man is sordid, selfish, narrow, mean, his life, however affluent, will reflect his character ; and, on the other hand, that there is about us

an inexhaustible store of unrealized possibilities, a treasure of spiritual wealth, open to the poorest, which grows with the using if only we know how to use it. And we believe that true education opens the eyes of the soul; that it is a strength in the difficulties which we must face; a solace in the sorrows that we must bear; an inspiration in interpreting the new truths which claim to receive from us a harmonious place beside the old; that it offers to all a vision of a larger order truly human and truly divine; that it is, in the noble words of your motto, 'not a means of livelihood, but a means of life.'"

But how came it that this rather shy and retiring Christian scholar, protected by the circumstances of his life from contact with the squalid realities of modern industrialism, became one of the great inspiring influences in the "socializing" of Christian thought? The answer to that question brings us back to the region of theology. Under the influence of the great Augustine, Latin theology has dominated Western thought for centuries. And Latin theology starts from the fact of sin. Born in a world dying of its own corruption, it cries for revolution in the individual and in

society. It stands armed before the world that has crucified its Master. It calls men to flee from the wrath to come.

Now in all this there is truth, but it is not the whole truth. Bishop Westcott, like Frederick Denison Maurice, was a disciple of the Greek Fathers—Clement, Origen, Athanasius. And the Greek Fathers begin not with sin but with God and the Incarnation. They see human life as Divine before they turn to see it defiled and degraded. And therefore the redemption of man means to them the restoration of human life to its true condition —the will of God done on earth as it is in Heaven. Greek theology is the theology of evolution—of a Divine purpose working in human society for the restoration of the lost ideals of brotherhood and fellowship. Founded on the truth that God became human, it holds out to all men the promise that man shall become Divine—not Divine as an isolated being but in fellowship with the whole society of redeemed humanity.

It was noticed by some close friends of Westcott that he could only meet the worst examples of human depravity with blank incredulity. He could not fit them into his scheme of things.

It was he who, characteristically, pointed out the note of hope in the last outcry of Guido in Browning's *The Ring and the Book.*

You cannot separate Westcott's theology from his social teaching. In the Preface of his last work, he writes:

> I approached my subject in the light of the Incarnation; and I have endeavoured to show from first to last how this central fact of history—the life of all life—illuminates the problems which meet us alike in our daily work and in our boldest speculations.

So at a Conference on International Peace—a subject very near to his heart—he said:

> The question of international relations has not hitherto been considered in the light of the Incarnation, and till this has been done, I do not see that we can look for the establishment of that peace which was heralded at the nativity.
>
> "The increase of popular power," he said on another occasion, "involves the increase of popular responsibility, and for the people, as has been truly said by non-Christian teachers, every question is finally a religious question."

But still less can you separate Westcott's social teaching from his personality. Like all really great teachers, he taught by what he was more than by what he said. Words that seem tame as we read them now came with the glow-

ing force of passionate conviction to those who heard them from him. His power did not depend on any rhetorical ability, or tricks of oratory. He generally spoke in a quiet and restrained manner, though sometimes there was the note as of a trumpet in his high, thin voice. But I doubt whether any other man of the last generation had so great a power of raising any question that he touched into the atmosphere of eternal things. He made us see that Co-operation and Boards of Conciliation and Hague Conferences had a spiritual meaning. His whole life was one long protest against the identification of spiritual with ecclesiastical things.

Westcott has often been called a mystic, and a mystic he was if a mystic is a man who "sees the infinite in things." In the long run a man must either come to believe that all life is sacred or that all life is secular. His Heaven must have no temple, either because "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it," or because temples have no place in his conception of life.

Like all mystics, Westcott was often charged with obscurity. There is a very familiar story of how Dr. Liddon once accounted for a

sudden fog in the town by conjecturing that Westcott must have opened his window! There is a certain class of mind that is always irritated by any religious teacher who cannot be labelled. But, mercifully for humanity, many of our greatest teachers defy our attempts at classification.

Was Bishop Westcott a Socialist? Yes, if by a Socialist you mean a man who believes, with the intensest conviction, that every group of men is meant to be a society and not a mere aggregation of contending atoms. No, if by a Socialist you mean a man who hopes to escape from the confusion of our present social conditions by bringing all alike under the despotism of the State. In one of his latest utterances, he defined the "momentous problem of our age" as the reconciliation of "authority with freedom, the united action of the Society with the conscious and responsible co-operation of all its members."

In many ways Westcott's social teaching resembles that of Ruskin, of whose writings he was a careful student. Both desire to secure for every worker his share of the joy, as well as the burden of labour. Both hold that

"there is no wealth but life." Both plead for simpler ideals, and nobler standards of life.

We may summarize what remains to be said in the answer to two questions. What did Birmingham do for Westcott? and what did Westcott do for England? In regard to the first question the Bishop left us in no doubt as to the extent of the debt he conceived himself as owing to his native city. On the occasion of his last visit to Birmingham he said:

> It is impossible to describe the feeling with which I stand here this evening in the hall of my native city and look back to all that I owed to Birmingham in my school years. Those were stirring years. We who passed through them felt that the old order was changing, and that a revolution was going on about us, the issue of which could not be foreseen. The first event of which I have a clear recollection was the meeting of the Political Union on Newhall Hill in 1831. I can see still the crown and Royal Standard in front of the platform, which reassured my childish heart, startled by wild words of violence and rebellion. The Chartist movement followed soon after. I listened to Fergus O'Connor, and I saw the blackened ruins in the Bull Ring guarded by soldiers. Then came the Corn Law Agitation and the Factory Acts. . . . They were stirring times; political, economic, social, religious changes came in quick succession, and, looking forward already to the work of a priest and teacher, I watched them with the keenest interest.

Early impressions strike deepest; and it

was Birmingham that kept Westcott's scholar mind in touch with the realities of life and that enabled him to keep the scholar's concentration while he conquered the scholar's aloofness.

What did Westcott give to England? In trying to answer that question we need to remember that every teacher is of necessity the product of his time as well as its maker. Much of what Westcott said to us had been said already by that great thinker, F. D. Maurice, and was being said by other men at the Universities and elsewhere. If Westcott's voice seemed more potent, it was because his long residence at Cambridge brought generations of younger minds under his influence. I doubt whether he ever understood the younger school of Oxford theologians, and I doubt even more whether they ever really understood him. On one occasion he half humorously complained to Archbishop Benson that he had spent days (mostly in vain) in the effort to make Oxford men understand Cambridge ways of thinking. "Quite naturally," he adds, "they forget that there is such a place." But if Oxford loves her own prophets best, certainly

we in Cambridge knew that in our three great scholars, Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort, there had been vouchsafed to us a gift such as does not often enrich even an ancient University. Perhaps the gift was too great; perhaps the younger men were overshadowed and dwarfed. But there are hundreds of clergy now serving their own generation in English vicarages or in mission stations under other skies, who can look back to Westcott's influence and example as the inspiration that taught them first truly to understand the meaning of the old words, "He that is chief among you, let him be the servant of all."

During the nineteenth century the Church of England has been influenced by three schools of thought that successively arose for the enrichment of her life. The first of these was the evangelical revival. It began during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and is associated with the names of Wesley, Newton, Wilberforce, Simeon, and many others. Its special aim was the reassertion of the importance of personal religion. It called men from intellectual controversy to the need of repentance and the possibility of holiness.

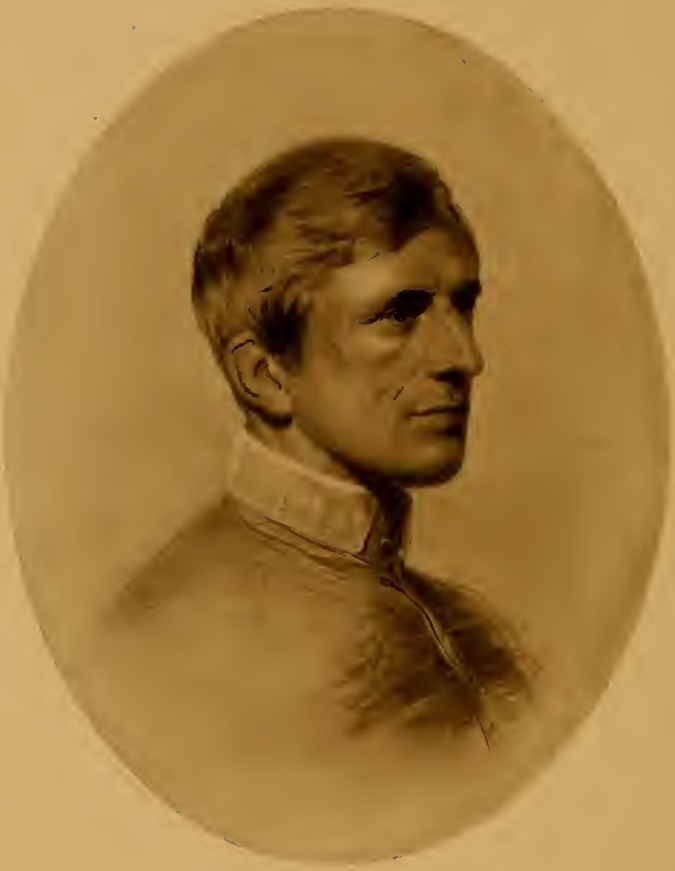
The second was the Oxford movement, which began about 1830, and among whose leaders were Newman, Keble, Pusey and Church. Its purpose was to assert that personal religion needed incorporation into the life of a society —that order and symbolism had their place in the world of grace as in the world of nature.

The third was the movement with which Westcott was most closely associated. It began about 1850 or a little earlier, and among its leaders have been Maurice, Kingsley, Westcott, Canon Scott Holland and Dr. Gore. Its purpose has been to assert that the Christian society is not an end in itself but a means to a larger end—that the protest for social righteousness, the truceless war against all that degrades and divides men, is the very purpose for which the Church exists.

> I will not cease from mental fight,
> Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
> Till we have built Jerusalem
> In England's green and pleasant land.

Those lines of Blake's express the thought that men like Bishop Westcott have passed on to our own generation. You will hear in another lecture of this course of another great Birmingham citizen, who did much to foster the

same ideal of Christian citizenship among the Christian bodies outside the Church of England. To Westcott and Dale alike the Kingdom of God was not an impracticable dream, but a reality to be achieved here and now by the ceaseless effort and unconquerable hope of men.



CARDINAL NEWMAN

Born 1801. Came to Birmingham, 1847.
Died, 1890.

By John H. Muirhead.

I feel that I have a difficult task in the present lecture. Newman has been the storm-centre of religious debate for nearly three-quarters of a century. His name stands for theological controversy. He differs, moreover, from the other men who have been the texts of these lectures, in that while they received much from Birmingham, and gave much in return, he owed it little but a resting-place. He lived, it is true, for the last forty years of his life in Birmingham, but he took no part in its business or government. He was as effectively cut off from its busy life as was the quiet chamber in which he thought and wrote, behind these great iron railings, from the noise and traffic of the Hagley Road.

But I have a further difficulty. I am speaking to an audience keenly alive to all progressive movements, to whom what is not social and democratic does not count; and I

am going to try to enlist your sympathies for a man who not only was not identified with any of these movements, but so far as he took part in politics at all, strenuously resisted reforms which everybody now admits to have been just and beneficial—Catholic Emancipation, the opening of the Universities to Dissenters by the abolition of tests, the great electoral Reform of 1832 itself. To the end, Newman showed little interest in the social, still less in the labour movement with which his brother-Cardinal, Henry Edward Manning, so enthusiastically identified himself.

Though it would not be difficult, as I hope to show, to explain this part of his life, and though there is a far more intimate connexion between the movement he initiated and the present democratic and even socialistic tendency of the Church of England than might appear, this is not the claim I desire to emphasize this evening. Even though it could be shown that Newman's life and work were entirely without manifest fruit in this direction, his name would still stand for interests that are of the deepest import for human life. If for the moment these interests are obscured by others

of more immediately pressing importance, and by the prevailing tendency of modern thought and feeling, there is all the more need to have them recalled to our thoughts on an occasion like this.

I am going to ask you to do what you sometimes find yourselves doing when you look at a picture or a landscape: to shut out for the moment the brighter and more prominent objects and colours in the foreground, in order to let the deeper and more delicate values that lie in the background have their chance.

I

Our first business is to try to comprehend the man. This, some one has said, is the sentence which a great man passes on his time—the task of understanding him. It is a particularly difficult one in the present case, and when we have done our best there will be much that remains a mystery.

Newman's birth coincided with that of the nineteenth century. Let me begin by recalling to your minds some of the chief features of the time in which he comes before us—both inside and outside the Church of England.

If we were to try to express in a word the characteristic note of eighteenth, as contrasted with the nineteenth century thought and feeling, we should find it in a certain hardness and clearness of outline with which things were felt and seen. "Everything," as one of its great writers said, "is what it is and not another thing." Everything is isolated and rounded into a whole for itself. Going along with this was a limitation to the more superficial qualities of things. It was the age of artificiality in poetry, of materialism in science, of utilitarianism in morals. But it was in the field of politics and religion that the characters which have been named came out most strikingly. In politics it was the age of individualism, of the rights that separate rather than of the duties and the affections that unite. In religion it was the age of deism—the doctrine that asserts the existence of God, but as of One who is far off from nature and human life, their well-wisher perhaps, but otherwise aloof from their operations. There were of course great exceptions. Already, moreover, new voices were being heard, notably some great poets like Blake and Robert Burns. But

man's spirit as a whole was still in bonds, his eyes and heart were still sealed to the new visions and the new emotions that were preparing for him in the coming century.

