

BANK STREET CHAPEL,
BOLTON,
BI-CENTENARY COMMEMORATION,
1696-1896.



Bank Street Chapel and Schools.

Bank Street Chapel, Bolton.

BI-CENTENARY
COMMEMORATION,
1696-1896.



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BI-CENTENARY SERVICES,
SUNDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 1896.

Order of Services.

MORNING.

THE BI-CENTENARY SERVICES,

SUNDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 1896.

LARGE congregations assembled in the Chapel on Sunday, 18th October, 1896, both morning and evening, notwithstanding the fact that the weather was extremely unfavourable. With one accord present and past members came together in honour of the Two-Hundredth Anniversary of the opening of the first chapel in Bank Street. The services were conducted and the sermons preached by the minister, the Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., LL.B. Mr. J. T. Flitcroft, F.R.C.O., presided at the organ. The Collections for the Poor amounted to £31 2s. 4½d.

HYMN I. *Luther's Hymn.*

1. **WE** come unto our fathers' God ;
Their rock is our salvation :
The Eternal Arms, their dear abode,
We make our habitation.
We bring Thee, Lord, the praise they brought ;
We seek Thee as Thy saints have sought
In every generation.
2. Their joy unto their God we bring ;
Their song to us descendeth ;
The Spirit, who in them did sing,
To us His music lendeth.
His song in them, in us, is one ;
We raise it high, we send it on,
The song that never endeth.
3. Ye saints to come, take up the strain ;
The same sweet theme endeavour !
Unbroken be the golden chain ;
Keep on the song for ever !
Safe in the same dear dwelling-place,
Rich with the same eternal grace,
Bless the same boundless Giver ! Amen.

T. H. Gill.

Prayer.

CHANT. *Woodward in D.*

1. **L**ET all Thy **works** | praise Thee, O | Lord ||
and Thy **children** re- | joice in | thanking
Thee.
2. Thine is our **breath**, and | Thine our | likeness ||
Thou quickenest our minds, and **makest** | fine
the | springs of | conscience.
3. From Thee came **ancient** revel- | ation and | writ-
ing || deep **sayings** of | prophets and | songs of
praise.
4. From Thee are all the wise **words** of | olden | time ||
the counsels of **truth** and | worship of | prayer
and | deed.
5. O everlasting **Teacher** | of man- | kind || from Thee
come the | workers of | good for | ever.
6. Thine are the revivers of godliness | in the | world ||
and the sowers of | winged | seeds of | truth.
7. Thine, O Lord, is the great company | of our | an-
cestors || the **sacred** | truth-tellers | and brave |
patriots.
8. All makers of story and song and the masters of |
harmony are | Thine || and the **pure** | suffer- |
ers for | goodness ;
9. **Whoever** has | vanquished | evil || and in faith and
hope | gone through | labour for | right.
10. Lord, let not **all** Thy | work be in | vain || whereby
thou dost redeem our **race**, that it | may par- |
take of Thy | glory.
11. If stories of old time fade, and earthl[y] | parables |
fail || let Thy kindness be ever **new**, and | truth
become | perfect | in us.
12. Open to us the door of faith, and of a new **mind**,
and of | deep | insight || and the God of **old** will
be | known as the | living | Friend.

13. Glory be to **God**, the | Father Al- | mighty || **Ma-** |
ker of | heaven and | earth ;
14. As it was in the beginning, is **now**, and | ever |
shall be || **world** | without | end. A-men.

—
Lesson.
—

HYMN II.

Austria.

1. **L**IFT the strain of high thanksgiving !
Tread with songs the hallowed way !
Praise our fathers' God for mercies
New to us each sacred day !
Here they built for Him a dwelling,
Sought Him here in ages past,
Fixed it for His sure possession,
Holy ground while time shall last.
2. When the years had wrought their changes,
He, our own unchanging God,
Stirred their hearts to rear new temple
On the site the fathers trod ;
Heard their prayers and helped their counsels,
Blest their zeal and faith and gold,
Till once more His house was standing
Firm and statelier than of old.
3. Fill our house of prayer with glory,
Greater than the fathers knew ;
Clothe with righteousness its people,
Guide them into reverence true.
Let Thy Spirit's mystic presence
Here its sevenfold blessing shed ;
Spread for us the heavenly banquet ;
Give us, Lord, the living bread. Amen.

J. Ellerton.

LESSON.

—
ANTHEM. *Sir G. A. Macfarren.*

A DAY in Thy courts is better than a thousand ; I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield ; the Lord will give grace and glory ; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee.

—
PRAYER.—
HYMN III. *National Anthem.*

1. **G**ONE are those great and good,
Who here in peril stood
And raised their hymn.
Peace to the reverend dead !
The light that on their head
The passing years have shed
Shall ne'er grow dim.
2. Ye temples that to God
Rise where our fathers trod,
Guard well your trust !
The truth that made them free,
Their scorn of falsehood's plea,
Their cherished purity,
Their garnered dust !
3. Thou high and holy One,
Whose care for sire and son
All nature fills !

While day shall break and close,
While night her crescent shows,
O let Thy light repose
On our free hills. Amen.

John Pierpoint.—
SERMON.—
Organ Voluntary and Offertory for the Door.—
HYMN IV.*Cambridge.*

1. **D**EAR Father of our souls,
O hear our earnest vow,
Assembled in this house of prayer
To seek Thy blessing now.
2. The busy years roll on,
And bring their joys and woes ;
But in life's dawn we lean on Thee,
And trust Thee at its close.
3. Our fathers and our friends,
Who lived in faith and fear,
Have entered on that higher life
They loved to picture here.
4. But they to us bequeathed
A legacy sublime,
To follow up their noble work,
And live the life divine.
5. Here then, with solemn vow,
We give our hearts to Thee,
And dedicate our lives afresh
To truth and purity.

6. Direct our wills aright ;
 Inspire our souls with love,
 That we may do Thy work on earth,
 And meet Thy smile a- | bove. Amen.
C. J. Street.

—
 Prayer.

—
 Lord's Prayer Chanted.

—
 Benediction.

—
 CHORAL VERSE.

DISMISS us now, O Lord ;
 Endue our hearts with love ;
 Be Thou our Guide, our Strength, our Stay,
 To lead us on life's way. Amen.

—
 EVENING.

—
 HYMN 1.

St. Peter.

1. **O** God of ages, by whose hand
 Thy people still are fed,
 Who through this weary pilgrimage
 Hast all our fathers led !
2. Our vows, our prayers we now present
 Before Thy throne of grace ;
 God of our fathers ! be the God
 Of their succeeding race.
3. Through each perplexing path of life
 Our wandering footsteps guide ;
 Give us by day our daily bread,
 And raiment fit provide.
4. O spread Thy covering wings abroad
 Till all our wanderings cease,
 And at our Father's loved abode
 Our feet arrive in peace.
5. Now with the humble voice of prayer
 Thy mercy we implore ;
 Then with the grateful voice of praise
 Thy goodness we'll adore. Amen.
Philip Doddridge.

—
 Prayer.

—
 Lord's Prayer.

CHANT.

Lawes in C.

1. **O** God, Thou | art my | God || early | will I |
seek | Thee.
2. My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh | longeth for
Thee || in a dry and thirsty land | where no |
water | is ;
3. To see Thy power | and Thy | glory || as I have |
seen Thee | in the | sanctuary.
4. Because Thy loving-kindness is | better than | life ||
my | lips shall | praise | Thee.
5. Thus will I bless Thee | while I | live || I will lift
up my | hands in | Thy | name.
6. Because Thou hast | been my | help || therefore in
the shadow of Thy | wings will | I re- | joice.
7. My soul longeth, yea | even | fainteth || for the |
courts | of the | Lord.
8. My heart | and my | flesh || cry | out for the | liv-
ing | God.
9. Blessed are they that | dwell in Thy | house || they
will | still be | praising | Thee.
10. They go from | strength to | strength || every one
of them in Zion ap- | peareth be- | fore | God.
11. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the | house of my |
God || than | dwell in the | tents of | wickedness.
12. For the Lord God is a | sun and | shield || the Lord |
will give | grace and | glory.
13. No good thing will | He with- | hold || from | them
that | walk up- | rightly.
14. **O** | Lord of | hosts || blessed is the | man that |
trusteth in | Thee.
15. Now, unto the King Eternal, in- | mortal in- |
visible || the | only | wise | God,
16. Be | honour and | glory || for | ever and | ever.
A- | men.

Lesson.

HYMN II.

Aurelia.

1. **O** GOD, the Rock of Ages,
Who evermore hast been,
What time the tempest rages,
Our dwelling-place serene ;
Before Thy first creations,
O Lord, the same as now,
To endless generations
The everlasting Thou !
2. Our years are like the shadows
On sunny hills that lie,
Or grasses in the meadows
That blossom but to die ;
A sleep, a dream, a story,
By strangers quickly told,
An unremaining glory
Of things that soon are old.
3. O Thou who dost not slumber,
Whose light grows never pale,
Teach us aright to number
Our years before they fail,
On us Thy mercy lighten,
On us Thy goodness rest,
And let Thy spirit brighten
The hearts Thyself hast blest.
4. Lord, crown our faith's endeavour
With beauty and with grace,
Till, clothed in light for ever,
We see Thee face to face ;

A joy no language measures,
 A fountain brimming o'er,
 An endless flow of pleasures,
 An ocean without shore. Amen.

E. H. Bickersteth.

—
Lesson.
 —

ANTHEM. *G. J. Bennett.*

BEHOLD now, praise the Lord, all ye servants of
 the Lord; ye that by night stand in the house
 of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.
 Alleluia, Amen.

—
Prayer.
 —

HYMN III. *Huddersfield.*

1. **C**OME to Thy house, great King!
 To Thee Thy people kneel;
 Accept the homage which they bring,
 And all Thy grace reveal.
2. Through many a year this place
 Service and song hath known,
 From hearts that sought Thy gracious face
 In worship all their own.
3. The ancient and the new,
 The ordered and the free,
 The lingering faith, the forward view,
 Blend in our rites to Thee.
4. For this our heritage
 We own Thy fostering hand,
 That safely led from age to age
 Our fathers' lonely band.

5. Lord, now their children bless;
 Our waiting hearts inspire;
 If still we tread the wilderness,
 Vouchsafe the cloud and fire.
6. Through triumph and through ill
 May we Thy presence see;
 Make Thou our service nobler still,
 Our worship worthier Thee. Amen.

From Mill Hill, Leeds, Hymn Book.

—
Sermon.
 —

Organ Voluntary and Offertory for the Poor.

—
 HYMN IV. *Burlington.*

1. **O**UR Father! while our hearts unlearn
 The creeds that wrong Thy name,
 Still let our hallowed altars burn
 With faith's undying flame.
2. Not by the lightning gleam of wrath
 Our souls Thy face shall see;
 The star of love must light the path
 That leads to heaven and Thee.
3. Help us to read our Master's will
 Through every darkening stain
 That clouds his sacred image still,
 And see him once again;
4. The brother man, the pitying friend,
 Who weeps for human woes,
 Whose pleading words of pardon blend
 With cries of raging foes.

5. If, 'mid the gathering storms of doubt,
Our hearts grow faint and cold
The strength we cannot live without
Thy love will not withhold.
6. Our prayers accept, our sins forgive,
Our youthful zeal renew:
Shape for us holier lives to live,
And nobler work to do. Amen.

O. W. Holmes.

Benediction.

—

CHORAL VERSE.

LORD, keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;
May angels guard us while we sleep,
Till morning light appears.

COMMEMORATION PRAYER,

USED AT MORNING SERVICE ON THE BI-CENTENARY
SUNDAY.

THOU who art the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, it is we alone who change. The generations of men and women come and go, sharing the same blessings during their allotted span of life on earth, encompassed by the same Providence, and wending their way at last to the same great Home in the bosom of Thy love. Of Thy patience and long-suffering there is no end. Thy tender mercies never fail. In the days when the timid approached Thee in fear, and stern natures worshipped Thee as a hard and terrible God, Thou wast Infinite Love. It was Thy tender care that protected them who knew Thee not as indeed Thou art. Thy pity and forgiveness waited ever for the minds that misjudged Thee and the hearts whose human love gave no strong and unanswerable message of the Divine. Thou wast and art ever true, however far Thy human children have wandered into error and failed to perceive the light.

We thank Thee, O Father, for the ever widening experience which has slowly but surely, brought humanity into closer touch with Thee. To the men and women of olden time the priceless perception of Thine ineffable love was, for the most part, not so clear as it is to us to-day; even though here and there Thou didst raise great souls to testify to the truth, and stimulate their brethren to higher thought. For the clear sight and consecrated life and inspiring teaching

of Jesus we would especially thank Thee. In the times of spiritual darkness through which the world has passed since his day, that bright beacon-light has steadily shone. We thank Thee that the days of gloom are largely gone; and that a fuller light has come. We thank Thee for the patient trustfulness of our fathers, who freely and perseveringly sought to understand and enter into communion with Thee. We bless Thee for their fidelity to conviction and their steady resolve that their children should be equally free to follow truth.

With the thought of the progressive past fresh in our minds; cherishing the remembrance of the loyal, true hearts which have endeared this sacred place to us; with the songs of gratitude which many generations have raised here echoing in our ears—we ask for the continuance of Thy blessing. If to us a clearer light has come, may we be worthy of it. If we have learnt to know Thee better under Thy great name of Love, may we be filled with Thy holy spirit, and make human life a sweeter and tenderer thing in consequence. And so may we clear the way for yet greater sympathy in the future, both in our own relations to Thee and in the lives of those who shall come after us, seeking and finding still deeper and truer revelations of Thy will. Amen.

REV. GEORGE HARRIS

ON

THE CAUSES OF DEISM AND ATHEISM.¹

*A Passage read during the Morning Service on the
Bi-centenary Sunday.*

ANOTHER of what I conceive to be the causes of Deism and Atheism is the conduct manifested by the majority of those who call themselves the disciples and followers of Jesus Christ. This indeed opens an ample field for animadversion; for that conduct has, to their shame be it spoken, been bad enough. Wherever we turn our eyes, we find most prolific topics of reproach and lamentation. Whether we detail the proceedings of man in the ages which have passed away, or refer to the circumstances which have occurred in nations denominated Christian in our own days, sad and humiliating is the tale which truth is fain to tell.

It is the erection of Church Establishments in direct opposition to the commands of him who declared 'My kingdom is not of this world;' 'Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren;' 'The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you;' that has caused a suspicion of the system that was thus indebted to human power for its support, to arise in the minds

¹ *The Causes of Deism and Atheism*: A Lecture delivered in the Unitarian Meeting-house, Moor Lane, Bolton, on Sunday Evening, January 19th, 1823, by GEORGE HARRIS. London: R. Hunter, St. Paul's Churchyard. Bolton: Brandwood; 1823, pp. 45-48.

of those who were harassed by its exactions. It is those who, by the use of unholy means, have been enabled to rule with despotic power over the heritage of God, who have, in the language of my text, caused the people of Jehovah to howl. It is the enactment, by authority of Parliament, of certain Articles and Creeds, and the enforcement of their belief, or rather, I should say, the *profession* of belief (belief itself not even the boasted omnipotence of Parliament could invariably effect) by pains and penalties, persecution and imprisonment, which has occasioned others of the people of Jehovah to be taken away for naught. It is the absurd attempt to produce conviction by the destructive flame, and to extirpate heresy by the terrors of the law, which has made the name of our God every day to be blasphemed.

Nothing can exceed the iniquity of this false and injurious zeal for the Lord, except it be the hypocrisy which it has, not unfrequently I am afraid, been employed to cover. The prosecution of opinions is the most ridiculous means which any unfortunate witling ever employed to convert the mind from error. Instead of weakening prejudice, it will only serve to make it more deep-rooted: instead of removing unbelief, it will only cause its more rapid spread. Such means of counteracting the opposition of infidelity the gospel does not sanction. Christianity knows nothing of a Parliamentary Religion, nor does it inculcate the adoration of a Parliamentary God. Pure Christianity disclaims the protection of the civil power. In its infancy 'the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together' to stay its progress; but it brushed them away as the sun does the dewdrops of the morning. In its maturity it will need not the aid of

'the powers which be' nor the tricks of priestcraft, nor the pomp of law, to ensure its triumphs. It is of God, and for good to man; and therefore its dominion must be as boundless as the race whom it is designed to bless.

Protect Christianity indeed! Protect Omnipotence, instruct unerring Wisdom, assist infinite Power, add to unbounded Benevolence! Frail child of yesterday, thy Creator needs not thy help to guard His truth. It is, like its Author, all-powerful. If the gospel be of God, it will stand, and rise triumphant above all the opposition that the art or ingenuity or malice of man can bring to bear upon it. If it be not from Heaven, let it totter to its fall, and be lost in the oblivion of ages. The prosecution of any human being for his opinions, whatever those opinions may be, the system of the Nazarene detests. It is the language of pure and undefiled religion—'Let both grow together until the harvest.'