Turning to the condition of the Church we have to recognize that at no time has the Church of England been without witness to the power of the Spirit. At the time of which we are speaking, the spirit represented by George Whitefield, John and Charles Wesley, still survived in the Evangelical party. This kept alive in many souls the faith in the Unseen. But it was inadequate to the needs of the new age. It wanted depth and constructive power. It talked much of salvation, but it lacked imagination to give meaning and purpose to the convert's life. "It treated the soul as though it were always coming to Christ, not as though it were in Christ and to be kept there." [1] It was too ready to compromise with the weaknesses of the classes to which it appealed. It failed to distinguish between joy in life and mere pleasure or sensuous gratification, and while maintaining a strict standard

[1] Abbott, *The Anglican Career of Cardinal Newman*, Vol. I., p. 45.

of moral purity and sobriety, showed itself too ready to connive at a life of selfish and luxurious comfort. With no coherent philosophy of its own, moreover, it had nothing to oppose to the rising tide of materialistic thought. For the rest, the state of the Church is best described in the phrase of the time: "high and dry." It took little interest in philanthropy. If not actually at ease in Zion (for the clergy were often active magistrates and parish rulers) its activity could hardly be called spiritual. "The worse members," says a writer, who knew it in these days, "were jobbers and hunters after preferment, or country gentlemen in orders, who rode to hounds, and shot and danced and farmed, and often did worse things. The average were kindly and helpful, but often dull and pompous, and when not dull insufferably dogmatic and quarrelsome." What was true of the High Church generally, was true of the High Church Professors and Lecturers at the Universities. One might say of them what the prophet Ezekiel said of the bones in the valley—"they were very many, and lo! they were very dry!"[1]

[1] See Church's *Oxford Movement*, pp. 3, 4.

Such in general was the spirit of the time at the beginning of the nineteenth century. If we were to try to describe what the new spirit, as it expressed itself in the best literature and life of the coming generation, was, we should best do it in terms the opposite of those I have been using. I shall not stop to attempt it, but try to sum them up in the word that has come to be accepted as the most general description of them. It was the spirit of *romance*. Though in many respects unsuited to express what is meant, romance stands for that earnest and imaginative look at things which pierces below the hard outlines of their superficial appearance to their deeper nature, and therewith to their affinities and deep-set relations with other things, bringing into view the links that bind man to man, man to nature, nature and man to the universal spirit that pervades "all thinking things, all objects of all thought." If you would understand the men and institutions or movements of last century, or for the matter of that of our own, in any department, this is the question you have to ask—the test you have to apply: how far are they in touch with, how far do they give utterance

to, this new spirit? how far have they still clinging about them the remnants and reminiscences of the old?

Newman was the son of a London banker, and a lady of Huguenot extraction, thus owning on the one side, like so many great Englishmen, a French descent. He was brought up in the unromantic suburb of Ealing. But the interest of his early years is not in his outer circumstances, but in his inner life: the books he read and the thoughts they left with him. This is true throughout. Whatever the interest of the events that were taking place in the world about him, it is the events of his inner life that claim our attention. It is the history of a soul that we are following.

Of his childhood he himself tells us that he had already anticipated an idea that in one form or another remained with him to the end. "I thought," he says, "life might be a dream, or I an angel, and all this world a deception, my fellow-angels by a playful device concealing themselves from me and deceiving me with the semblance of a material world." On the other hand, his boyhood

seems to have been occupied with quite other thoughts. Tom Paine was the Charles Bradlaugh or Robert Blatchford, and David Hume the Herbert Spencer or the Professor Huxley of these days. At fourteen, he tells us he had read all that Paine had to say against the Old Testament and Hume against the miracles. At least he told his father so, though he thinks it may have been merely a boy's swagger—put on I suppose to make the good banker's flesh creep. It is pleasant to know that he was like other boys in one thing at least.

At fifteen he underwent a great change. He "fell under the influence of a definite creed." The creed was Calvinism. I do not know whether there is any one in this hall except myself who was brought up a Calvinist. It is a horrible faith. Some parts of it are horribly (or at any rate terribly) true; other parts are horribly false. What is true is the momentousness of the difference between right and wrong, and the need in every soul that is going to rise to anything worthy of its better nature, of some sort of regeneration, some sort of new birth. What is false is the doctrine that regeneration is a definite unalterable act of

favour wrought upon an elect few by a Will outside their own, instead of the daily renewal of a spiritual life from sources which by the grace of a merciful Heaven are open to us all. What this faith did for Newman in these days was further to isolate him from the objects that surrounded him, and deepen his distrust of the material world—to lead him, as he says, to rest more implicitly in "the thought of two, and two only absolute and luminously self-evident beings—myself and my Creator."

His next impressions came from a book I can remember well, occupying a small sanctum by itself in my grandmother's house. No one perhaps reads Scott's *Commentary on the Bible* nowadays, but the influence it exercised in the religious life of last century was immense. From it Newman tells us he learned two great truths: "Holiness better than peace" and "Growth the only evidence of life," which he took thenceforth for mottoes. These, with the deepening of the mind that comes from the study of history and the older writers, and the balancing doctrine that the Pope was Antichrist and Rome the Scarlet Woman, may be said to have been the first deposit of religious belief in his mind.

The second stratum was partly, one might say, of the same material as the first, only a more finely granulated form of it, partly it was a new and not less significant deposit. Bishop Butler's *Analogy* has probably played a greater part than any other single book after the Bible in moulding the matter and spirit of English theology. It is concerned, as the name indicates, with the analogy between the natural and the spiritual order, or more strictly between natural and revealed religion. We are here concerned, not with its detailed argument but with the bent it gave to Newman's mind. He tells us it affected him powerfully in two respects. In the first place it extended and refined his childish doctrine of angels. These now became to him spiritual powers acting behind the laws of nature and the wills of races and nations and classes of men. "Every breath of air and ray of light and heat, every beautiful prospect was as it were the skirts of their garments, the waving of the robes of those whose faces see God. What would be the thoughts of a man," he asks, "who when examining a flower or herb, or a pebble or a ray of light, which he treats as something so beneath

him in the scale of existence, suddenly discovered that he was in the presence of some powerful being, who was hidden behind the visible things he was inspecting, who though concealing his wise hand was giving them their beauty, grace and perfection—nay, whose robes and ornaments these objects were which he was so eager to analyse?" Such thoughts, he tells us, were his. From the same source came too, he thought—though here there was room for admixture of evil—"the action of bodies politic and associations which is often so different from that of individuals who compose them. Hence the character and instinct of states and governments, of religious communities and communions. I thought these assemblages had their life in certain unseen powers." It was only an extension of this doctrine when he came later to realize that Scripture itself "was an allegory: pagan literature, philosophy and mythology, properly understood, were but a preparation for the Gospel. The Greek poets and sages were in a certain sense prophets; for 'thoughts beyond their thoughts to those high bards were given.'" That was the first lesson he learned from Butler—a deepening, you will

see, of former impressions. His "preference for the personal to the abstract" still gave it a picturesque form. But stripped of the fanciful elements his imagination imported into it, this was the same truth that formed the inspiration of the new romantic movement and lived in the poetry of Burns and Wordsworth and Shelley, not to speak of the new voices in Tennyson and Browning that were about to break the silence. The defect of Newman's way of presenting it was that the spiritual counterpart was apt to fade away into an unknown and unimaginable form of being beyond or behind the material and temporal, instead of being felt to be the deeper meaning of it as the soul is the deeper meaning of the body.

The other lesson he learned from Butler was that contained in the philosopher's doctrine that "probability" and not logical certainty "is the guide of life." Here too we have the anticipation of a great truth. It is profoundly true that the syllogism and the mathematical equation are inapplicable to the deeper truths of life and religion. As St. Ambrose said: "It has not pleased God to save His

people by Logic." [1] But this is wrongly interpreted when it is taken to mean that science and philosophy are one thing and rest upon reason walking in the light of certainty, while Religion is another resting in a faith which is always of the nature of a leap in the dark, a "venture" not only from the known to the unknown but from the known to the contrary of the known, from the normal to the miraculous. To set faith and reason thus in opposition to one another is to set human nature against itself, and is a mode of stating the foundation or the foundationlessness of religion, which is unlikely ever to satisfy the human mind. I shall return to this at a later point. Meantime it is sufficient to indicate it as that which more than anything else separates Newman from the main line of philosophical thought in his own century.

I have now traced the history of Newman's mind down to his twenty-fifth year. The thoughts and beliefs with which he left college had a stamp given to them by his own mind, but they were in themselves large and genial thoughts

[1] The motto of Newman's *Grammar of Assent.*

which he shared with the greatest minds of his own time containing no particular menace to anything, far less to the Church and the University which he loved.

What I have now to try to make clear is, by what admixture they became the explosive compound that was to create the deepest disturbance that had taken place in either since the Reformation, and if not to shatter, at any rate to rend asunder one of them in the midst.

It came from the men with whom he found himself when the fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, which he won in 1822, "raised him," as he says, "to the high and broad platform of University society and intelligence." But to explain precisely *what* it was, and *how* it came, I must recall your minds to the state of the country in the later twenties of last century.

It was, you will remember, a period of rising Liberalism. The chief intellectual influence of the time was that of Jeremy Bentham and his school. However narrow Utilitarianism might be in morals, economics and religion, it had an undoubtedly broadening influence in politics. It was the enemy of all sorts of intolerance and

sectarianism, all merely class interests, all that existed merely by the right of prescription. Particularly it was pledged to the relief of Roman Catholics from all civil disabilities owing to their religion. But it went further and threatened Disestablishment. The great reform of 1832 was already in view which would transfer political power to the party that was pledged to these things. It was the day of the deliverance of the State, but it looked as though this would be the day of the captivity or the destruction of the Church. *Either* the Church would remain established and become the bond-servant of a free-thinking or indifferent government, *or* it would be cast loose to sink or swim as one among contending sects.

It was thoughts like these that were moving to their depths the minds of thoughtful and zealous churchmen in those days; among others, none more than the mind of John Keble. Keble's *Christian Year* appeared in 1827. It was published from the retirement of the country and anonymously. But Keble was no recluse. He followed public events with the keenest interest; had no delusions as to the course of things; asked himself quite

definitely the questions, where the Church would stand in case of disestablishment, and answered with equal clearness and definiteness, "where she had always stood, upon her own Catholicity and Apostolicalness." Her claim to be the Church of Christ and the inheritor of the Apostles took a new hold upon his mind, and formed thenceforth the centre of his thoughts. But Keble was no party leader to inspire; he was no preacher to strike and subdue [1]; he was no thinker and theologian to strengthen and edify. He lived, moreover, in the depths of the country. So far as he was concerned this doctrine, after flashing out occasionally in his University sermons and lectures, might have died and been buried with him at Hursley.

On the other hand, Newman was already showing himself to possess all the needed gifts. In 1828, moreover, he had been made Vicar of St. Mary's and was already speaking to the heart from the centre of the great University. But there was as yet no connexion between the older and the younger man. The connecting link was that fiery heart—the Lord Byron of the

[1] Barry's *Newman*, p. 31.

Oxford Movement—Richard Hurrell Froude. One is tempted to dwell on this picturesque, almost weird figure. I can only afford to mention him here as the torch which kindled the conflagration by indoctrinating Newman with the ideas of Keble. "Do you know the story," Froude writes, "of the murderer who had done one good thing in his life? Well, if I was asked what good deed I have ever done, I should say I had brought Keble and Newman to understand each other." The opportunity came when Froude returned from reading with Keble to become Fellow of Oriel in 1826. The intimacy deepened in the enforced leisure from business that came with the disagreement between the Head and Fellows which ended in the importation of outside tutors to do the work of the College, a kind of academic blackleg against whom the regular staff was powerless. It was still further deepened by the winter which they spent together in the Mediterranean. It was during this time that Newman's conviction became fixed. The brilliant scenes of the South flitted past him like phantoms. His mind was bent inwards. The future was dark and uncertain, but one clear, leading

light was rising before him—the sense of a mission to his Church, and as he thought to his time and country. It was while tossing about in an orange-boat in the Strait of Bonifacio that he wrote "Lead, Kindly Light," the marching song, as it has been called, of the Tractarian movement. Surely never a hymn that came more directly out of the heart; perhaps none that goes more directly to it. Its very title, by which few now know it, "The Pillar of the Cloud," adds to its pathos. To Newman the sign was too often a pillar of cloud by day—a darkening of the light—rather than a pillar of fire by night.

He himself attributes the beginning of the movement for the rescue from bondage of the Church of England, to a sermon that Keble preached on "National Apostasy" in 1833. But it was the preparation of the ground in Newman's mind, and not the accidental word that was the decisive fact—the determination with which he landed again in England "to force on the public mind, in a way which could not be evaded, the great article of the creed, 'I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church.'" [1]

[1] Church's *Oxford Movement*, p. 29.

For his new-formed purpose he had an organ to his hand in his pulpit at St. Mary's, but there was need of the more powerful organ of the press. Newman was equal to the occasion. To the gifts of the preacher he added a consummate talent for the higher journalism. The result was the *Tracts for the Times.* Many hands were employed upon them ; the inspiring, controlling, directing brain was Newman's. This was the beginning of the great change. "The new age was upon the Church."