REV. FRANKLIN BAKER'S

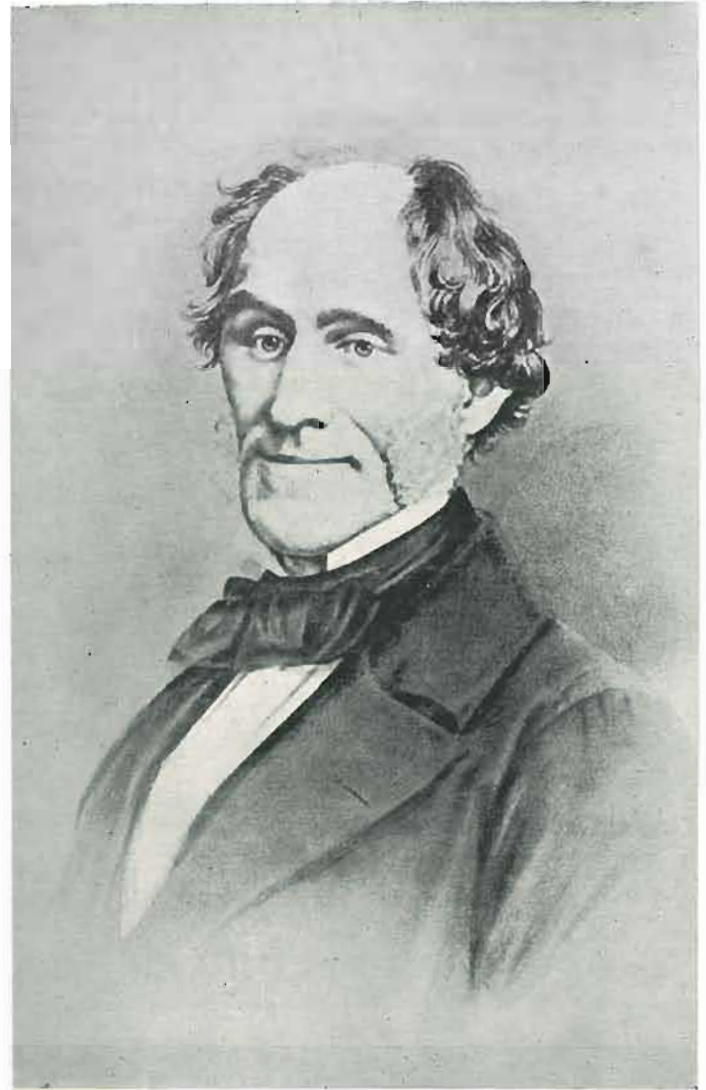
CONFESSION OF FAITH AT HIS ORDINATION SERVICE.¹

*A Passage read at the Evening Service on the
Bi-centenary Sunday.*

THAT best of books [the Bible] has taught me to look up to God as One unrivalled Being, Himself the Creator and Sovereign of all worlds; to adore His matchless perfections, and to rejoice in His universal government; to regard Jesus Christ, the honoured

¹ *Ordination Services.* London: Richard Taylor, Shoe Lane. Bolton: John Yates. 1825, pp. 23-4.

instrument and organ of the most important of God's communications, as one of the human race, chosen from among his brethren to fulfil the gracious designs of Infinite Mercy; and, when he had finished his earthly course, receiving from his Heavenly Father an appropriate and a rich reward; and leaving behind him the light of his example, to guide his followers in their way to wisdom, to holiness, and to heavenly joy. I have also been led to conceive of it as a principle of the highest importance, that there exists an indissoluble connection between our character here and our condition in that world which is beyond the grave; that every man must bear his own burden, and answer for his own transgressions; that all the actions of our lives will be brought into judgment and produce their proper fruits. In a word, without entering more into detail, I am persuaded that the teachings of revelation are in every case coincident with the dictates of reason and conscience, and that the loudest professions, unaccompanied by piety and virtue, are but as the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal. Far be it from me to make any pretensions to infallibility. I hope to be always a humble learner at the feet of Jesus; and although I deem my fellow-Christians who maintain doctrines inconsistent with those which I have specified to be in error, yet I do not on that account question their final acceptance with the great Father of us all.



Rev FRANKLIN BAKER

TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF FREE
RELIGION.

PART I. 1696—1820.

*The Story of Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, as told by Rev.
C. J. Street in his Morning Sermon on the
Bi-Centenary Sunday.*

‘The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. Let him not leave us, nor forsake us; that He may incline our hearts unto Him; to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers.’—1 *Kings* viii. 57-58.

IT is a proud privilege for us to-day to assemble in this sacred edifice, and remember that we are upon holy ground which for two hundred years, without a break, has been associated with the free worship of God. The congregation, of which most of you are members and of which I rejoice to be the minister, is more than two centuries old, and dates back even prior to the year 1672; but it is just two hundred years this month since the old chapel was opened for public worship on this very site. Think of the long line of illustrious and heroic and devoted men and women who have entered into their deepest communion with the Great Spirit on this very spot! May we not justly and truly say:—‘This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven?’

It is not, however, solely upon the ground of age that we venerate the place of our assembling together for public worship. There are other churches with a longer history than ours, though only one in this town;

but there are few with a story so honourable. The men and women who have been nurtured by the religious teaching here have done noble service to the community of which they formed part, and have obeyed the teaching of Jesus in letting their light so shine before men that others, seeing their good works, have glorified the Father in heaven. And during two centuries the character of the ministry has been upheld without a smirch by every man who was called to the pastoral office. Yet even these are not the claims which constitute our commemoration to-day as one of almost unique interest. Other churches have reared self-sacrificing and public-spirited members and can point to an unsullied ministerial roll.

What, then, gives special importance to the Bicentenary of this church, as contrasted, *e.g.*, with the parish church, which is the only other place of worship in the town that can show a record extending over two centuries? It is this—that the congregation was established in freedom and has cherished the spirit of liberty from the first day until now. It is true that the theology of 1696 was very different in many respects from that of 1896: the remark applies as much to the Church of England as it does to those Protestant Dissenting Churches into whose inheritance we have entered. But the Church of England was and is pledged to subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. Bank Street Chapel was and is entrusted to its members with a perfect faith in the security of divine truth under varying forms. It is not a triumph of *opinions* that we celebrate to-day, though we may be convinced that our Unitarianism is the religion of Jesus of Nazareth and the nearest approach to truth to which man has as yet attained in the domain of

religion. But it is the consistent maintenance of a sterling *principle* that we delight to honour—a principle of trust in the power of truth to win its own way into acceptance, of trust in the human faculties to find their way in freedom to the discernment of the spiritual revelations of the Most High.

The congregation for which Bank Street Chapel was built was legally formed in 1672 by the Rev. Richard Goodwin, M.A. (Cantab). Mr. Goodwin came from Cockey Moor in 1647 to be assistant to the Rev. John Harpur, then minister at Bolton parish church. Mr. Harpur died in 1657, and Mr. Goodwin, who had been sole minister for three years, was recognised as vicar in 1660. When the cruel Act of Uniformity was passed, he was one of the noble 'Two Thousand'¹ who, for conscience' sake, refused to conform to a state tyranny which enforced the use of the Prayer-book as the only form for public worship, demanded the unfeigned assent and consent of every minister to all contained in that Prayer-book, and required episcopal ordination for every minister of the Church. Uniformity of profession, and not sincerity of confession, was the object sought after. Bishop Sheldon exultantly cried, 'Now we know their minds, we'll make them all knaves if they conform.'

But the Nonconformists were made of sterner stuff than to submit to such ignominy. Yet it was a hard trial and a terrible ordeal which they were called upon

¹ The exact number is not certain. According to Calamy there were quite 2,400, but Kennet pointed out great mistakes in the list given for the diocese of Peterborough alone. Hallam says, 'about 2,000,' and J. R. Green says, 'nearly 2,000 rectors and vicars, or about a fifth of the English clergy.' The round number is near enough: a few more or less does not affect the question of conscientiousness.

to face, and it is not to be wondered at that some tried to find a means of escape. Nathaniel Heywood, the beloved minister at Ormskirk, was urged by some of his people to conform, so that he might stay with them. He replied that he would gladly do so if he could with a good conscience. 'Oh, sir,' it was urged, 'many a man now-a-days makes a great gash in his conscience: cannot you make a little nick in yours?' But he could not, and they honoured him all the more for the fact.¹

On St. Bartholomew's Day, 24th August, 1662, Richard Goodwin, vicar of Bolton, and Robert Parke, the lecturer, were among the Lancashire clergy (about seventy in number), who had laid down their livings and went out into the wilderness. At first Mr. Goodwin and many more of the ejected clergy formed little congregations in private dwelling houses; but a stop was soon put to this. The Conventicle Act of 1664 prohibited, under penalty of imprisonment and transportation, all meetings of more than five persons beyond the household for any religious worship other than that of the prayer-book, and made it a crime to refuse to attend the parish church. By the Five Mile Act of 1665 every ejected minister was required to swear that he would never endeavour any alteration of government in church or state. If he refused, he was forbidden to go within five miles of any corporate town or of any place where he used to minister, under penalty of a fine of £40 and imprisonment for six months. By such iniquitous enactments, Charles the Second's Parliament endeavoured to suppress the free

¹ Lord Macaulay declared that the Puritans were 'the most remarkable body of men the world has ever produced,' and Mr. J. R. Green testifies that 'the rectors and vicars who were driven out were the most learned and the most active of their order.'

exercise of religious worship. They were a striking commentary on his own Declaration made while he was still in Holland and before he was called to the throne; 'we do declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion on matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom.'

During the keener period of the persecution, Mr. Goodwin retired to Manchester and studied chemistry; but in 1672, taking advantage of the Declaration of Indulgence,¹ he took out a licence to preach in a house at the corner of Deansgate and Mealhouse Lane, at the back of what is now the 'Old Woolpack' inn. The preaching room was twenty-six feet long by eighteen feet wide. There he gathered together the congregation from which we are in the direct line of descent. A few months after the little meeting-house was opened, the Rev. Oliver Heywood preached there, on the 18th September, 1672. Mr. Goodwin conducted services twice a Sunday until the date of his death, which took place in December, 1685, when he was seventy-two years of age. His remains were interred on Christmas Day in the churchyard of the parish church, from the charge of which he had been driven out twenty-three years earlier.