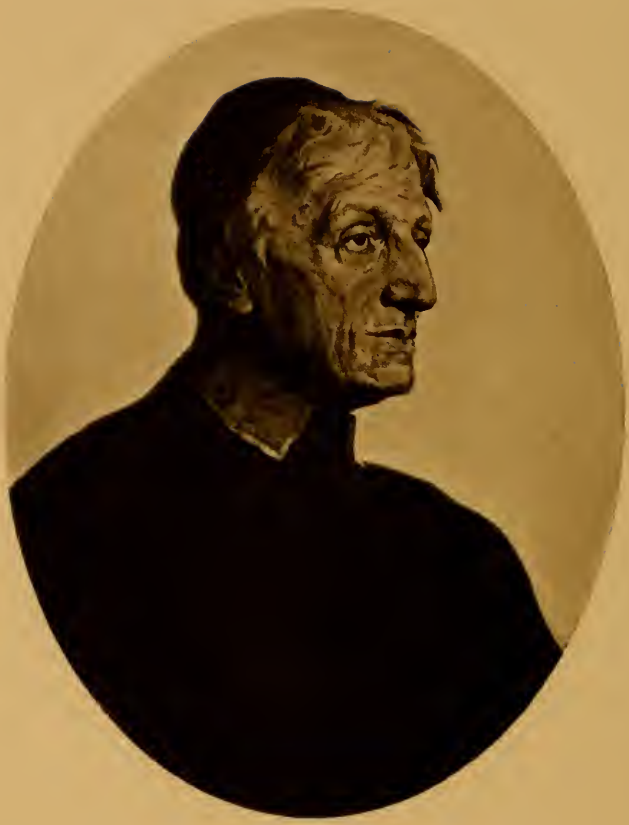
It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the issues that were now raised—the amazement on the one hand of hope and joyful confidence, on the other hand of fear and dark suspicion that now fell upon men's minds. To the one party, the Tractarian Movement meant the Romanizing and destruction of the Church of England. To the other it seemed the dawn of a new life within it, the exaltation of its horn at once against free thought, with the atheism that must follow, and against the Church of Rome. By the intelligent appeal to history and tradition, a wall of protection might be raised against the devastating flood

of "Liberalism," while at the same time the purity of Anglican doctrine and ritual would form a clear and effective barrier against Roman corruptions. This was the celebrated Via Media, to Newman and his party the one clear and solid footing in the surrounding fen, to their opponents a shaking quagmire from the beginning.

So far as its leader was concerned, the movement fell into two parts. For the first five years, with the pulpit of St. Mary's and the Tracts as his organs Newman led his gathering party through a period of brilliant successes only to be followed by a period of disillusionment and disastrous collapse. The turning point was the celebrated *Tract Ninety*. Like the first of the tracts, the last was the work of Newman's single hand. Its aim was to show that "the Articles are not framed on the principle of excluding those who prefer the theology of the early ages to that of the Reformation. Their framers constructed them in such a way as best to comprehend those who did not go so far in Protestantism as themselves. Anglo-Catholics are but the successors and representatives of those moderate reformers;

and their case has been directly anticipated in the wording of the Articles."[1] Though nothing was affirmed which had not been over and over again implied in the previous series, this open statement was too much for the authorities. In the Church of the time you could say what you liked, so long as you said it obscurely: so long as you did not say what you meant or mean what you said. But here was a man who was determined to force his doctrine on the public mind, who could say what he meant and meant what he said. The gathering storm burst. The Tract was denounced at headquarters, and the denunciations of the authorities in turn stirred the younger members of the party into more startling and uncompromising statements. Between the two Newman was between the upper and the nether millstone. The history is soon told. The "movement" broke into two. Pusey and Keble rallied the bulk of the party which remained loyal to the Church of England, and may since be said to have won it to their side. A smaller part stood staunchly by Newman, some, like the ablest of them,

[1] *Tract Ninety*, 2nd edition, pp. 81, 82.



W. G. Ward, preceding him, others following him to Rome. A few like Froude, the historian, and later on Mark Pattison—"the modern man," who, Dr. Barry thinks, might under more favourable circumstances have done for Newman's later life what Hurrell Froude did for his earlier—passed to "Liberalism."

But the interest of these years centred then, as it centres still, round the solitary figure in the village of Littlemore, to which Newman had retired on giving up his pulpit at St. Mary's. The Via Media had faded into moonshine and the ground was sinking beneath his feet. "From the end of 1841," he says, "I was on my deathbed as regards my membership of the Anglican Church." But he had still a long spiritual conflict before him. It was not till four years later that he was received into the Church of Rome: the light, you might say, of the University, the greatest of its living sons, knelt before a simple and ignorant Italian Passionist friar in the little room still shown in the Free Cottage Library at Littlemore.

Newman came to Birmingham in 1847 and lived in your city for the rest of his life: in it,

but not of it; yet perhaps of it too as far as it was possible for one like him to be of any earthly city. He had come to anchor. He had escaped from all intellectual doubts and hesitations. Henceforth he lived at peace with himself. But at what expense was peace purchased? We can understand the cloud of Anglican suspicion, almost of execration, under which he retired to Edgbaston. But it might have been expected that he would have been understood and trusted by the Church of his adoption—all the more because of the sacrifices he had made. The truth was, he had drunk too deeply of the Protestant spirit, particularly of the doctrine of the rights of conscience and of private judgment, to find himself wholly at home in the Church of Rome. Hence while Protestants found it incomprehensible how an intellect like his could consent to submit itself to Papal authority, Catholics found it equally impossible to understand how, having accepted the light, he should still keep peering into the darkness, seeking to test the sun of his own rushlight; how having entered the harbour, he should continue making his observations and setting his com-

pass as though he were still on the high seas.

It was not till the publication of his greatest book, the *Apologia pro Vita Sua* in 1864, that the cloud of English suspicion was rolled away, and not till Leo XIII came to the papal seat in 1879 that he received full recognition by the Roman Catholic Church.

Would we know what his life at Edgbaston between this and his death in 1890 was, we must wait for the Life that is promised from the Oratory. Meantime we can perhaps get a glimpse of it in his own description of the life of St. Philip of Neri, the saint to whom he dedicated himself when he entered the Church of Rome. "He was not a hunter of souls, but preferred tranquilly to cast in his net to gain them; he preferred to yield to the stream and direct the current which he could not stop of science, literature, art and fashion, and to sweeten and to sanctify what God had made very good and man had spoilt. Whatever was exact and systematic pleased him not, he put from him monastic rule and authoritative speech as David refused the armour of his king. He did not so much seek his own, as draw them to him. He sat in his small

room and they in their gay, worldly dress, the rich and the well born as well as the simple and the illiterate crowded into it. He was all things to all men. When he was called upon to be merry he was so ; if there was a demand upon his sympathy he was equally ready. He gave the same welcome to all, wearying himself to assist all to the utmost limits of his power." Newman died in 1890. He lies buried in the quiet burial-ground at Rednal beside the Lickeys. His memorial tablet is in the Church of the Oratory, and bears beneath the Cardinal's shield with its motto—"Cor ad cor loquitur": heart speaketh unto heart—the simple inscription of his name, with the words, also chosen by himself—"Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem": from shadows and semblances to the truth.

II

I have tried to make Newman's life comprehensible in the light of one central conviction, his faith in the Unseen, and the strong reaction this set up in his mind against the shallow popular philosophy of his time. But something—perhaps the chief thing—remains

still obscure. Others shared this conviction. It might be said to have been the note of the deeper mind of the time. It meant, as we now see, a forward movement to a larger faith in man, a deeper conception of God and His mode of operation in the world, a wider interpretation of what is meant by revelation. In spite of his belief in Conscience, Newman seemed to end in a distrust of human nature, a doubt as to whether there is any real evidence of the control of men's hearts by the divine, and an overmastering need to find a rest for his faith in some authoritative utterance coming from without. It was as though he had only got out into the stream to be caught in a back current and carried further up than the point from which he started. This is brought out by the contrast his life and teaching offer to those of his great contemporary Carlyle. "Two writers," says Froude, "have affected powerfully the present generation of Englishmen, Newman is one, Thomas Carlyle is the other." In Carlyle more than any one else we see the great forces of the century awakening and stretching themselves—with some grotesqueness of gesture, it is true, but powerfully and

effectively. Like Newman he was a lover of the past and the ages of faith, but he recognized that they were also the ages of childhood: he felt that their darknesses and credulities were things of the past. He believed in the Church, but it was the Church of the future whose "organic filaments" were coming together in obscure corners with quite other binding power than that of the authority of any man or any tradition. He believed in God, but it was a God who revealed Himself everywhere in nature and history, "weaving in time," not in any one time alone, "the garment we know him by"—whose best and greatest was not in the past but in the future. Whence the difference?

To understand it we must come back to a point where we all are one. Here we are in this "bank of time," the meeting-point, as Carlyle himself would say, of two eternities—all with one supreme human interest how to find assurance that we are not mere creatures of the moment, but parts of an eternal order, and that not as atoms might be parts of an eternal matter—drops of an eternal ocean, but lives and souls of an eternal Life or Soul,

minds and wills of an eternal Mind and Will.

Let now a man be convinced that this is the deepest, most precious of all truths; but let him be all in the dark as to how he is to come to assurance of it by way of human knowledge and inference. Let him even be assured that the human reason is a false light, sure if we put our trust in it alone to lead us further from the central truth on which he feels that salvation depends. On the other hand, let him have been brought up in the belief that out of the darkness at a particular time and through a particular organ the Eternal had once spoken in human voice and that the assurance which he seeks can be attained only by once for all renouncing the guidance of reason and accepting the outer testimony in simple trust. What choice, under these circumstances, would he have? To one to whom this outer voice was incredible, who held that natural experience and the reasoning founded upon it were the one path to whatever truth was attainable, such a renunciation would seem like putting out one's eyes in order to see. But to the seeker for assurance him-

self it would seem like keeping open the single window that looked out on Eternity.

Some such was Newman's case. No man had ever a profounder faith in the reality of the Unseen. No man had ever a more insistent craving to have a reasoned assurance of it. Yet this was just what his age seemed to show to be impossible. To cast off authority and seek to justify this belief through reason and philosophy, could only end in one way. Here there was no Via Media. On the one hand was faith, on the other reason. These two led opposite ways and there was no third. This opposition between faith and reason was an antithesis he never got beyond. More than anything else it is the light in which we must read his mental history. He held it at the outset. He held it at the end. The intermediate period was occupied in realizing what it involved. As he himself puts it—"Turn away from the Catholic Church and to whom will you go? It is your only chance of peace in this turbulent and changing world. There is nothing between it and scepticism."[1] Much indeed still remained dark to him. The doctrines of the Church were

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations.*

changing from age to age. At best perhaps they were only symbols of deeper unimaginable things, "the expressions in human language of truths to which the human mind is unequal." But such as they were, they were our only guide.

He was like a man who finds himself on a steep mountain side with a narrow ledge to stand upon, a cave of comparative shelter and safety behind him. Above him far away is the clear mountain top with its sunshine and peace, its true outlook on the world around. But how to get there he knows not, no map which he has shows the way. There is, indeed, a path which appears to lead forwards but it leads only downwards, and from what he knows or thinks he knows of the fate of those who have taken it there is little encouragement to try it. Is it much wonder that in these circumstances he clings to his ledge for such assurance of safety as it can give, or seeks a larger and more commodious resting-place that offers easy approach along the path by which he has come? But suppose the maps and the observations on which his estimate of the forward path is founded, are old and out of date. Suppose

the path, though apparently starting downwards and full of peril, turns nevertheless in the end upwards, and leads always to fuller light. In such a case it would be possible to see and sympathize with the life and teaching of this great lonely pilgrim, to realize the pathos, the sincerity, and the essential truth of his underlying faith, and yet to feel that the position he has taken up is no true resting-place for us who have other lights to guide us.

This I wish to suggest is what has actually happened. Already in Newman's time there were other thoughts of the evidences for the great truths for which he stood. Since he wrote, these have become widely known, and taken hold of the mind of large sections of the Christian world, entirely altering the intellectual outlook. What in detail these are, where they have come from and what they seem to justify, is too long a story to enter upon here. What is clear to any one who can read the signs of the times, is that among Protestants and Catholics alike there has spread in these days a conviction that human experience, both inner and outer, when rightly interpreted, not only does not contradict, but offers reliable

evidence for the existence of a spiritual purpose in human affairs. Not only in the voice of conscience which Newman admitted, but in the course of human development which he refused as evidence, it has become possible for us to read the signs of purpose and guidance. To take but one example, was there a single man whose heart and mind did not respond the other day, when at your Annual Meeting a leading speaker broke from the level of the commonplace with the words, "I believe there is a divine purpose in democracy!"[1]

I do not wish to pursue this thought but to apply it at once to the opposition between faith and reason on which Newman's teaching rests. It is true that it is a different thing to believe in the end of life, to "trust the larger hope," and to believe in a mathematical equation. But this is not a difference between belief upon more and upon less valid evidence. It is not a difference of degree but of kind. Let me try to illustrate from the latter example. You have heard of the man who refused to admit that one and one are two till he knew what was going to be made of the admission.

[1] Speech by Bishop Gore.