From 1685 till the Toleration Act was passed in

¹ The Declaration was issued on the 15th March, 1672, giving permission, by virtue of the royal prerogative, to Roman Catholics to worship in private as they pleased and to Protestant Dissenters to worship only in public places duly licensed. The preachers must take out a licence, and undertake not to preach seditiously or against the discipline and government of the Church of England, and the doors of the meeting-place must be open to all comers. No fewer than 3,000 applications for such licences were made, Mr. Goodwin's being one. The declaration was withdrawn in March, 1673, in compliance with a strong remonstrance from the House of Commons.

1689 it would seem that there was no regular Nonconformist ministry in Bolton. The Rev. John Lever, who in 1662 was minister of Cockey Moor, but laid down his charge because he would not conform, then became Mr. Goodwin's successor, but his ministry, though blessed, was not of long duration, for he died on July 4th, 1692, aged fifty-seven. He is said to have been in very good circumstances. This was not the Rev. John Lever who occupied Mr. Goodwin's place as vicar at the parish church, for *he* did conform; but the two were very good friends, and used 'to walk up and down the town, arm in arm together.'¹ Mr. Lever was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Seddon, M.A. (Cantab), who had been ejected from the rectory of Langley in Derbyshire. Mr. Seddon was a man of some means, and became the owner of a 'mansion-house' at the top of Bank Street, then called Windy Bank. For three years only did his ministry continue, for he was a great sufferer, and died on the 25th March, 1696, when he was sixty-six years of age. A few weeks before he died he made a generous gift of the land on which this church now stands, being a portion of the property attached to the 'mansion-house,' for the purpose of erecting a Protestant Dissenting Chapel.

The deed of gift, which bears date February 17th, 1695,² is of sufficient importance to merit some consideration. The trustees to whom the land was handed over were John Andrews,³ Nathan Mort, Edward Richardson, Peter Finch, Joseph Crompton, Nathan

¹ 'History of Great and Little Bolton, 1824,' page 380.

² Present reckoning, 1696.

³ Squire Crompton of Rivington is a descendant of his.

Dorning,¹ John Collyer, James Seddon,² Thomas Booth and William Bridge. The land itself, previously used as a garden, was twenty-six yards long by eleven-and-a-half yards broad. The preamble of the deed clearly sets forth the conditions under which the gift is made, and by which its subsequent application should be tested.

'Whereas a chappel or oratory is fully intended and agreed to be made and built by severall Protestants dissenting from ye Church of England upon a certain plott or parsell of ground lyeing on ye N. and N.W. side of ye house of ye said Robert Seddon and that ye same should be a place for religious worship onely and for an assembly and meeting of a particular church or congregation of Protestants dissenting from ye Church of England for ye free exercise of their divine worship therein and that ye present and successive minister and ministers or teachers of ye said congregation shall be a Protestant minister or ministers of ye gospel dissenting from ye Church of England but qualified according to an Act of Parliament [the Toleration Act] made in ye first year of ye reign of his present Majesty King William and ye late Queen Mary entituled an Act for exempting their Majestys' Protestant subjects dissenting from ye Church of England from ye penalties of certain lawes or that shall be qualified according to some other Act of Parliament or law that shall hereafter be made and constituted in favour and allowance of such dissenting protestants.'

The free spirit which actuated Robert Seddon and his congregation is apparent in this wording, which had to be very carefully prepared to gain the true object in view, and at the same time to disarm hostility. The members of the congregation were intended to have

¹ This Mr. Nathan Dorning was brother to the great-grandfather of Mr. William Dorning, who is and has been all through his life attached to this congregation.

² The nephew of Rev. Robert Seddon.

'the free exercise of their divine worship.' There is no reference to creed; restraint from the Established Church is guarded against; and the minister is to be qualified under the Toleration Act or under any subsequent modification of the law of the land. This implies that greater toleration is desired than the Act gives.

Mr. Seddon's intention of giving a free hand to the congregation is still more clearly shown in the explicit instruction in the deed to the trustees. They

'Shall permitt and suffer ye said chapell or oratory when built upon ye premises and soe soon as ye same shall be finished to be used and imployed for ye exercise of divine worship therein and by such a congregation and assembly of Protestants onely as shall be dissenting from the Church of England and for and during soe long time as ye lawes of this realm will permitt and if ye lawes of this realm will not permitt ye same in manner and forme aforesaid that then and in such case they ye said [trustees] and ye survivors or survivor of them and his heires shall or may as they think fitt, imploy the said building and intended cbapell or shall truely faithfully and wholly distribute convert and bestow all such yearly revenues profitts and commodities as they shall make of ye same premises herein before granted (if any profit shall be made by them thereof) in such acts or works of charity and piety as they ye said trustees herein before named or the major part of them shall in their discretion think most fit but with ye consent approbation and allowance of ye said Robert Seddon and not otherwise during ye term of his natural life.

The parties evidently bore in mind the tyranny which the law had already shown to those who believed in free thought and speech and life; and so provision was made for contingencies of the kind which might again occur, the honour of the trustees being relied on to keep the great end of free and practical religion in view.

I have dwelt thus fully upon the original deed of gift, by right of which this chapel, like its predecessor, has been erected here, because, notwithstanding the challenges which have been from time to time thrown out and the inaccurate statements which have been made about the perversion of the property, the deed itself clearly and emphatically vindicates your forefathers and ourselves in maintaining the right of continuity of possession and free development of religious faith.

This early attachment to the spirit of freedom was not to be greatly wondered at. The authorised translation of the Bible had only been placed in the hands of the people early in that very century; and the study of the book itself, without the mediation and gloss and suppression of the priest, inevitably opened the minds of those who read, taught them the fallibility of a human priesthood and human creeds, and gave them a love of spiritual liberty and a desire for free enquiry. The acute struggle for civil liberty under the Stuarts strengthened this tendency, and brought a hatred of tyranny into the hearts of those who had been made to suffer both by Church and State. The remarkable thing is that those whose name would best have expressed this attitude—the Independents—were, generally speaking, only eager for outward freedom from State control, but practised rigid authority within each Church, based upon the Assembly's Catechism and Confession of Faith; whereas the Presbyterians, for the most part, cared not so much for emancipation from the State as for private liberty of conscience, though at first with reservations, and they did not press for subscription to any Confession or creed.

In this connection it is instructive for us to trace

the religious growth of the Seddon family. Robert Seddon, who gave the land, was unmarried, and he died in the house of his brother, Captain Peter Seddon. Peter Seddon and his son James were original trustees (1693) of Stand Chapel, whose congregation has also developed into Unitarianism. James Seddon was, as we have seen, an original trustee of Bank Street Chapel also. His son Peter was minister at Cockey Moor Chapel, which has also come into our possession; and *his* son, John, became minister of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, built two years before ours, and was the first minister to preach Unitarianism from that pulpit (1761). A family of the same name, descended from this stock, are to-day attached to our Preston congregation, which was established in 1716, if not earlier. So that even the religious development of the Seddon family is a testimony to the natural inheritance of these old free churches by the men and women who in the eighteenth century came to hold Unitarian opinions.

Another interesting bit of history conveys the same lesson. The first minister of the old chapel built on Robert Seddon's land and opened in October, 1696, was the Rev. Samuel Bourn, whose mother was Robert Seddon's sister. His son, also Samuel,¹ was

¹ The free spirit of Mr. Bourn the younger is clearly indicated in the following passage from a sermon preached at the Ministers' meeting at Dudley in 1738:—'To substitute any human compositions, whether articles, creeds, catechisms, or confessions, instead of the gospel, as a rule of trial, or to annex them to the gospel as necessary to be believed—this is to give up the scripture sufficiency: it is to return back into the tents of popery, and will in time sacrifice the cause of Christ to infidels. Let the Jewish Sanhedrim try Christ and his apostles, not by the oracles of the Old Testament, but by their traditions; let the priests of Rome try men's faith by the Council of Trent instead of the New

minister at the New Meeting, Birmingham, and at Coseley (both of which congregations became Unitarian) and was in 1751 invited to the ministry here. The invitation was not accepted; but it is significant that he, the family representative of his father, had then become an Arian, while the congregation at Bank Street, the successors of his father's flock, had also embraced Arian views. The historical connection and succession is complete, whichever way you regard it.

The application for the registration of the chapel was dated September 22nd, 1696, and was signed by John Andrews, Sam. Bourn (the minister), Nath. Crompton, Edward Potter, Dan. Hemingway, and Edward Kenyon. They describe the chapel as 'a Meeting House newly erected for the worship of Almighty God by his Majesty's loyal Protestant subjects, the Dissenters of Bolton and the adjacent parts, commonly called Presbyterians,' and they give assurance that 'it is a place of safety, and that the meeting designed to be held there cannot reasonably be supposed to be any nuisance or hindrance to the market.' The certificate, which is still preserved,¹ was granted by the Bishop of Chester on

Testament; but let not Protestants, let not Protestant Dissenters, so far forget themselves, so wholly give up all their great principles, as to set up any human composure as an idol, and then let loose their anger against those who will not bow down to it. . . . Let us, then, all agree to quit the camp of the enemy, the camp of Anti-Christ. This we have not done till we allow every man, every private Christian, every Christian minister, full liberty to use his own judgment, his own conscience, his own eyes, in understanding his Bible as well as he can, and till we have learnt to think no worse of a Christian brother for differing in opinion from us, while he seeks the truth as honestly as we can pretend to do.'—*Turner's Lives of Eminent Unitarians*, 1843, Vol. II. pages 326-7.

¹ A reduced fac-simile is reproduced in this volume.

the 30th September, 1696; and the chapel was immediately afterwards opened for public worship by Mr. Bourn. The exact date is not known, but it was evidently in October; and the terms of the application seem to be open to the interpretation that the Hulton Monday lectures had perhaps already been delivered there.

The Rev. Samuel Bourn, who had the honour to be the first minister of the old chapel, was an able preacher and a winning pastor, and the congregation flourished under his care. On his death-bed, Mr. Seddon had urged his appointment, and the congregation, though with some dissentients, confirmed the choice. Mr. Bourn was then minister at Calne, in Wiltshire, and it speaks well for his old congregation that, when they heard that he 'met with some unhandsome treatment' from certain people who did not approve at first of his selection, they invited him to return at a higher stipend. This invitation was declined, and it speaks equally well both for Mr. Bourn and his new congregation that he gained the esteem of all who knew him, and that he had not a single enemy in Bolton when he died. Mr. W. Tong writes of him in the biographical sketch prefixed to Mr. Bourn's *Several Sermons*, published after his death, in 1722, that he was 'a very hard student, a diligent, lively preacher.' Though, by the generosity of Mr. Seddon, educated at Cambridge University, he did not proceed to his degree as he was unwilling to take the oaths and sign the articles. His son, Samuel, was called to the ministry at Crook, near Kendal, and was urged by the ministers of the district to subscribe to the Assembly's Catechism, but his father advised him not to do so. These are sufficient indications of the liberal tendency of his mind, though his personal

16
Bolton Sept. 22 1696

W^hose p^resents may certify all whom it shall concern yt there is d^e in acting thereto lawfully exercised for the p^rofit of d^emighty God by his majesties legal protest^r & subjects the dissentors of Bolton & the adjacent parts & commonly called parishes lying upon a piece of ground lately purchased of Robert de la-
lam & given for yt and v^{er}o by yt^e charter m^r Robert Seddon late Lord of the said place of Salford & yt the mooring designed to be holden there cannot reasonably be supposed to be any nuisance or hindrance to the market. Immo where on yt contrary is alleged yt d^e edifice hath been an advantage to it. Now w^ho humbly deserveth w^h might legally demand yt this said mooring may be demolished & removed according to yt direction of the Law, & yt thereto we may advise d^e certificate pursuant to yt p^rovises

Atteste d^e

John Andrew
24th 6th
Sam^l de la lam

This certificate was entered or Registered in the Registry of the said Bishop of Chester upon the request therein made in pursuance of a late Act. and by his Lordships Order the twentieth day of September 1696
John Andrew
Sam^l de la lam

predilection seems to have been for a moderate Calvinism. Mr. Bourn died on March 4th, 1719 [new reckoning, 1720] in his seventy-second year, his ministry here having lasted 23 years, and he was buried in the chapel, near the pulpit.

Mr. Baker¹ omits the name of the Rev. Peter Withington who succeeded Mr. Bourn in the ministry in 1720.² The ministry was of short duration, as he died in June, 1722, while visiting Scarborough for the sake of his health. He was then only 34 years of age, and seems to have been a man of considerable promise. He had been assistant minister to Rev. John Gardner, Matthew Henry's successor at Chester, before he was called to Bolton.

Early in 1723 (not 1719 as Mr. Baker states), the Rev. Thomas Dixon, M.A., entered upon the ministry here, coming from Whitehaven, where he had conducted a successful academy as well as maintained his ministry. His Arts degree was given him by Edinburgh University *honoris causa*, and while he was at Bolton he took the degree of M.D. in the same university, and actually established a large medical practice, besides maintaining the academy and performing the duties of a minister of religion. He died on August 14th, 1729, at the comparatively early age of fifty, his end probably being accelerated by over-strain. He was buried in the meeting-house, and a tablet was erected to his memory, which is to be seen in the transept of the present chapel. It describes him as 'chief alike of medical men and of theologians.'

¹ *Rise and Progress of Nonconformity in Bolton*, by Franklin Baker. London: E. T. Whitfield, 178, Strand. 1854.

² He was catechist for the Hulton Trust in 1720, 1721, and 1722. Mr. Dixon (not Dr. then) was catechist in 1725.

In 1723 the house occupied by Mr. Seddon and afterwards by Mr. Bourn was purchased by Mr. John Andrews on behalf of the trustees for the sum of £120. Of this sum £70 was raised by the trustees 'and other Protestant Dissenters in or about Bolton,' and the remaining £50 was paid over by Mr. Andrews as trustee for the late Mr. Robert Mort, 'according to the liberty and power he had for so doing when any urgent or extraordinary occasion offered itself, which then appeared to be the case.' The old house was pulled down, and a new one erected, to serve as a parsonage or chapel house.

Mr. Nathan Dorning, one of the original trustees of the chapel, by his will dated 18th May, 1728, bequeathed the sum of £30 to the trustees of the chapel upon trust to dispose of the yearly profits thereof to and for the use of the Dissenting preacher or teacher there who should preach a sermon upon some Sunday in May on 1 *Peter* iv. 18, 'And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?' This practice is still maintained by the resident minister for the time being.

Dr. Dixon's immediate successor (1729) was the Rev. John Buck, of Idle, near Bradford, who for twenty-one years remained as minister until his death, 8th July, 1750. The information about him is scanty, but he is known to have preached against particular election and in favour of free grace and personal responsibility, and his teaching was Arian rather than Trinitarian. He lived in the chapel-house, as the new trust deed of 1743 shows. The site of the chapel is therein described as 'The Windbank or the Windebank.' Mr. Buck's remains were interred in the chapel.

The Astley Charity was founded in 1734 by the

will of Jane Astley, who left three sums of £60, each to be put out at interest, and applied respectively to the following purposes:—(1) to provide clothing for the poor who attended some Protestant place of worship on the Lord's Day; (2) to a duly-appointed minister who should preach a sermon upon some subject tending to awaken secure sinners in the Presbyterian meeting-house in Bolton on the fair day; (3) to provide a number of seats for poor people to sit in the said meeting-house.

After Mr. Buck's death there was a period of dislocation and strife in the chapel affairs. Family quarrels accentuated theological differences. The growing Arianism of the majority was distasteful to the Calvinistic minority, and the want of harmony was shown in strong divisions of opinion as to the next appointment. Apparently Mr. Samuel Bourn the younger would have healed the differences, but he did not see his way to accept the call to his father's old chapel. Eventually the choice fell upon the Rev. Thomas Dixon (son of Dr. Dixon), who had been educated at Dr. Rotheram's Academy at Kendal. When he received the invitation from Bolton in 1752 he was colleague to Dr. John Taylor at Norwich, perhaps the most distinguished student who had been under his father's care at Whitehaven. Mr. Dixon, who was an able man and has been described as 'a well-informed and liberal theologian, but not an eloquent speaker,' only lived two years longer, his death taking place on the 23rd February, 1754, when he was only thirty-three years of age. His was the last body to be buried in the chapel. A tribute to his memory is paid in the memorial tablet erected

to his father and himself, in which he is described as 'happily following in the footsteps of his father, full of honour, if not of years.' He is considered to have been the first minister who openly preached Unitarianism, as distinguished from Arianism, in the chapel. There is some doubt on this point, and there is nothing in his published writings to throw light upon it; but his intimate friendship with the Rev. John Seddon, the Unitarian minister of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, may be supposed to give some confirmation to the tradition. At any rate, it is certain that the Calvinistic minority in the congregation became still more restive and demonstrative at this time; and shortly after Mr. Dixon's death, finding themselves unable to secure the appointment of a minister holding their views, they seceded and joined the first Independent congregation in the town, which in 1754 was founded at Duke's Alley. Though the trust of the Duke's Alley Chapel specifies no form of church government as necessary, it contains restrictions which 'guard the property from being used by any other than a congregation of orthodox dissenters. Its basis is Calvinistic and its references are to the Westminster Confession.'¹ For a long time the chapel was called 'Oliver Chapel,' from its association with Oliver Ormrod, a local notability, who was one of the earliest trustees. It is interesting to note here the satire of events. In 1782 the Rev. James Wraith was dismissed from the ministry at Duke's Alley Chapel because he did not preach Calvinistic doctrine; and in 1803 the 'orthodox' Presbyterian party seceded to establish the Moor Lane Chapel, which was afterwards purchased and long occupied by Unitarians.

¹ *Centenary Memorials of Duke's Alley Chapel*, by Rev. W. H. Davison, page 48.