It seems absurd, but there is a good deal to be said for his caution. When the certainty of figures is pressed upon me I often feel inclined to reply—"I acknowledge your equation but I can make nothing of it—in fact I do not believe it unless you will condescend to tell me what one and one you mean."

Here are two men in a college lecture-room. Each is one, but one and one do not make two men, but tutor and student, and this is different. If you ask me what makes the difference, what it is that is added, I answer, it is the whole *world of knowledge and of the purposes of life.* I agree that I cannot show it by another equation. If you like to say I know it by faith, you may do so. But it is a faith which is not different from my reasoning as the uncertain or the unknown from the certain and the known. Rather it differs from equational logic as the more comprehensive and significant from the less, even as life itself differs from mathematics.

Though different then, faith and reason cannot be opposed. Faith indeed leaps to the end. It is the completion of what our reason leaves incomplete. But we should never reason un-

less we had faith in the ends of reason. As Pascal (another of Newman's great masters) said, "We should never seek for God unless we had already found Him." It is this conviction of the unity of faith and reason in all human experience which underlay the teaching of Carlyle and made it so fruitful in his time. But it was a truth that was hidden from Newman, partly, we now see, by reason of the narrowness of his own intellectual training; partly by the intellectual timidity which was so marked a feature of his mind. With the recognition of this truth there falls away the fatal alternative which his teaching offers.

If it be asked how, in spite of this, the representatives of the newer thought in the Church of Rome can yet appeal, as Father Tyrrell does in the *Hibbert Journal* of January of the present year,[1] to the teaching of Newman, in support of the tendencies which he represents, the answer is not far to seek. An honest perusal of the chief of his writings leaves no doubt at all that he is a devout believer in the ordinary Roman Catholic doctrines—the miraculousness of the Church, the unity and coherence of Romanist theology which must be accepted whole or not

[1] 1908.

at all, the infallibility of the interpretations of Council and Pope. In harmony with all this is his account of faith as acceptance on authority of what we cannot know. "By 'faith' I mean the Creed and assent to the Creed."[1] With this before him Father Gerard in the same number of the *Hibbert Journal* can say "the difference between Newman and his alleged successors is fundamental and absolute." On the other hand, Newman was far too sensitive to the deeper currents of the thought about him, far too deeply touched with the spirit of his time, not to feel that there was a deeper than any external authority, and that revelation can be no isolated or completed process. Hence it comes that it is possible to read not only between the lines but, in many finely expressed passages of his greatest books, suggestions of a teaching, "hints and seeds of thought," incompatible with the older doctrines.[2] This is particularly manifest in his theory of the Development of Doctrine. It would certainly be wrong to attribute to Newman writing

[1] *Anglican Difficulties.*

[2] See e.g. *Grammar of Assent,* 4th ed., pp. 349–51, 353, 386–8, 402, 410, 429, 486.

in 1845 the idea of development that Darwin announced in his *Origin of Species* in 1859. In Newman's exposition there is much that is arbitrary and artificial. Yet the truth remains that he clearly conceived of ideas and doctrines, and among them those of Christianity, as having had to enter into conflict for existence with other ideas, and as having been subjected in the process to transformations and enlargements comparable to those of organic growth.[1] Such a view is clearly incompatible with belief in a body of doctrine inalterably stereotyped for all time, and handed on from age to age for uncritical acceptance by the Christian world. With this in view his Roman Catholic biographer can write with truth that Newman "has reacted on the mental habits of those whom he joined by teaching them a language they could not have gained without him, modelling afresh their methods of Apologetics,"[2] and Father Tyrrell can maintain the essential "solidarity of Newmanism with modernism."

With the results of this attempt to under-

[1] See *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, chapter i., section i.

[2] See Dr. Barry's *Newman*, p. 275 and following.

stand the man, the movement which he initiated, and the immediate and remoter bearing of his thought before us, we come back to the question with which we started—the capitalized value of his teaching for us. So far I may be said to have advanced to an answer in connecting him with ideas and feelings characteristic of the deeper mind of the nineteenth century. But others, we have seen, gave utterance to these ideas with equal conviction and with greater force and consistency. Is the conclusion then that Newman merely succeeded in expressing in a weaker and more effeminate form the great truths for which these others stood? It has been said of Newman's poetry that it is the poetry of Wordsworth cast in the language of women. Is this all that we can say of his teaching in general? I think there is more.

1. Others taught the reality of the Unseen. To Newman it was given to realize it as a constant inward presence, the source of an inward ideal of purity and fullness of spiritual life. Inward perfection better than peace; growth the mark of life: we have seen how early he took these as his watchwords. In the teaching of Carlyle there is little of this

His is a gospel of work. God is manifested in the hero, and the hero is the swallower of formulas, too often of scruples. Newman holds up the opposite and complementary ideal—the ideal of the saint, the devoted or devout.[1] Taken alone this also has its weakness. It is too apt to fade away into scrupulosity, unreality and ineffectiveness, or to be connected with some single and partial object. Nevertheless it is one the world cannot afford to do without. It is the ideal of Buddha and of Socrates, of the Hebrew prophets, and of the Greatest of them, of St. Francis and St. Catherine, of John Stuart Mill as well as of John Henry Newman. It is this that gives beauty and refinement to character and in its best types is recognized as the very crown of life. In times like our own, full of the call to social work and social reform, there is a real danger of its being overlooked. No thought and effort can be too great in the cause of material reform. But the reformer can never safely forget what it is in the last resort that makes the life for which we strive worth striving for, and that sustains us in striving for

[1] See especially "Saintliness, the Standard," *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, v.

it. Movements, like men, have their souls, not as something in the next world, but as what makes life worth having in this. What shall it profit the best of them if they gain the whole world, and lose their own soul? or what will they give in exchange for their soul?

2. This is the first truth for which Newmanism stands: what he called the "idea of a saint." The second is closely related to it. It is the need of organized spiritual fellowship if the soul is to rise to the height of its calling. Regeneration is no individual matter. It can only be begun, continued and perfected in a society devoted to that end—in a "fellowship of the saints." It was the perception of this truth that explains the central place in human life, that Newman assigned to the Church. To it are committed the means of grace. "The Church," he says, "aims at three special virtues as reconciling and uniting the soul to its Maker,—faith, purity and charity,—for two of which the world cares nothing. The Church regards, consults for, labours for the individual soul; her one object is to quit herself of this responsibility, to take offences out of the way, to rescue from evil, to convert,

teach, feed, protect, perfect. Good and evil to her are not lights and shades passing over the surface of society, but living powers springing from the depths of the heart."[1] Here too, doubtless, there is room for fatal mistake. Belief in the place and power of the Church in the life of the soul is apt to degenerate into a belief in the special and miraculous sanctity of some particular Church. But this is one of the things the human mind is likely to outgrow, has indeed, in the view of many, already outgrown. The idea itself will not grow old—the idea of a fellowship of men and women "holding the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" with a tradition, a continuity, an atmosphere of its own—a meeting-place, a service and a ritual, however simple, round which associations may gather—calls and directions to human service, in which mind and character may find their discipline, and religion its reality.

It is a long cry from the rich, august, historic Church to which Newman looked, to these last products of Democracy, the

[1] *Difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching*, chapter viii (condensed).

Adult Classes and the Labour Churches of our own city. But it is the same human need that has given birth to both; it is the same spirit and, if not the same *belief*, I think we may say that it is the same *faith* that underlies the work of the teachers, administrators, members of both.

It is the clearness with which Newman realized these two complementary ideas, the idea of inward devotedness and the idea of an outward and visible embodiment of spiritual fellowship that lifts his teaching above the limitations of time and circumstance, and gives him the place that Froude claims for him as one of the two great centres of spiritual influence in the nineteenth century.

SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES

Born in Birmingham, 1833. Died in London, 1898.

By R. Catterson Smith

Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart., was born in this city on August 28, 1833, at No. 11, Bennett's Hill—a house on the left hand as you walk up the hill from New Street. It is now marked by a tablet between the first floor windows. His mother died within a week of his birth. His father was a framemaker, carver and gilder by trade, but not of the successful type. He said of him: "My father was a very poetical little fellow, tender-hearted and touching, quite unfit for the world into which he was pitched. We had very, very few books, but they were poets all of them, and I remember when I was about twelve or so he used to read to me little poems he made himself, but as time went on he grew shy of reading them to me. He used to read in a very touching voice, melodious and pathetic, believing everything he

read. I never heard such sympathetic reading. And he believed all good things that were ever said of any one and was altogether unworldly and pious. Like his countrymen he knew nothing at all of art, and couldn't understand what it was all about or why it should be ; but for Nature he had a passion, and would seldom miss a sunrise if it could be seen, and would walk tired miles to see a cornfield." With that statement we must be satisfied, if we are seeking in parents or ancestors for indications of the gifts which blossomed in the boy. It would have been interesting to us in this city if he had come of a line of jewellers.

The child seems to have been delicate and was, in consequence, sent into the neighbouring country constantly for the sake of fresh air. One place he remembered late in life was called "Nineveh," which was probably mixed up in his mind with the Biblical city of that name. Doubtless those little trips to the green fields and flowers fed the fast-opening soul of the little boy with impressions which were afterwards given back to the world in the backgrounds of pictures of most romantic charms.

In 1844 at eleven years of age he became a

pupil at King Edward's School, New Street, being placed on the commercial, but later on the classical side, I suppose from indications he showed of being gifted in that direction. So far as his drawing went in school, his master —Thomas Clarke—reported that his "drawing might be better if he exhibited more industry." It appears, however, that he showed considerable industry in drawing out of his head, and he had a reputation amongst the boys for drawing devils.

Books on history and romance in prose and verse he devoured. *Æsop's Fables* was a special favourite; while from Macpherson's *Ossian* he says he got his first love for Celtic lore.

He had a strong predilection for matters theological and ecclesiastical, as may be seen by letters he wrote. He fancied signing himself—

"EDW. C. B. JONES.
"ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY (Elect).
"EDOUARD CARDINAL DE BIRMINGHAM."

He evidently steeped himself in the picturesqueness of Church usages, and that feeling appears never to have left him through life.

At seventeen years of age we find a few indica-

tions of his powers of drawing, or perhaps I should say his power of graphic expression, a great advance upon the devils of two years before. The group of people, like a football scrum—the reception of a returning relative—is full of representative fun, invention and observation, not giving the least hint of the special developments of the future artist. Perhaps the drawing in a letter to his father from London, a memory of the British Museum, may suggest the future a little more.

The year 1852 was the 300th anniversary of the foundation of King Edward's School, in commemoration of which prizes were offered for essays. Edward Burne-Jones as a candidate for one of these wrote an essay on "The state of literature in England in the time of Edward the Sixth," but he was not successful in winning the exhibition or scholarship which would have paid his way in Oxford, to which University his father had decided to send him. Before leaving his school period I should like to give his tribute to one of his teachers. Though I think it well to say that he nearly always steeped his admiration in the sweet essence of his mind, he always romanced.

"At Bideford," he writes, "died the only master I ever had who had any brains. His name was Abraham Thompson, a doctor of divinity he was; black hair grew on the back of his hands which I used to marvel at; he was very handsome and black. Funny little boys are—*how they watch.* He could be very angry and caned furiously; at times I caught it. I think he grew very poor in his last years and had the school at Bideford. I never heard about him at the end. I worshipped him when I was little, and we used to look at each other in class. I wonder what *he* thought when *he* looked; *I* used to think Abraham of the Chaldees was like him. I was always sorry that he was called Thompson, for I liked lovely names—should have liked one myself and a handsome form—yes I should. So that was Thompson. I have thought how far more needful with a lad is one year with a man of intellect than ten years of useless teaching. He taught us few facts, but spent all the time drilling us that we might know what to do with them when they came. Abraham Kerr Thompson, that was his name, I wonder if any one remembers him. A strange thing he would do, unlike any other I ever heard of; he would call up the class, and open any book and make the head boy read out a chance sentence, and then he would set to work with every word—how it grew and came to mean this or that. With the flattest sentence in the world he would take us to ocean waters and the marches of Babylon and hills of Caucasus and the wilds of Tartary and the constellations and abysses of space. Yes, no one ever taught me anything but he only."

This passage gives a good idea of his manner of speech which had a certain playfulness with a touch of whimsicality in it.

In 1853 we find him in Oxford at Exeter College, somewhat disappointed. The religious enthusiasm with which the writings of Cardinal Newman had inspired him, gave him great hope that there he would find fervid and learned men on every side—he found languor and indifference instead. But if he found shortcomings in that direction, he found a life-long friend in that wonder of men, William Morris. Both these men were intended for the Church by their parents, but other forces were at work as well as the decision of parents.

"The daily work of the schools," he says, speaking of himself and Morris, "was uninteresting to them, and made absolutely desolate by the manner of teaching; but little by little we fed ourselves with the food that fitted us."

That food was the reading of Ruskin, Tennyson, Carlyle, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Malory's Morte d'Arthur and everything they could get dealing with mediaevalism.

They paid a visit to London and saw several pre-Raphaelite pictures, amongst them Madox Brown's "Last of England." But the picture which delighted them the most was one by

D. G. Rossetti of Dante drawing an angel when he was disturbed by "certain people of importance."

In one of the long vacations they decided to form a party and visit the churches of Northern France—Morris had been there the year before and reported their magnificence.

They went straight from Boulogne to Abbeville, where they arrived late in the evening, but Morris, the eager, the strong and the restless, was up and about early next morning, and they wandered the streets before breakfast. Off again in the afternoon for Amiens. They saw Beauvais, Paris with Notre Dame, the Cluny Museum and the Louvre. At the Louvre Morris led Burne-Jones blindfold up to Fra Angelico's Coronation of the Virgin, that he might see him under the shock of sudden delight. They also saw Chartres and Rouen. On their way home on the quay of Havre at night they definitely resolved to devote their lives to Art—Morris to be an architect and Burne-Jones to be a painter. "That was the most memorable moment of my life," says Burne-Jones.

Before leaving Oxford in fulfilment of this

resolve, the idea of publishing a magazine[1] which would give the ideas of the little set of enthusiasts of which these two men were the centre, was formed. The expense was to fall on Morris, as he was the moneyed man. By Burne-Jones's contributions to it, it was shown that he had fine literary gifts. His most important contribution was an essay on Thackeray's *The Newcombs*, then just published, in which he expressed some of his artistic faith as well as his high admiration of the gifts of Thackeray. Two sentences will suffice to show the serious and exalted state of his mind.

> When shall we learn to read a picture as we would a poem, to find some story from it, some little atom of human interest that may feed our hearts?
>
> An artist should be no faint echo of other men's thoughts, but a voice concurrent or prophetical, full of meaning.

Busy while at Oxford with book learning, he was by no means neglectful of art—for he was continually designing—we hear of designs from the *Lady of Shalott*, and illustrations to the *Fairy Family*, by Archibald Maclaren. Doubtless many others were in hand which never saw

[1] *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine.* Twelve parts were all that appeared, 1856.

completion, or have been lost in the course of time.

He never took a degree at Oxford.[1] He left the University in 1855. Then began his artistic life in real earnest, the first great event in which was his meeting with Dante Gabriel Rossetti, which took place one night at the Working Man's College, where Ruskin, Rossetti and others took part in the teaching. The impression made upon Rossetti by young Burne-Jones is expressed in a letter from Rossetti to a friend, thus :

> One of the nicest young fellows in—dreamland.

The friendship with Rossetti grew, and with it the stimulus of his fine work and as fine a personality—such a personality that I have heard Morris say whatever Rossetti said became a fixed law for them.

Burne-Jones had no regular art training. He did while in Birmingham attend a school of design three evenings a week, but now that he had launched out into the career of an artist he felt severely his want of executive power, and to help himself in this respect he

[1] He was made an honorary D.C.L. in 1881, and Honorary Fellow of Exeter College in 1882.

attended the drawing and painting classes at Leigh's School in Newman Street, Oxford Street. This was a private school whereto went art aspirants—art heretics very often—who did not enter the Royal Academy or other schools that had regular systems through which the pupils had to wade. That was all the art schooling Burne-Jones ever had, I believe.

Of this period are several designs clearly inspired by Rossetti, of which "Going to Battle" is one. In it will be seen the deliberate imitation of Rossetti's manner of representing the watery ripple of hair—which has been carried by that artist to a beauty never attained before, to my knowledge.

Suddenly we find Edward Burne-Jones in correspondence with Ruskin. He writes to his friend Mr. Cormell Price:

> I'm not Ned any longer. I'm not Edward Burne-Jones any longer. I've dropped my personality. I'm a correspondent with Ruskin, and my future title is the man who wrote to Ruskin and got an answer by return.

His first actual meeting with Ruskin took place in 1856, when he was twenty-four years of age. He records their meeting in a letter:

> Just come back from being with our hero for four

hours. So happy we've been: he is so kind to us: calls us his dear boys, and makes us feel such old friends. To-night he comes down to our rooms to carry off my drawing and show it to lots of people; to-morrow night he comes again, and every Thursday night the same—isn't that like a dream?

The rooms referred to were the rooms in which he and William Morris lodged—and for which William Morris was having furniture made after his own designs. In true mediaeval fashion they were being painted upon by Rossetti and Burne-Jones.

Burne-Jones painted a little in the studio of Rossetti. But of more value to him than the actual painting was the guiding advice Rossetti gave him—indeed, the guiding principle of his artistic life—which he has recorded in the following words:

He taught me to have no fear or shame of my own ideas, to design perpetually, to seek no popularity, to be altogether myself, and this not in any words I can remember, but in the tenor of his conversation always, and in the spirit of everything he said. So what I chiefly gained from him was not to be afraid of myself, and to do the thing I liked most: but in those first years I never wanted to think but as he thought, and all he did and said fitted me through and through.

What does this advice, Not to be afraid, or ashamed of his own ideas, mean? We must

be clear upon that point if we are to get at the underlying principle of Burne-Jones's art.

The answer is, that there were several paths open to the young man—several schools of painting into which he might drift. There was the residue of the school of which Reynolds and Gainsborough were the greatest ornaments—which came down to us through Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir Benjamin West, Sir Charles Eastlake: the art of flunkeydom it might be called, which had wasted the talents of many a gifted one. There was a school of painting which dealt with the appearances of actual life. And there was the school which dealt with those visions or dreams which spring within the mind from its contact with old legends, and from thoughts which have to be expressed by allegories and symbols. Rossetti saw in the young man the rare capacity to become an artist of the latter school, but he also knew that the surrounding influences were likely to work against that capacity, and to fill his mind with doubts as to the wisdom of following such visions and dreams. He may also have feared that his young disciple might think it necessary to trim his ideas to bring them into line with work of the sort that had

been done or was being done, that the fear of being unusual might get hold of him.

Let us take another view of the matter. We all have a double power of vision. We have eyes which see the outer world, and we have eyes which see the world within our minds—a world wherein wander all kinds of dim dreams and memories. Each of these worlds is equally real, equally natural. A few of us have our mind-eyes more open than our outer-world eyes, most of us have very dim mind-eyes. What are those mind images like as a rule? Vague enough, I think.

Take any well-known legendary person such as Moses. We have all heard of him often enough to have formed some impression of him. Well, what is that impression? Michael Angelo made a great statue in marble of him, which is in Rome in one of the churches. It gives the impression he formed of Moses. He conceives of him as a great force—a great leader of men. It will be remembered that "horns of light" stood out of his head—Michael Angelo has put horns on him, but they are short horns like those on a young bull. Did he intend them to look like horns of light, or did he put them there

to be a sign of Moses? I think he put them there because they suggested to his mind the wilderness and the reversion of man through forty years of wandering there to his primitive life amid shepherds and goats. You and I do not translate them into horns of light—but they convey to us a goatlike suggestion—which is also helped out by the long, ropey beard. The costume is not Egyptian nor in any way local or belonging to an historic period. It rather looks like pieces of drapery tied rudely on—as might be supposed to happen in the case of men wandering where all the formal clothes of civilization would have disappeared. That rendering of Moses by Michael Angelo I think falls in with, and embodies, the vague general impression we have of him; and once having seen that figure, I think it takes its place in our minds as a wonderful interpretation of that great fierce lover of liberty wandering in the wilderness, who saw God face to face.

William Blake translated the Book of Job in the same way, and I am informed that an eminent translator of the books of the Bible says that Blake's rendering of it gives the truest

impression of the original. Burne-Jones has done similar work, though not on the same high plane.

Such men we may call translators of the visions of the mind. The order of men who people the mind's world for us who have less clear seeing.

I have just said Burne-Jones has done similar work "though not on the same high plane." I think the difference between Burne-Jones and these two men is, that they thought less of beauty than of the idea they were expressing, while he thought more of beauty than of the idea. He was more of a decorator and less of a visionary than they were.

Burne-Jones's pictures of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table have visualized for many of us the glamour of that strange period outside actual history. We may not care about its kings and queens, and ever fighting knights, its plotting ladies, its wizardry, its illicit loves made so beautiful as to be almost justified, with self-renunciation lifted to the highest virtue, and the mysterious quest of the cup which received the blood-drops of Christ when he hung on the Cross—

So haggard and so woe-begone.

That sort of thing was in the air then: Tennyson had dressed it sweetly for drawing-room use—Rossetti, Morris and others were singing it too—and the cultured classes were crying out for more.

It is beautiful in its own unreal way. But we have wakened to a wider view of things. Although Burne-Jones knew it to be a Celtic story he did not dress his people in historic Celtic garb, nor did he use Celtic ornament to decorate them. His shields are not Celtic, nor his armour, nor his architecture. He did not want to represent an historic period, but to translate the impressions that the legend made on his mind, and he has done so in a most wonderful and convincing manner, endowing them with a sense of mystery unique in art.

The danger likely to beset an artist who relies upon the visions or fancies of his mind is that he is apt to drift further and further from wide human interests and from the natural appearances with which other people are familiar, and to cultivate idiosyncrasies; to shut himself up in a little close garden and to grow curious flowers which may please a small number

of specially cultivated people. That has unfortunately happened over and over again, and even in the case of Rossetti himself. Burne-Jones is not altogether free from it.

At first he painted in the early style of Rossetti, representing scenes as if they took place in actual life, somewhat like the work of the pre-Raphaelites, but not pledged quite so much to fact. Later he adopted a purely unreal treatment. He did not desire that his audience should compare his pictures with nature or with pictures representing nature, so that those people—and there are a great many—who say that his work is unnatural and unreal are so far quite right, but they should not expect in his pictures what he did not intend them to convey.

To express himself, he had to discover a language, a language of painting fitted to his particular service. Few of his contemporaries were engaged upon that kind of work—none almost. To the ancient painters he had to appeal for help. For those ancient painters worked upon conventional lines which had been developed after long effort to express ideas in the most beautiful and spiritually truthful way.

They were not realists. As illustrative of what I mean, a very early crucifix enters into painful details, streaming blood and gaping wounds. But in the later crucifix that sort of realism disappears, *at least in Italy*, and we get the crucifix as a beautiful symbol free of all agony. The spiritual idea has taken the place of the physical suffering.

His visits to Italy were, therefore, of the utmost importance to him. The first was in 1859, when he was twenty-seven years of age. Two years later another. Then over ten years intervened and he paid another visit, and his last a year later in his fortieth year. Four visits in all. He saw the chief cities north of Rome and they had a profound influence upon him, corroborating all he felt and all he believed in.

The painters who influenced him most were, I think: Sandro Botticelli, Mantegna, Giotto, Carpaccio, Fra Angelico and Michael Angelo. He assimilated something from each of them, and from many others. But it will be found that they were all before the art of painting gained its greatest power of expressing reality.

Modern painters, with the exception of the pre-Raphaelites, were uninteresting to him. Turner, that great master of paint and light and atmosphere, was nothing to him or to William Morris—in spite of Ruskin's championing of him. They both saw through mediaeval spectacles.

Let us try if we can apply to one of his own pictures his desire that we should be able to "read a picture as we do a poem."

Take COPHETUA AND THE BEGGAR MAID.

This is the old story of the charm of lowly beauty subduing the great.

Look at her sitting up there—alert—not quite at ease. Look at her far-off expression, as if she beheld some vision of liberty and joy perhaps about to vanish from her life, or felt some wonder come upon her. What if all the splendours of the palace meant a prison! What if they took from her the joy in the singing of birds, in the sheep up the mountain-side, the sunrise and the sunset, and all the simple pleasures of the peasant's life!

Perhaps those youths standing up behind the throne are chanting some love-song laden with power to ensnare her heart.

He sits—in silent adoration—as if afraid to wreck her vision by word or deed, seeing in her a guileless human soul. See how he sits below her, and with side-glance watches, lest he should even by the turn of his head, disturb her reverie, lest he should force the life he would have her lead with him upon her, without due thought and her soul's full consent.

And what an old world wonder of a place it is! What strange and mystery-haunted images are wrought upon that throne!

Through the opening at the top are seen the battlements and the distant solemn tree-tops, and one band of quiet cloud, giving a feeling of profound repose.

Note that she is barefooted, with a girdle of sheep's wool, is slightly clad, but not with rags. The painter does not want us to pity the ragged beggar, but to love the simple soul. He never painted rags.

Let us take another picture, THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM—which is in the Art Gallery here, and which was originally designed for William Morris to reproduce in tapestry.

The scene represents the visit of the wise men to the Holy Mother and Child. How far

this is from the actual or probable! He felt that the subject was of eternal interest. No nation, no time was of importance; and indeed who, reading the New Testament story, sees it all happening in the East? This is the Divine Mother and that the Divine Child for all time. Those wise men—three kings—are presenting their crowns to the Child. And note they represent the three races of man. The Eastern, the European and the African. The star is not an astronomical one, but is a ball of light borne by an angel, which, I think, is an original invention by the painter. The Mother has that strange look of resignation to a state of exaltation bewildering to her understanding, which some of the ancient painters, especially Sandro Botticelli, gave to the Blessed Virgin. The place is not in a town, but out by a lonely woodside; the shed, a canopy of straw, but roses are about them and beneath their feet flowers. The shed is the treatment of it used by many of the ancient painters.

The general colour of this picture is of a moonlight grey, showing very little more than would be seen in moonlight.

The greatest judgment and invention is

shown in the ornaments, the crown on the ground being most beautiful, all evincing deep sympathy with the craftsmanship of the early centuries. The angel here, as in his Annunciation, is designed under the influence of the figures in the porch of Chartres Cathedral.

These two pictures can be read somewhat, and are full of meaning.