The Rev. Philip Holland, of Wem, in Shropshire, was the next occupant (1755) of the Bank Street pulpit after the secession of the Calvinistic party, and his views were non-Trinitarian. His ministry was so successful that the fortunes of the congregation were soon restored, and in 1760 it became necessary to enlarge the chapel. So far as one can judge, the chapel must have been originally of oblong shape, with the pulpit placed where the present pulpit is, but facing a long wide wall; and when the enlargement was made, this wall was broken into, and a portion of it set further back, near to the chapel-house. The population of Great and Little Bolton in the year 1773 was returned as 5604. Mr. Holland lived at the chapel-house, and conducted a boarding-school in addition to his ministerial duties. He gave vigorous aid to the agitation which in 1779 secured for Nonconformists release from the necessity for subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, and the substitution therefor of a declaration on their part that they were Christians and Protestant Dissenters taking the Holy Scriptures as their rule of faith and practice. He held Unitarian opinions of the Priestley school in his later years, though he was not by any means a controversialist. Writing to the Rev. John Hughes, of Bury, on 13th September, 1780, the Rev. Job Orton, of Shrewsbury, remarked: 'I have lately read Mr. Holland's charge. I am sorry to find my friend Holland sink the inspiration of the apostles and their epistles lower than I think he can justify. I have freely written to him on the subject.'

In 1785 the Rev. William Hawkes, of Dob Lane, was appointed assistant minister, to relieve the strain upon Mr. Holland, and for four years the joint pastorate was maintained till Mr. Holland's death on the 3rd

January, 1789, after thirty-three years' faithful service. A tablet to his memory was erected by the congregation and is to be seen in the transept of the present chapel. With the death of the senior minister, Mr. Hawkes's connection with the congregation came to an end, though there were many who desired the continuance of his services. The trustees, however, promptly appointed the Rev. John Holland, the nephew of Philip. Mr. Hawkes accepted an invitation in the same year (1789) to become the minister of the newly-formed Unitarian congregation in Mosley Street, Manchester, the successor of which is Upper Brook Street Free Church; so that I, whose last full pastorate was in that church, have a double claim to be considered the successor of Mr. Hawkes.

The Rev. John Holland, after his settlement at Bank Street in 1789, at once set to work to establish a Sunday School; and in the very year of his appointment—a year of revolution indeed—this was done. Bank Street Chapel was early in the field in this good work, but to the Wesleyans at Ridgway Gates Chapel must be accorded the honour of leading the way in Sunday School teaching in Bolton, the population of which town in 1791 had risen to 11,000. A room was taken by Mr. Holland at the bottom of Acres Field, and there a little Sunday School was conducted until 1796, when a building was erected on the south side of the chapel, to which the school was transferred. I quote an interesting description of this building, given by the late Mr. Isaac Barrow in a historical sketch prepared for the celebration of the Centenary of the Sunday School in 1889, and embodied in a most interesting memorial manuscript volume just presented to the school by Mr. Miles Gerrard.

'It stood between the passage to the old chapel and the old Wheatsheaf Inn. On the removal of this inn, with the inn-keeper and the name of the hotel, to the new Wheatsheaf in Newport Street, the school building, along with the inn, was pulled down, and shops built on the site. The accommodation consisted, during the later years, not only of an upper room (as stated in Mr. Baker's lectures), which was approached by an awkward flight of outside [wooden] steps, but also of another room above that, and also of a third on the ground floor. As access to the two latter rooms was by internal staircases, the probability is they were added as additional accommodation was required. The room on the ground-floor was occupied by the younger children, the middle room by the older girls, and the top room by the older boys—this room also serving for the assembly of the school at the opening service.'¹

Mr. John Holland was devoted to young people and was never tired of teaching them one subject or another. He was a bold preacher of Unitarianism, and no one was allowed to remain in doubt long as to his opinions on any question. This sometimes brought unpopularity. During the Church and King excitement he was burnt in effigy; and it was probably the fear of attack upon the chapel that caused the trustees to procure a quaint certificate (which still exists and is reproduced in the Addenda), from the Quarter Sessions at Salford, that the 'Windy Bank Chapel' was 'a place of congregation or assembly for religious worship.' It would seem that Mr. Holland was at one time uncom-

¹ It may be interesting here to note that in the memory of persons living in 1862, Bank Street was 'so very narrow that it was necessary for foot-passengers to step into some shop or doorway to avoid being crushed by a passing cart.' [*Sayings and Doings of Fayson Folds*, Bolton: Geo. Winterburn, 1879, page 34.] Mrs. Farrar remembers in her early childhood, sixty years ago, asking her grandmother what Bank Street Chapel was, and she was told that it was 'the Round-head Chapel,' and that its members were 'descended from those people who killed the king.' This was the opinion of a staunch Churchwoman and real old Tory, born about the year 1773.

fortable about the mode of his appointment and not convinced that he was supported by the whole congregation, for he resigned the pulpit [date uncertain], and 'was re-elected in a manner more gratifying to the congregation and more satisfactory to himself.'¹ An organ was for the first time introduced as an aid to worship in the year 1792.

At the close of a thirty-one years' ministry Mr. Holland's health failed him. He resigned on the 20th August, 1820, very much broken down, but he occasionally occupied the pulpit afterwards until his death in 1826. A tablet to his memory was placed above the pulpit, testifying to the 'grateful and affectionate remembrance' in which the congregation held 'his zeal, his talents, and his virtues.' It may be seen in one of the transepts of the present chapel.

And here I must pause in the narration of the history of the congregation, whose further story until the present day I intend to tell this evening, tracing the dependent and independent movements which have all contributed to make the reality of to-day what it is. I am only too conscious that in the very short time which has been at my disposal to gather and arrange the facts it has been impossible for me to do such justice to the interesting and instructive narrative as I should desire and its merits would deserve. While I would commit the reconsideration of this long period of honourable history to the reflection of the elders, I cannot forego a word of special appeal to the younger members of the congregation. It is well that they

¹ The Memorial of Dissentients to Rev. Noah Jones, 1821, reproduced in the Addenda.

should know and ponder over the brave struggles of their forefathers, who through much difficulty, perseverance, and sacrifice, won the rights and privileges which we easily enjoy to-day.

Youths and maidens, and you who are approaching the years and burdens of maturity, remember, I pray you, the spiritual ancestry from which you have sprung, and hold in high honour the name and thought of Nonconformity to all human limitations of the Divine claim on the soul. When the glamour of a stately ritual and the popularity of a fashionable cult tempt you to an insincere conformity to a creed against which your heart and mind alike revolt, think of the heroic truthfulness of which you have learnt, amid dangers and difficulties which you in these comfortable days can scarcely realise, and let your wills gain tone and strength, to stand by the grand old cause which will itself remain true, whoever may prove false to it. Cherish the high principles which have been put into practice here, and have brought a hallowing influence upon this church of your fathers. Let the memory of the just be to you a cause of devout thankfulness, of resolute determination, and of perpetual inspiration. If you value the lessons of history, remember that you are making history to-day, and the generations to come will have their tale to tell of the way in which the responsibilities of to-day were dealt with. Be worthy of your sacred calling, and may your children and children's children live to call you blessed. It may be that your names will be handed down to some future commemoration, as great and good names have been passed down the long line of the past to us; but even if no page of human history shall record your names, they will be written in the book of life which never errs, if only with con-

secrated zeal you give your hearts to God and your lives to his most holy service. 'The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers. Let him not leave us, nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.'

TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF FREE RELIGION.

PART II. 1821—1895.

The Story of Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, as told by Rev. C. J. Street, in his Evening Sermon on the Bi-centenary Sunday.

'Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.'—*Galatians* v. 1.

THIS morning I traced for you the history of our venerable congregation from its earliest times down to the year 1820. I now take up the thread again in order to carry the record to the present day.

The appointment of the Rev. Noah Jones to the pastorate in the summer of 1821 was the unhappy cause of a break in the harmony of the congregation; and, after an unsuccessful effort on the part of the large dissentient minority to persuade the newly-elected minister to decline the appointment, a serious secession took place which led to the establishment of a new Unitarian congregation in Moor Lane. It will be interesting to give some account of the 'Separatists' as they were called, and briefly trace their history till the differences were happily ended, and the two diverging streams were again blended. At this distance of time it is possible to speak with an unbiassed mind and with less reserve than was necessary on Mr. Baker's part and in his day. It may be well to record the fact that the population of Bolton had now increased to 31,295.

The Rev. Noah Jones, when by a majority of six votes he was elected minister at Bank Street, was a very young man, only twenty years of age, and had but recently settled at Walmsley. He was educated for the Independent ministry at Wymondley, but changed his opinions while at college, and did not complete his course. All these facts seem to have influenced many against his appointment; the name of another minister obtained almost as much numerical support; and there was a feeling on the part of the dissentients that Mr. Jones's friends were ruling with too high a hand. It is also suggested that differences of theological and political opinion and the desire of the dissentients for the display of a more missionary spirit accentuated the difference. The original memorial addressed to Mr. Jones urging him to decline the invitation is still preserved, and was signed by sixty-seven persons, most of whose family names reappear in our congregation of to-day. It was a formidable list of members threatening secession. The memorialists maintained that an actual majority of the congregation was opposed to the appointment, and urged that the Walmsley congregation was being unfairly treated; and they intimated that persistence in accepting the invitation 'will most certainly cause a very serious schism in the congregation, which we shall sincerely lament.'¹

The protest was without avail; the appointment was persisted in, and the threatened secession took place. The story may be told in the words of the Rev. George Harris, who became the first minister of the newly-formed congregation. It forms part of the preface to a lecture on 'The Causes of Deism and

¹ The full text of the Memorial will be found in the Addenda.