Take another, THE GOLDEN STAIRS. What does it mean? We might as well ask what does a piece of music mean. It is simply a delightfully bewitching snare to catch the fancy, an artist's expression of beautiful lines and contrasts in a mysterious nowhere. Tested by actuality: what of the dangerous stairs? where is this crowd of listless maidens coming from? or where are they going to? It may be a bit of the far-off land of peace and ease, eternal youth and music which we dream of in contrast to the strenuous life which we are doomed to at present.

Now, although I have made an attempt to explain or analyse these pictures, it must never be forgotten that it is quite impossible to express in words what a good picture conveys

to the mind. There is so much in the way it is done—so much in *unspeakable* delicacies, which can only be seen by the searching eye, and felt by our most sympathetic nerves. A really good picture needs no name. Its subject may be obvious or it may not. You stand in front of it and look—only look—but you take away more from it than you are conscious of. If it is beautiful, and earnest, and true, the ideal in the centre of your soul has had its proper food, and the far-off hopes of man are brought nearer by your uplifting.

"Colour," which to the average mind only means a pleasant arrangement of hues, may be far more than that; just as music may be far more than an agreeable arrangement of sounds. The average artist arranges colour to please the eye only. But artists of the magnitude of Burne-Jones have a wider range of meaning in colour.

We find in him three phases of colour—the first giving the feeling of the chasteness of a spring day, *when the thought is religious*; the second like the mellow richness of the autumn, *when the senses are appealed to*; the third somewhat like the grey of twilight, *when the thought is solemn.*

These phases he used to create the mental atmosphere he desired in his audience.

As a portrait painter he painted into his people his own fancy rather than what could be said to represent them. They are consequently more representative of his own mind than of his sitters. He feared to paint the natural complexion of the face—made them mostly pale. This he did in obedience to his dislike to realism.

I have now dealt briefly with his pictures, but there is besides a vast region of work touching the lesser crafts. Of these, stained glass windows come next to his pictures in importance. Birmingham is the proud possessor of four of the finest in the Cathedral Church of St. Philip.

No man ever had greater powers of graceful arrangement of forms, and if one asks for melody in line only, he gives that perfectly. He had the power to make things "sing," as he was in the habit of calling it. In fact, he could design too easily, and his work has a tendency to over-sweetness in consequence.

His appeal is, on the whole, to the cultured

more than to the mass of people. And I cannot help thinking that if his education had been less literary he would have produced work which would have touched a wider audience.

People who are familiar with his serious work only, do not suspect the strong vein of fun which was in him. Those who were near him saw it constantly, and it now is to be seen in the many humorous drawings he made.

It is an everlasting pity and shame that he was not employed to decorate the walls of some fine building—a thing he would have loved to do. What it would be to have a great hall covered with the legends of King Arthur by him—and another of the "Book of Job," by William Blake!

Manchester has had the wisdom to have its Town Hall decorated by Madox Brown, and many will be the pilgrims to that city to see those pictures.

He was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in his fifty-second year, although he never sent a picture to its exhibition until after that. He resigned that associateship after three years, as it had not been followed by the full membership.

He was created a baronet on the recommendation of Mr. Gladstone in January, 1894.

He died suddenly in June, 1898.

Since I completed this lecture I found the following letter in Mr. Comyns Carr's recently published book, *Some Eminent Victorians.* It is a reply by Burne-Jones to a letter from Mr. Comyns Carr asking for information about certain pictures he had chosen for notice in his "Ignotus" articles which he was about to republish. It is a piece of self-criticism of great interest, when it is remembered that the writer was by no means a disappointed artist, or one who had not an abundance of admirers.

I need not say that such a flattering review of them gave me pleasure, for whatever cause I have to see them with disappointment, such sympathy as you express cannot be anything but most welcome. But there is so little to say of the kind of information you ask for, and I should like to say nothing, for a sudden feeling of being ridiculous overwhelms me. At Oxford till twenty-three, therefore no right to begin art at all, never having learnt one bit about it practically, nor till that time having seen any ancient picture at all to my remembrance. Provincial life at home, at Oxford prints of Chalons and Landseer—you know them all. I think Morris's friendship began everything for me, everything that I afterwards cared for. When I left Oxford I got to know Rossetti, whose friendship I sought and obtained. He taught me

practically all I ever learned; afterwards I made a method for myself to suit my nature. He gave me courage to commit myself to imagination without shame, *a thing both good and bad for me.* It was Watts much later who compelled me to try and draw better. I quarrel with Morris about Art. He journeys to Iceland and I to Italy, which is a symbol. And I quarrel too with Rossetti. If I could travel backwards, I think my heart's desire would take me to Florence in the time of Botticelli. I do feel out of time and place, and then you should let me go crumbling and mouldering on, for I am not fit for anything else but a museum. You see I am writing in front of my work and ought to know, and I do know.

R. W. DALE

Born December 1st, 1829. Died March 13th, 1895.

By Charles Silvester Horne

While I appreciate highly my privilege this evening in being permitted to speak on such a theme to such an audience, I shall have to crave your indulgence because of the special difficulty of my task. It is, in the first place, impossible for me to assume an attitude of detached criticism as one might try to do in estimating the work, and the life, of some man of distinction whom one had never known. I knew and loved Dr. Dale. Stories of his college friendship were a golden tradition in the home in the Midlands where I was brought up. I surrendered to the spirit of hero-worship for Dale of Birmingham before I first experienced the bracing influence of his personality, or sat spellbound beneath his eloquence. I frankly confess myself incapable of even an approximation to impartiality in discussing either the

creed or the public service of one who did more than any other teacher and leader of my generation to shape the ideals and determine the life work of the younger ministers. But the second difficulty which I feel is that though I have so vivid and grateful a memory of him, I cannot speak to you as an old Birmingham friend and associate would have been able to do—some colleague of his through those strenuous and memorable years when the architects and builders of municipal Birmingham were not only adding fresh fame to this city, but inaugurating a new era of civic and social progress. So far as intimate personal familiarity with the local details of that historic struggle is the qualification for any appreciation of Dr. Dale and his work, I am disqualified, and can only claim the secondary qualification of genuine enthusiasm for those ideals which Birmingham contributed to our national life. Disabled therefore for the part of critic by reason at once of too sacred memories and too imperfect knowledge, you will forgive me if I play the more congenial rôle of eulogist, and if this lecture takes the form of the tribute of a disciple to a dead but ever-dear master.

There need be no quarrel between Birmingham and London as to the credit for the two famous citizens Mr. Chamberlain and Dr. Dale. It is, of course, open to London to suggest that Birmingham had to come to the metropolis for the men of genius which she could not produce herself. It is equally open to Birmingham to retort that these two men gave early proof of sagacity by leaving London and coming to the only city capable of doing them justice. London may avow herself so rich in talent that she can supply citizens and statesmen for the rest of the kingdom; Birmingham may reflect that despite changes in her fiscal theories she has no objection to the free importation of good raw material. The quality of the raw material is, of course, an all-important thing; but even the best may be of little value if you do not know what to make of it when you have got it. It is enough to say that so far as Dr. Dale was concerned he was Dale of Birmingham the world over. Nearly forty years' association with this city would have sufficed to strengthen any languid hands and confirm any feeble knees that might have been a lamentable legacy from London. London, truth to tell,

was associated with the mortification of his early ambitions, Birmingham with the realization of them. A great name in London in the forties was Dr. John Campbell, minister of Whitefield's Tabernacle, Moorfields, where the Dales attended. He was as grim an old champion of an intolerant orthodoxy as ever roasted a heretic, and with that note of papal infallibility which has not been wanting in very extreme Protestants in all ages. Dictatorial and domineering, he was incapable of any effort of the imagination so daring and dazzling as the conception that in the young lad of a poor home there might have arisen a greater than the Solomon of the Moorfields' Tabernacle. It was Dr. Campbell who put his foot down with every appearance of finality on the ambition of the young man and his parents, and refused a recommendation to one of the colleges where he might have been trained for the ministry. From which it appears that even the decrees of Nonconformist Vaticans are not always infallible wisdom, any more than those of a more pretentious establishment elsewhere.

But if London was thus associated with a

keen disappointment, it is only fair to point out that there is another and nobler association to be chronicled. Difficult as it is to treat the sacredest of all subjects in a public lecture, any incident that uncovers the secret springs of the inner life of such a man as Dr. Dale must detain us for a moment. For we may as well set it forth once for all that, great and famous as he subsequently became in the civic and political, the educational and ecclesiastical worlds, these were not the worlds in which he most of all lived and moved and had his being. The most original fact about Dr. Dale was undoubtedly his religious faith. He himself would never at any time have hesitated to trace his public activities to certain religious convictions, which again were the product of certain spiritual experiences. Mr. Lecky has told us in his history how a humble meeting in Aldersgate Street, at which John Wesley experienced the spiritual change that profoundly affected his life, "marks an epoch in English history." It is worth your while to reflect how much of the municipal and educational history of this city is intimately connected with the preaching of a sermon by the Rev.

James Sherman, the immediate result of which was that Robert William Dale, as I heard him tell the story, left the chapel as in a dream, aware that something had happened which had affected his life at the centre. Such spiritual crises, where they are real and profound, mean the quickening of the whole being; and great national and ecclesiastical movements, like mighty rivers, can, not infrequently, be traced to some simple source in the birth of a new manhood beneath a creative influence which is at once the most mysterious and the most efficient of all the forces that make or mar our lives.

It is sixty years ago since Dr. Dale entered as a student at Spring Hill College in this city to prepare himself for the Congregational ministry. Dr. J. B. Paton of Nottingham is almost the only survivor of the brilliant band of men who won no little reputation in the land for what was then relatively a small theological seminary. It is not, however, numbers that make a school or a college great, but primarily personality in the teachers; and Spring Hill College was associated with one professor of genius. I mean, of course, Henry Rogers, another name of which Birmingham may be justly

proud, the friend and literary colleague of Macaulay, Stephen, Whateley and others. He was a philosopher and student of history, a brilliant essayist, a keen and subtle thinker, a wit, an inspiring conversationalist, and through all and above all a kindly and devout Christian gentleman. It can hardly be doubted, I think, that among the earliest of the formative influences of Dr. Dale's life this one ranked highest. Henry Rogers was in the best sense of the word a man of the world, deeply interested in, and interesting his students in every living movement of thought and action. We have often had reason to complain of the narrowing and even monastic effect of life in a seminary, and nothing could have been healthier by way of abatement of any such tendency than personal contact with one whose tastes and ideas were so cosmopolitan, and who regarded it as belonging to the function of a college professor not to discourage but to compel original thought on the part of his men. We can imagine how congenial such a personality would be to a young man of Dale's temperament. The seminary has yet to be built that could have made a monk of him. For the ascetic spirit he had

less than no respect. He had no ambition to play the part of the small coasting vessel, skirting timidly about among the shallows and sheltered places, and exploring the petty creeks and estuaries of thought. He was built for the high seas. He was happy in the great waters. He moved, as only great minds can, with a superb ease and power, where men of smaller build are timid and vacillating. He was, as we all know so well, a man of massive and masculine intellect, and John Bright's old saying about him, that he suggested the Church militant was emphatically true. It was never his way to evade discussion and controversy. He had a soldier's instinct for the storm-centre, and the "happy warrior's" joy in battle. What distinguished his fighting was not the smart and supple use of the rapier, but the tremendous sweep of the broadsword, as of some knight of heroic mould and giant stature bearing down all before him in the thickest of the fray. One consequence of this was that he was never afraid of theology, nor, let me add, of theological controversy. Whether controversy is noble or ignoble depends absolutely on the spirit of the controversialists. He had

no sympathy with a tame and weak surrender where great truths were at stake simply because, as is sometimes argued, good and pious people differ, and therefore it is best to leave the subject alone. He was drawn by sheer intellectual and spiritual interest to the discussion of the biggest and most momentous problems of life and religion, and believed that the Church of Christ in England would suffer irreparable loss if she did not face the problems of theology with as firm and inflexible an intellectual courage as the leaders of science or philosophy have dedicated to the problems on which they have spent their strength.

I have been led to say so much on this point not only because it explains why at this formative period a leader of thought like Henry Rogers would be invaluable to him, but because it also explains why another famous Birmingham teacher, who inspired some of his most characteristic ideals, could yet never wholly satisfy him. In that biography of Dr. Dale, by his son, which is in the way of becoming a Nonconformist classic, the author recognizes fully the influence of George Dawson in strengthening convictions in Dale which afterwards bore fruit

in the masterly books which he devoted to the exposition of Christian ethics. There is no reference in that biography to the very interesting appreciation by John Ruskin, in the *87th Fors*, of an article on George Dawson contributed by Dale to the *Nineteenth Century*, and which is an admirable indication of the writer's standpoint. There are two passages in it at once critical of and appreciative of George Dawson, which Mr. Ruskin commended so absolutely that he announced his intention to place them "for an abiding comfort and power in St. George's Schools." Suffer me to read to you these two passages that were so fortunate as to win the unqualified favour of that fastidious and somewhat capricious critic. The first is this—"To despise the creeds in which the noblest intellects of Christendom in times past found rest is presumptuous folly; to suppose that these creeds are a final and exact statement of all that the Church can ever know is to forget that in every creed there are two elements—the divine substance and the human form. The form must change with the changing thoughts of man, and even the substance may come to shine with clearer light and to reveal

unsuspected glories as God and man come nearer together."