Atheism,' published in 1823, for which it is interesting to note, Mr. Franklin Baker, then a student at Glasgow University, was a subscriber. The book is dedicated 'to those Individuals who have formed themselves into a Religious Society on the glorious and eternal principle of Christian equality; whose place of worship is sacred to Liberty of Thought and Freedom of Inquiry; whose Brotherhood is the race of man; whose sole master and law-giver is Jesus Christ the Righteous; whose temple is a memorial to the Unity and Supremacy of the One God, even the Father; the members of the congregation of Unitarian Christians, assembling in the Unitarian Meeting House, Moor Lane, Bolton.' The historical passage is as follows:—

'In the summer of 1821, some individuals separated themselves from the Religious Society to which they had previously belonged, for the purpose of forming a congregation on what they deemed the purest principles of Christianity. They at first assembled together in a small upper chamber in a private house. Here they were joined by many who for a long period had totally absented themselves from public worship, occasioned by their disgust at orthodox dogmas and the time-serving and tyrannical conduct of too many Christian professors. The room at length became too small for the numbers who attended, and on the 18th November, 1821, the Cloth Hall was engaged by the society for the better accommodation of themselves and friends in worshipping the One God and Father of all. About this period the Calvinist Baptist Chapel in Moor Lane was advertised for sale by public auction. Encouraged by the success which had attended their exertions, the congregation resolved, if possible, to purchase a building which is capable of conveniently seating more than eight hundred people, and has attached to it about 1,100 yards of burial ground. It became the property of the society at the price of £900. On the 25th November, an invitation to become the pastor of the new church was given to the Rev. George Harris, which was accepted; and on the 7th April, 1822, the congregation assembled for the first

time in their own place of worship. At the opening, the society consisted of about two hundred persons, and the number of sittings let was two hundred and thirty-three. At the present period more than double the sittings are let, and the regular attendants are trebled. . . . The congregation have during the year, . . . established Sunday Schools in which are educated rather more than a hundred children of both sexes, have formed a class meeting for religious conference, a library of theological and general literature, and a benevolent society for the assistance of their sick and poor members.'

To this passage the following notes will be of interest. In the upper room of the cottage where the services were first held, the backs of the people pressed against the slanting roof. The Moor Lane Chapel, a plain, square building, having two side entrance doors with a large window between, was erected by Scotch seceders from Duke's Alley in 1803, under the name of St. Andrew's Church, as a Presbyterian chapel in connection with the Secession Church of Scotland; but after a few years the cause died out, and was not revived till 1837, when the Presbytery of the Established Church of Scotland founded a mission station in Bolton, and as a result in 1845-46 St. Andrew's Church in Bowker's Row was built. The Moor Lane Chapel was rented in 1819 by the Calvinistic Baptists for £25 a year, and in 1822 (much to the disappointment of that body who were still worshipping there) was offered for sale and purchased by the Unitarians, subject to a ground rent. The Baptist congregation, on being dispossessed, occupied the Cloth Hall, in which the Unitarian services had hitherto been held. Mr. Harris, who came from Renshaw Street Chapel, Liverpool, to the ministry at Moor Lane, preached on the opening Sunday to crowded and enthusiastic congregations, and the collections that day amounted to £101

7s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. The contributions of members and outside subscriptions had by July 4th, 1824 brought in the sum of £1,243 16s. 6d., which cleared all expenses connected with the building, and left a small balance in the treasurer's hands. Commemorative anniversary services were regularly held on Easter Sunday, and the collections at the first two, namely £55 17s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and £90 8s. 8d., were included in the account referred to. 'These Easter anniversaries,' said one who often shared in them, 'were glorious gatherings at which not a few found their principles invigorated, their zeal increased, their resolves to make open and manly avowal of unpopular truth strengthened, and went from the meetings to their several spheres of labour with renewed hope and determination, thanking God and taking courage.'¹

Mr. Harris was a man of fine presence, and a most eloquent reader and preacher. He was full of missionary zeal, and during his short ministry at Moor Lane the chapel was crowded, forms having to be placed in the aisles frequently; but on the 25th of September, 1825, he removed to Glasgow to take charge of the Unitarian congregation there. This was a great blow to the young cause in Bolton, and the congregation was never so prosperous again. The work had not been thoroughly consolidated in so short a time, and the withdrawal of his strong personality was disastrous. The succession to the ministry at Moor Lane chapel was not an enviable one under such circumstances, but for several years the struggle to maintain an inde-

¹ *Christian Reformer*, 1860, p. 404, 'George Harris: a member.'

So enthusiastic were the working-men whom Mr. Harris succeeded in drawing around him that many of them worked overtime so as to earn their contributions to the chapel funds.

pendent existence was bravely carried on. The choice of the congregation fell upon the Rev. John Cropper, M.A., who began his ministry in 1826 and remained until 1832, when he removed to Exeter, subsequently holding pastorates at Aberdeen, Stand, and Wareham. He was succeeded in 1832 by the Rev. William Smith, F.L.S., who came from Dundee, and in March, 1834, removed to Stockport, ultimately becoming professor of Natural History in Queen's College, Cork. The Rev. John Thomas Cooper was his successor at Moor Lane from 1834 to 1836. The trust deed was not executed till 4th May, 1836, when the following were appointed trustees, Messrs. Joshua Crook (who, however, did not sign the deed), Isaac Barrow, Henry Grindrod, jun., Benjamin Rigby, Geoffry Taylor, John Bradshaw, Peter Heywood (Astley Bridge), Robert Salter, Peter Heywood, jun. (Burnden), William Smith, John Heap, John Harwood, John Nuttall, James Taylor, and Joseph Parkinson. The witnesses to the signatures were Messrs. T. R. Brandreth, James Haselden, jun., and John Platt. The last minister was the Rev. William Maccall, who held the pulpit from 1837 till 1840. Thereafter, until the chapel was closed in May, 1843, the pulpit was supplied by various ministers.

Several causes contributed to the closing of the chapel and the amalgamation of the congregation with that of Bank Street from which it sprung. Chief among these must be placed the fact that as time went on, the causes of original difference disappeared, and friendly relations between the two had been developed. The choice of Mr. Baker by the Bank Street people, after the secession, proved to be a wise one, and his long and faithful ministry approved itself to the Unitarian community, many of the Moor Lane people

gradually finding their way back to Bank Street. Mr. Baker and his brother (afterwards Sir Thomas) married two sisters, the daughters of Mr. Jeremiah Crook, whose family connections were prominent at Moor Lane chapel.¹ In 1839 it was found that the congregation was not in a flourishing condition, numerically or financially. The way seemed prepared for amalgamation with Bank Street.

Accordingly, at a congregational meeting, held October 13th, 1839, Mr. Peter Heywood, of Burnden, in the chair, it was unanimously resolved: 'That a deputation from this congregation wait upon the trustees of the Bank Street Chapel, and make them an offer of our chapel, so that we can unite together as one congregation; the mode of disposing of our chapel to be left to the deputation.' The deputation consisted of Messrs. Joshua Crook, John Heap, Peter Heywood (Astley Bridge), John Nuttall, and John Harwood, jun. A letter conveying this resolution was forwarded by the Secretary, Mr. John Bradshaw, to the Bank Street trustees, and on October 20th a meeting of the trustees was held, Messrs. C. J. Darbishire, Edmund Ashworth, James Bromiley, Arthur Bromiley, John Gordon, John Dean, George Cunliffe, Robert Heywood, and Thomas Kenyon being present. A resolution was adopted that 'the trustees regard with much pleasure the existence of such a feeling in the congregation assembling at the Meeting House, Moor Lane, as should lead them unanimously to make so conciliatory a proposition for the union of the two societies.' They pointed out, however, that there were legal and other difficulties in the way of amalgamation; but these were in course of time

¹ A younger brother of Mr. Baker's (Charles) married the grand-niece of 'Parson Folds.'

happily surmounted, and on Sunday, 4th June, 1843, to their mutual advantage, the two congregations became one again, under Mr. Baker's ministry, and, to use the Rev. John Gordon's words, constituted 'a happy and prosperous society, to which the memory of the past is as that of a journey through the wilderness, which has led to the promised land.'¹

The chapel at Moor Lane was rented by the Wesleyans, and then by the Methodist Free Church, who removed in 1846 to their new chapel in Bowker's Row, now converted into sale rooms. In 1851 it was tenanted by a body of worshippers who had seceded from Mawdsley Street Chapel, but they subsequently removed to Albert Place Chapel. During the time that the old Bank Street Chapel was being pulled down and the new one erected, the congregation worshipped at Moor Lane, the organ from Bank Street being temporarily transferred there. There was no organ belonging to the Moor Lane chapel, and the music had been led by a small instrumental band. Occasionally the building was let as a lecture hall, to Mr. Bradlaugh and the Rev. Dr. Verity among others. Subsequently it was sold, and St. Paul's Church is now erected upon part of the site. Well within the borders of a single century the site has been adapted to some curious ecclesiastical changes.