In that saying there stand expressed his convictions very early formed: (1) that the form of the Christian creed must necessarily change with the changing times; and (2) that any new form must enshrine the very substance of the great faith "in which the noblest intellects of Christendom found rest."

Now let us read together this other "most important and noble passage," as Mr. Ruskin calls it. George Dawson, Dale has contended, cast anchor in the belief that "the facts of the universe are steadfast and not to be changed by human fancies or follies." Then follows Dale's addition: "The spiritual universe is no more to be made out of a man's head than the material or the moral universe. *There,* too, the conditions of human life are fixed. *There,* too, we have to respect the facts; and whether we respect them or not the facts remain. *There,* too, we have to confess the authority of the actual laws; and whether we confess it or not we shall suffer for breaking them. To suppose that in relation to the spiritual universe it is safe or right to believe

what we think it pleasant to believe—to suppose that because we think it is eminently desirable that the spiritual universe should be ordered in a particular way, therefore we are at liberty to act as though this were certainly the way in which it is ordered, and that though we happen to be wrong it will make no difference—is preposterous. No; water drowns, fire burns, whether we believe it or not. No belief of ours will change the facts, or reverse the laws of the spiritual universe. It is our first business to discover the laws, and to learn how the facts stand."

Such were the passages that captured John Ruskin's admiration, and how familiar to some of us the words sound! How we seem to hear again the voice of one who scorned to claim any quarter, or ask any favours, for the system of thought which was to him the very queen of sciences! What granite common-sense revealed itself as the foundation of every fabric of philosophy or theology that we owe to him! How he insisted on the facts, the proven facts—but *all* the facts—so that scientific observation, analysis and co-ordination of actual experiences might lead up to sound theory and

rational belief. Those who frankly recognize this necessity may nevertheless arrive at totally different conclusions, but they will respect one another, for they are at least agreed on the only method that can help us in the search for truth.

Some of you may feel a little impatient that I should spend so much time on this aspect of Dr. Dale's character. But the fact is that unless we understand this, the perspective will be all wrong. When he settled at Carr's Lane he did not propose to serve up to his congregations merely dainty and highly-spiced confectionery, but strong meat such as would produce a robust type of Christian citizen. The sermons that consist of anecdotes, platitudes, and a quotation from Longfellow were not his style. The prophecy has become famous of the Congregational minister who told him that the congregation at Carr's Lane would never stand doctrinal preaching. "They will have to stand it" was the reply. One of his most highly educated hearers complained that it was "hard work" to follow his sermons on the Romans. Hard work, no doubt, it was, but the people of Birmingham soon discovered

that it was worth while to work hard at the highest of all themes under his guidance. I remember very well his saying to me that the skilled artisan of Birmingham was the best hearer he had ever found; one who would take and appreciate the strongest thinking that could be offered him. He respected his audience, and his audience came to respect him. I will not weary you with the narrative of the early years of this momentous and historic ministry in Birmingham, when those who could not recognize old truth unless it took the form of old shibboleth bemoaned to one another the young man's heretical tendencies, and shook their heads over his probable eventual destiny. Nor have I time for more than a sentence of recognition of the chivalrous and courageous attitude assumed towards him by his grand old colleague, the veteran John Angell James, who differed often and radically from the younger man's doctrines but defended him with magnificent staunchness, knowing full well his essential loyalty to the evangelic faith. All this is known to you—is it not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the dissenting divines of England?

This, then, was the new force that was to be brought to bear upon local and national politics in the mid-years of the nineteenth century. You and I are so familiar to-day with the position that it is the duty of every true minister and every true Church to be interested in all aspects of human life collective as well as individual, that we hardly realize that when a young Congregational minister in those days began not only to preach this thing but actually to practise what he preached, every saint over fifty was apt to regard it as a deplorable and disastrous innovation. Dale was nothing if not drastic and thorough in the application of his principles. He found no warrant in the earliest charter of the Church for the distinction between priest and people. He believed that all Christians were priests, and he objected to be regarded as a member of a sacred caste, and marked out by certain disabilities as a distinct order of human being. He held that a man forfeits no privilege and abdicates no duty in becoming a minister of a church. He may not, on that account, repudiate his citizen obligation. He may not separate himself, by artificial distinctions, from the rest of the common-

wealth. So, with admirable directness, Dale put his principles into practice. He forswore the white tie and the ministerial costume. He deliberately and definitely broke down every monastic habit and custom that had clung to the Puritan minister in spite of his puritanism. The Genevan gown went the way of the white stock. Despite the well-meant protest that they invested ministers with an air of levity and worldliness, he grew a beard and a moustache. He took care to have it known that he had an invincible objection to the title "Reverend." He made no secret of the fact that he smoked a pipe. The souls of some of the faithful froze with horror at these iconoclastic methods. But he was undismayed. Yet it is worth while to observe that he fought his battle out in his own community at Carr's Lane, before he ventured forth into the wider arena. He fought and he won. The plain men and women of Birmingham understood him; and Nonconformity soon recognized that it had nothing to lose but everything to gain by getting rid of some outworn trappings which disguised rather than expressed its true soul and meaning. When Dale proceeded to carry

out his principles still more freely, and made full public proof of his citizenship, he had secured the co-operation of his Church, he had conquered their prejudices, and he went forth into wider service followed by the conviction and enthusiasm of a united people who had responded with magnificent unanimity to the new ideals of life which he had advocated and exemplified in their midst.

The old prejudice which Dale was bent on breaking down was, in a word, that a minister existed for a limited number of Church members and pew-holders, and not for the whole population of a city. His responsibility to God and the Church was for the right discharge of his mission to Birmingham, and to the greater world outside. He was, as you all know, an ardent denominationalist, but he never dreamed, to use a modern phrase, of contracting himself out of the national system to serve denominationalism more efficiently. He began with a close first-hand investigation of the conditions of business and industrial life in Birmingham. He studied the factory, the shop, the office. He interested himself in all the facts of work and wages. "The last translation of the

Bible," he once said, "will be its translation into the vernacular of daily conduct and custom." Many was the young man afterwards who was amazed to find that Dale knew more about the inner workings of the business in which he was engaged than he knew himself. Readers of his *Week-day Sermons*, and the *Laws of Christ for Common Life*, will realize how intimate was his knowledge of the everyday affairs of the working world. From these wide interests he advanced with sure and steady tread to a close examination of the more public questions—questions which equally involved ethical considerations, and to the solution of which principles of national righteousness must be applied. Into that world of politics he was constrained to enter by the ideal that he had formed of what the Christian ministry ought to be. He could not admit that in the public affairs of a city alone conscience and reason and the humaner instincts had nothing to say. But not only was he prepared to enter this world himself—a world that had often been treated as common and unclean by professing Christian people—but he was determined that the members of this Church should be confronted with their

responsibility in this respect. He once said, in his lectures on preaching, that he believed the day would come when those who refused to vote would be subjected to Church discipline as well as people who refused to pay their debts. And the saying exactly expressed what he felt; for every citizen owes a debt to his city, and if he does not pay his debt, he defrauds the city of its due. That was, as you well know, a characteristic article of his creed; and with what wealth of illustration and argument he expounded it from pulpit and platform as well as in the press and in the polling-booth itself all England may bear witness. Speaking in your Town Hall on one occasion when Mr. Bright was present he devoted himself to this theme. "Of all secular affairs," he said, "politics rightly considered are among the most unworldly, inasmuch as the man who is devoted to political life ought to be seeking no personal or private good. The true political spirit is the mind that was in Christ Jesus, who 'looked not on His own things but also on the things of others.'" "I feel," he went on, "a grave and solemn conviction which deepens year by year that in a country like this, where the public

business of the State is the private duty of every citizen, those who decline to use their political power are guilty of treachery both to God and man." Nobody felt more keenly than he that the effect of this "treachery" on the part of religious people is to jeopardize the best interests of the commonwealth by leaving them to those who have private axes to grind. It is easy to condemn corruption in these latter, but the former deserved, in Dale's thought, an equal share of condemnation. "The rogues do public work in order to make money; the honest men neglect public work in order to save money Judged by the laws of public morality there is not much to choose between them." That is plain talking, but such talk was needed in the mid-Victorian days if our Churches were to be saved from what Dr. Dale truly called "an exquisitely delicate and valetudinarian spirituality."

That they were effectually saved from that weak and futile attitude was due mainly, I think, to him. Through all his preaching and speaking one hears this strong dominant note. He was Christ's servant for the sake of the Church, the city, the commonwealth, the world. Eng-

land has never had a more perfect example of a man of whom it could be said that every practical activity rooted itself in a spiritual principle. Dearly as he loved Carr's Lane, and dearly as the Church at Carr's Lane loved him, he could not and would not narrow his affections, nor consent to circumscribe the area of his activities. He faced the logical consequence of his own creed. He was bent on making Birmingham a very metropolis of liberty, education, and courageous municipal government. The city, its possibilities and opportunities, possessed his imagination, and captured his devotion. The human interest was paramount with him. He was never insensitive to the appeal of sublime and beautiful scenery. He appreciated the quiet resting-places of life as much as anybody. But it was in the crowded streets, with the men and women fighting hard beneath the battle-smoke, that his heart was; and he could never be long separated from them. The passage in one of his letters is inevitable in a lecture like this—"At this moment," he writes during a summer holiday, "when I raise my eyes, the Lake of Lucerne with its guardian mountains is before me—the noblest scenery as some think

in all Europe; but I declare that there is nothing in this magnificent view which makes me feel half the thrill I have sometimes felt when I have looked down on the smoky streets of Birmingham from the railway as I have returned to my work among you after a holiday. The thought of having to do more or less directly with all that mass of human thought and action which is covered with the ceaseless smoke which hangs over us—the thought that you and I together may, with God's help, save multitudes—sends the blood through one's veins with an exultation and glow which the most magnificent aspects of the material universe cannot create." The spirit in which he entered upon his strenuous and often stormy political and municipal life may be best illustrated by two stories gathered from different sections of his son's biography. The first refers to the unveiling of a monument to Joseph Sturge, and George Dawson's perverse and undiscerning remark that Joseph Sturge "was a singularly unpractical man." Dale was roused. "The most practical thing in the world," he replied, "is to believe in God's law, and to try to hold fast to it." That, as his biographer says, was a

summary of his whole life and philosophy. He was in politics because it was God's law for him; and he could not stay outside without breaking that law. The other story is of a retort which he made, in a little private gathering, to Mr. O'Sullivan, an educational antagonist. "Dale," said O'Sullivan, "when do you mean to quit politics and look after your soul?" The reply was as decisive as the question was pointed. "I have given my soul to Christ to look after; He can do it better than I can; my duty is to do His will, and to leave the rest with Him." About that "will," so far as the immediate content was concerned, he was troubled with few doubts. He would tell the story of Alderman White's public stewardship—the teacher of a large Bible Class for young men; how he visited every street, every court in his ward; how he set forth the facts as to the squalid homes in which the poor lived, destructive to health and rendering all high moral Christian life almost impossible; how he then submitted to the Council an elaborate scheme for sweeping all the wretched district away at a cost of four and a half millions, a proposal which the Council unanimously accepted. "Now I believe," said Dale, "that

my friend was trying to get the will of God done on earth as it is in heaven, just as much when he was fighting St. Mary's ward, and speaking in the Council as when he was teaching his Bible Class on Sunday morning." It is no exaggeration to say that the eyes of the nation were on Birmingham, where a new civic spirit was created largely by the inspiring Gospel of Christian citizenship preached pre-eminently by Dale, Dawson, and Vince; and illustrated in the City life by such lay-comrades as Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Dixon, Mr. J. S. Wright and many others. Then it was proved that even the platform of municipal politics might be converted into a pulpit from which might be published a new evangel. Ideals were no longer despised. Men of vision were not thereby disqualified for public affairs. To quote Dr. Dale's own description, "the speakers dwelt with glowing enthusiasm on what a great and prosperous town like Birmingham might do for its people. They spoke of sweeping away streets in which it was not possible to live a healthy and decent life; of making the town cleaner, sweeter, brighter; of providing gardens and parks and music; of erecting baths and free libraries, an

art gallery and a museum. They insisted that great monopolies like the gas and water supply should be in the hands of the Corporation ; that good water should be supplied without stint at the lowest possible prices ; that the profits of the gas-supply should relieve the pressure of the rates. Sometimes an adventurous orator would excite his audience by dwelling on the glories of Florence and of the other cities of Italy in the Middle Ages, and suggest that Birmingham too might become the home of a noble literature and art." I shrewdly suspect that he himself was that "adventurous orator."

In that final sentence there lay a clue to another article of his creed with which his name and fame will always be associated. He did not enter either municipal or national politics simply to realize certain materialistic ends. Municipal baths and wash-houses, gas and water, clean streets and adequate drains, modern houses and improved locomotion, all belong to the necessaries rather than the luxuries of a democratic civilization. But a very large part of their value will always depend on the sort of men and women who are going to make use of them. While as for libraries, galleries, and

museums, it is mere waste of good money to provide these things unless you are also prepared to educate the people to enjoy them and benefit by them.

We have arrived now at those stormy years around 1870 when the battle for national education was fought out, and as a result a limited and maimed national system did get on to its feet and hobble along. So far as the theory of compulsory universal education was concerned Dale was one of the pioneers, breaking a lance for it when few even of his closest denominational allies could be found to sympathize with him. Nobody saw clearer than he did that the old hard individualism was no sort of a theory to meet the necessities of our modern society. He realized that the broadening of the citizenship of the nation had made education more necessary than ever; but he argued the case also from a modern point of view in the rights of the children, and the duty of the State to enforce that right. The State cannot permit physical starvation; and no humane and advanced State can permit mental starvation either. To that position he had to convert the mass of Liberals and Nonconformists of

the old school who resented any interference with those people who regard it as a sacred parental privilege to be able to starve the minds and overwork the bodies of their children. It was not that the best minds in England were indifferent to the value of education, but that they thought it was one of those interests that might better be left to the haphazard voluntary system. Dale had done all that one man might to make voluntaryism effective; he had pleaded for funds; he had to complain that voluntaryism to many people meant "freedom to give nothing." He now saw clearly that there was no escape from universal compulsory education paid for out of State funds if England was not to be outstripped by other great competitive nations. With a conviction and enthusiasm that were irresistible he flung himself into the new fray; he wrote masterly articles in the leading magazines; he fought the matter out at private conferences; he conquered the rank and file from the public platform. No single man did more than he to make national education an inevitable article of the Liberal creed; a question which the great Liberal majority of 1868 dared not shirk even if they would.

I have not time to devote more than a sentence or two to the revolt which Dale eventually led against the famous 1870 Act of Mr. Forster, and the contempt for the essential principle of religious equality which, as Dale maintained, was manifest in that measure. That State grants without State control should be conceded to denominational schools was, as he argued then, a vicious and mischievous principle capable of indefinite expansion. He was equally offended at some of the provisions relative to the School Boards, an inadequate conscience clause, and the indefiniteness of the Cowper-Temple regulation for Bible teaching. He had a great horror of seeing the schools which should make for the unity and harmony of the commonwealth converted into places for emphasizing religious and denominational distinctions. Hence it was that he adopted the policy to which after fierce debate he secured the adhesion of the Congregational Union Committee, "that in any system of national education secular instruction alone should be provided by the State, and that the care of religious instruction should be remitted to parents and churches." It may be added that the more subtle question as to

the exact definition of secular education had not then arisen; nor had the failure of an admirable attempt to prove the sufficiency of the "right of entry" in Birmingham shown conclusively that voluntary Biblical instruction at all events is not a practical proposition. He always regarded it as a concession on his part when he subsequently consented that the Bible should be read in the schools without note or comment, and in later years he returned to the severely secular position which he defended with renewed energy upon his return from Australia, and after an investigation of the Australian school systems. At the moment, however, he felt that in the Act of 1870 with its state recognition of denominationalism, essential Liberalism had been betrayed and the principle of religious equality dishonoured. He led the revolt against Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone which did more than anything else to produce the reaction which brought Mr. Disraeli into power in 1874. It was no doubt a heavy price to pay for loyalty to a single principle. But the fact that Dale and thousands with him were content to pay it was the strongest proof that could be offered of the value they

set on education, and equal justice to all children in the schools of the nation; and when one considers the endless sequence of ecclesiastical strife and political intrigue that has been the fatal fruit of the double-minded policy of 1870, he is indeed a bold critic who is prepared roundly to deny that if Liberalism had been led then, not by W. E. Forster but by R. W. Dale, we should have been spared many years of controversy inimical alike to education and to religion. Once, however, the 1870 Bill was law, he made up his mind that its worst perils must be obviated in administration. From 1870 to 1880 he was, as you all know, responsible, with distinguished colleagues, for the great constructive work which covered this city with Board Schools of which she is justly proud. If by force of circumstances he was compelled from time to time to fight vehemently in what seemed to be a negative crusade, his efforts during those years proved him to be predominantly a constructive statesman, and an educational enthusiast. Nobody rejoiced more than he did whenever he was able to suspend hostilities against ecclesiasticism and join his ability and energy to those of all

good citizens in perfecting the education of the children.

There is only one other controversy into which we need follow him. It was the one in which his genius could not fail to mark him out for leadership, and it has the advantage that it leads us back in closing to what was most fundamental in his thinking. We have already seen what was his view of the Church. In the true sense of the word he was a great Churchman, and, as he never failed to claim, he was a High Churchman. He believed that Christian men and women, however simple and uncultured, might have the presence of Christ with them in their counsels; and that because *ubi Christus ibi ecclesia,* "where Christ is there is a church," is eternally true, therefore they might receive direction from the Head of the Church and assume the responsible functions of a Church which Christ Himself has inspired and guided. He argued that, such being the clear New Testament teaching, for it to be assumed that such a Church is not to be intrusted with the choice of a minister, or the management of its own worship and spiritual affairs, is to discredit

the reality of Christ's Headship and the sufficiency of His promise. He felt that for the State to dictate to Christ's Church within its borders who should be its chief pastors, what should be its creeds and rubrics and lectionary—in short for Parliament to be called in to define the liberties and enforce the discipline of the Church of Christ was and is an intolerable and presumptuous usurpation. Such, as we have seen, was his view of the Church.

We have seen also what was his view of the State; how he identified himself with the school of thinkers who argued for an extension of the State's legitimate authority, and the enlargement of its functions; but how, at the same time, when the problem of religious education arose he declined absolutely to admit the competence of the State to prescribe the religion suitable for its children, or to train the teachers capable of teaching it. No man holding by these principles as fundamental to all his thinking can possibly acquiesce in the existing relations of Church and State. In association with Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain he made Birmingham the Mecca of the Liberation movement. I believe I should speak the literal

truth if I were to say that in all the political history of England there is no parallel to this triple alliance of orators each of whom was perfect in his own style and order, one star differing from another star in glory. Mr. Chamberlain's unique gift of keen incisive logic, Mr. Bright's magnificent purple rhetoric, and Dale's aptitude for massive intellectual and ethical arguments were mutually complementary. If their Rome was ever attacked, the enemy might well hesitate to storm the bridge "where stood the dauntless three." John Bright's speeches on the disestablishment of the Irish Church are among the noblest in the language. Dale and Chamberlain fought the battle as vehemently in the Midlands as Bright fought it in Parliament; and in contradistinction to Mr. Gladstone they never pretended that it was other than one application of a principle that is essentially just and true, and that must eventually have recognition everywhere. This was the principle to the exposition of which, in association with Dr. Guinness Rogers, Dale gave his whole strength in the prime of his days in a campaign that became memorable. As his son has well said, he was concerned not

so much to right Nonconformity as to right Christianity, which he felt was misrepresented and perverted, disabled and discrowned, by the mere fact of Parliamentary control.

It ought, I think, to be said that Dale's "Root and Branch" opinions on this great subject—for he was a sound disciple of John Milton—while in his early days in Birmingham they scandalized and alienated many whom he would have desired to have as allies, came in course of time to be thoroughly understood and appreciated, and his relations with such men as Bishop Westcott and Cardinal Newman were relations of mutual friendliness and respect. No one was ever more ready than he at all times to acknowledge the personal debt which he owed to the great Anglican and Roman Catholic communions. Nobody was better able to sympathize with them in their reverence for the Church idea. When Dr. Welldon once in Exeter Hall claimed him as a Churchman no one who saw him will forget the energetic nod of the head as he retorted, "There's no mistake about that." But what so many found it difficult to understand was that he was a Churchman because he was anti-clerical, and he claimed no authority in the

Church that did not equally belong to its humblest member. It was this combination, as I hold, of an intense jealousy for the rights and prerogatives of the Church, with the sturdy and uncompromising repudiation of the clerical claims, that made him a unique and original force in the Christian thought and life of his time. Possibly it will make his position clear if I quote a passage which at once illustrates his attitude, and is a fine example of his sonorous eloquence—an eloquence of an order and quality in which he had no living rival—an eloquence of the old stately style of which Burke, on whom he deliberately formed himself, was the supreme master, and of which, alas! in these latter days, we have no representative left. It is not necessary that you should agree with the sentiment to be able to admire and to enjoy this example of impassioned polemic.

I am not insensible to the majesty and grandeur of the Church of Rome. It has other and nobler claims on our wonder and admiration than those which rest upon the elaborate perfection of its organization, the vast number of its adherents, its venerable antiquity, and the great part which it has played in the history of Christendom. I have wept over the story of the heroism, the sufferings, the unquenchable ardour of its illustrious missionaries. The massive and stately structure of its theology, built up

by the gigantic labours and enormous learning of innumerable doctors, through a long succession of generations, has filled me with intellectual awe. I have been melted, and I have been thrilled, by the transcendent eloquence of its great preachers, from Bossuet to Lacordaire. I know something of the wealth of spiritual wisdom to be found in the spiritual writings of its great mystics who, in the strength of an intense faith in the unseen, have been able to dissolve the spell of a sensuous worship, and to penetrate through an elaborate ceremonial into the immediate presence of God. The saints who have been the strength and the glory of the Romish Church in days gone by have their successors in our own times, and God forbid that I should ever forget that those who love Christ, whatever their Church and whatever their creed, are regenerate of the Holy Ghost, and heirs together of God's eternal glory. But against the pretensions of this Church to be the exclusive minister of God's grace and to stand between even the humblest and obscurest of God's children and their heavenly Father; against the assumptions on which her priests and her bishops rest their claim to control national policy and legislation; against the authority asserted on behalf of her chief ruler to interfere in the name of God with the free development of the intellectual, political, and social life of mankind; against these I must declare my intense and implacable hostility. Never, never again, I trust, will the people of England and Scotland permit the emissaries of an Italian bishop to menace their Parliaments and to control their kings. If we have to fight over again the old battle—the battle between the theology of Rome and the pure truth of Christ, between the pretensions of her priesthood and the liberty of immediate access to God which Christ confers on every one that receives His grace, I trust we shall have the sanctity and the learning and the genius to win a controversial triumph as illustrious as that

which our fathers won. And if the battle is to be fought in another form—if the Roman Catholic priesthood tell us that freedom is not enough for them, but that they must have privilege; if they tell us that it is not enough that the Irish people have been emancipated from the injustice of having to support a Church whose faith, and whose worship they reject; if they insist on having imperial grants, in larger and still larger proportions, voted for the maintenance of schools intended to propagate the Romish faith; and if they tell us that in the event of our refusing to concede their claims they will provoke civil disturbance and render British rule in Ireland impossible; I trust that those threats will but stir the heart and brace the courage of the English and Scottish people, and that we shall tell them that the high spirit of this ancient empire has not decayed, that we are resolved to pursue a policy of justice and of freedom, that we scorn their threats and defy their power, and may God defend the right!

My time has gone, and I can but ask your patience for a sentence or two by way of conclusion. The political schism that cleft into two hostile camps those with whom he had been so closely associated, when the Home Rule question was raised in an acute form in 1886, caused him more distress than perhaps to any other prominent public man. He had hosts of friends among both parties to the dispute; and he saw from the first how disastrous this fissure would be to many of the causes for which he cared most. Already he had sorely over-

taxed his strength, and it may be doubted whether his visit to Australia, with its exacting programme of engagements, helped to mend matters. On his return to England he realized that his political work was done. It was "time to be old," and "to take in sail." To many men who had lived so much in the public eye this would have been almost an intolerable cross. But I have spoken indeed to little purpose if I have not made it apparent that his predominant interest lay throughout in the world of idea and belief; and that even more vital to the Commonwealth than the practical ordering of its affairs was, in his estimation, the clear and sound exposition of the principles and motives of action. To this work he consecrated his closing years. If any credence were still given to the old fallacy that much contact with public affairs unfits a man for religious and theological leadership, and that no one who rubs shoulders with politicians and administrators of all sorts and conditions can retain unabated the interest and experience which combine to form the only true saintly character, then Dr. Dale would seem to have been specially raised up to confute such theory. It

was not necessary to accept all his theological conclusions to admire his intellectual grasp, to envy his extraordinary power of cogent argument, and to sympathize with his lofty moral and spiritual ideals. The practical working faith that had been his inspiration through strenuous and stormy years did not fail him now; and as the weather-beaten vessel drew on toward the haven and into calmer waters, he had time for reflection, time to confirm and illustrate for others the fundamental laws and principles by which he had navigated these earthly seas. He had taken his bearings from the sun, and he had read direction in the stars; and he was confident not only that they had not betrayed him, but that all human instruments and calculations would ever need to be tested and corrected, as the ages move on, by these eternal facts of our spiritual firmament. If the last days were not without pain, they were at least without dread. To him Emerson's magical lines might have been spoken:

> Lowly-faithful banish fear,
> Right onward drive unharmed;
> The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
> And every wave is charmed.

Birmingham does well to be proud of its famous sons. Great men have been among you, hands that penned and tongues that uttered wisdom. No city is so rich in living leaders that it can afford to blot out of the book of its remembrance the apostles and prophets who laid the very foundations of its civic well-being. Few cities in the world have so good a right as this to draw up a calendar of saints and seers, men of wide vision, and noble disinterested activity. It has been well for you to do homage to those worthies who have deserved and achieved a place among the nation's immortals. I, too, rejoice with you in your inheritance in the name and fame of those who have been celebrated here by other and abler lecturers than I; and yet, as I remember the manifold distinctions of him of whom I have been privileged to speak, his permanent contributions to the theological and ethical thinking of the modern world, his ripe sagacity, his rare fortitude, his spiritual genius, his high and unblemished character, his chivalrous championship of great causes, you must not attribute it wholly to the fond preference of a prejudiced disciple if I hazard the verdict as I close—"this was the noblest Roman of them all."

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