We must now return to the original Bank Street congregation, which, with thinned ranks, remained loyal to the Rev. Noah Jones. His ministry, perhaps not unnaturally under the circumstances, was not a long one. In 1822, the year after his appointment, his health broke down, and he resigned. In the autumn

¹ *Christian Reformer*, 1860, page 405, 'George Harris: a Memoir.'

of 1823 an invitation was sent to the Rev. Franklin Baker, which he accepted. He entered upon duty on the 14th December, 1823, but the ordination services were postponed till 23rd September, 1824. The proceedings on this occasion, in which the Rev. J. G. Robberds, the Rev. John Kentish, and the Rev. James Hews Bransby (of Dudley, whence Mr. Baker came) took prominent part, were published in a book of 120 demy octavo pages.

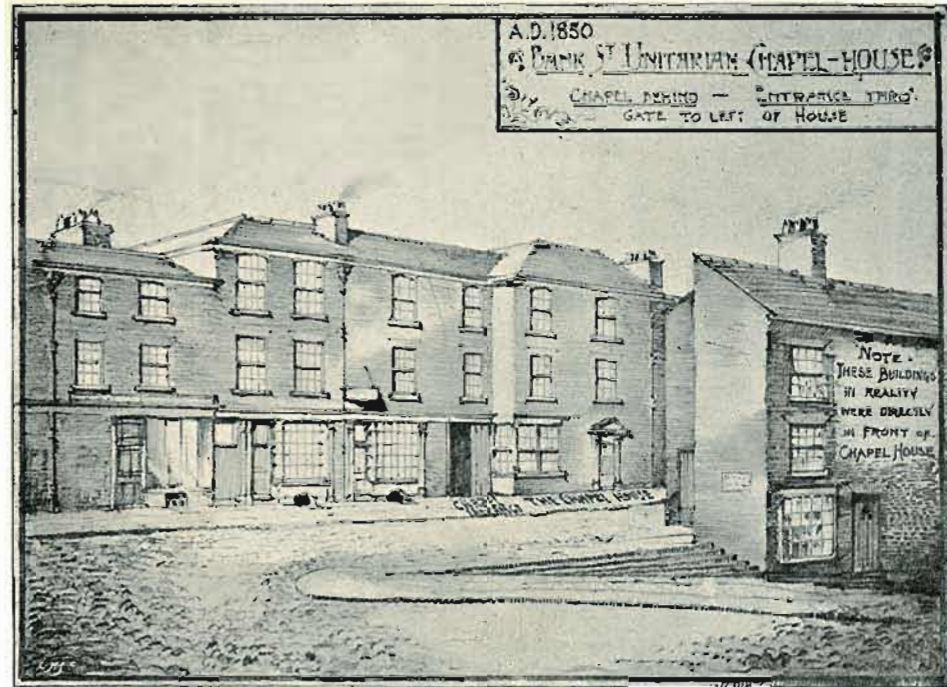
The young minister had a difficult task before him, for the congregation was greatly weakened by the secession and the feelings caused by it, and Mr. Harris was a powerful attraction to Moor Lane; but Mr. Baker had virility and staying power and an aptitude for organization, and he threw himself into the public life of the town without neglecting any portion of his ministerial work. It was inevitable that such steady work should tell, and much of the former prosperity of the congregation returned, and its influence was strengthened. A note just discovered in an old pocket-book of Mr. Robert Heywood's is dated November 6th, 1831, and reads 'our chapel near being burnt down.' In 1835, the Sunday School, having become too large for the small building erected for it in 1796 on the south side of the chapel, was transferred to the chapel house, which was henceforth disused as a parsonage and adapted for the needs of the school. In 1846 the number of Sunday scholars on the roll was 195, the average attendance being 155.

Reflected honour came upon the chapel in the fact that, on the incorporation of the borough in 1838, Mr. Charles J. Darbishire was chosen as the first Mayor; Mr. Robert Heywood being elected to the same post in 1839, and declining in 1840 a knighthood offered at the

time of the Queen's marriage. The prominent and honourable place in civic life taken by these two close friends and staunch Unitarians was typical of the progressive and practically Christian spirit of the chapel and the school to which they were proud to belong. A tablet in the chapel, erected in 1888, the year of the Corporation Jubilee, appropriately commemorates the 'two friends, bound by ties of mutual regard, of common sympathies, and of united services on behalf of the town in which they lived and the church in which they worshipped.'

An interesting development took place in 1841 at another chapel, which ultimately led to an accession of members to Bank Street. In 1818, Ebenezer Chapel was erected for the Methodist New Connexion in what is now Deane Road. In 1841, as a result of divisions in the congregation and financial difficulties, the building was, on the advice of the minister, Rev. Thomas Berry, who had long shown his dissatisfaction with Dissent, sold to the Church of England. Mr. Berry was himself at once ordained as perpetual curate on the understanding 'that the congregation and chapel, with all its appurtenances, were transferred to the Church.'¹ A large part of the old congregation remained with Mr. Berry, including six of the local preachers, all the trustees, and the majority of the teachers and scholars. Mr. Peter Ormrod, to whom the chapel had been heavily mortgaged, forgave the debt on condition that the building was handed over to the Church. Many of the old members, however, left;

¹ Preface to Rev. James Slade's *Sermon preached at the opening of Christ Church, Bolton (late Ebenezer Chapel), on Sunday, May 2nd, 1841*. Mr Slade was then vicar of Bolton.



The Old Chapel House.

From a sketch by Mr. Joshua Crook, reproduced by Messrs. Bradshaw and Gass.

some went to Lever Street, keeping their association with the Connexion, and afterwards removed to the new chapel in St. George's Road, erected in 1852; others, amongst whom were Messrs. John Entwisle, Richard Carling, John Lomax, John Rothwell, and William Rigby, commenced and conducted services in a room over a saw-pit in Green Street, off Moor Lane. Mr. Entwisle taught an adult class on Sunday afternoons, the memory of which brings feelings of gratitude to his old scholars. The Rev. Travers Madge and the Rev. John Wright, of Bury, frequently came to preach at 'the Saw-pit.' The congregation was then known as the Independent Christian Church. After worshipping there for several years, the little band, which had come under the influence of Joseph Barker (who had preached in the Saw-pit Chapel), and was in consequence dubbed 'Barkerite,' removed to another room previously used by the Society of Friends in Acres Field. This became known as the 'Christian Brethren's Meeting Room.' The services were given up on Sunday, 13th May, 1855, most of the members joining Bank Street Chapel, others returning to the Methodist New Connexion.

This welcome accession to the ranks of the congregation could not at once worship at Bank Street, for the simple reason that the old chapel was then pulled down and the new one was not yet completed, so that the actual migration was to the temporary home in Moor Lane. The old chapel in Bank Street had done its work well, and it was no shame that it was showing signs of wear and decay. The sum of £3,300 was readily subscribed when the proposition to build a new chapel was seriously entertained in the year 1853. The last service in the old chapel was conducted by

Mr. Baker on Christmas Day in that year, when he delivered the last of his series of four lectures on 'The Rise and Progress of Nonconformity in Bolton.' The work of demolishing the ancient structure was begun in January, 1854, the old material being sold for £83 15s. 6d. Mr. George Woodhouse was secured as architect, and the erection of the new edifice in which we now worship, occupying the whole site of the old chapel, school, and parsonage, was begun in June, 1854. The basement story, forming the school, was completed during the year, and after a pause of a few months the upper portion, *i.e.*, the chapel, which was a separate contract, was proceeded with.

The opening ceremony took place on Thursday, 21st August, 1856, in somewhat unfavourable weather, but there was a large assemblage. The dedication sermon was preached from 2 *Chronicles* ii. 4, 5, 6, by the Rev. Robert Brook Aspland, M.A., of Dukinfield, and after the service about three hundred sat down to a cold collation at the Baths Assembly Room, at which appropriate and encouraging speeches were made by the Chairman (Mr. Robert Heywood), the Rev. Dr. Beard and his son Charles, Mr. Joseph Crook, M.P., the selected preachers for the following Sunday, and others. On Sunday, 24th August, sermons were preached in the morning by the Rev. John Gordon, of Edinburgh, afternoon by Rev. J. Panton Ham, of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, and evening by Mr. Aspland. The collections at the opening amounted to £202 19s. 8d. At a congregational soiree held on 26th January, 1859, the subscription list was brought up to £3,971 9s. 4d., the total receipts amounting to £4,290 15s. 1d. The cost of the chapel, including the purchase of the land occupied by the chapel-house

(£248 11s.), and all other expenses, was £4256 16s. 5d.; so that a balance to credit of £33 18s. 8d. remained in the hands of the treasurer. The record was a worthy and honourable one.

In 1853 there were 228 scholars on the roll of the Sunday School, the average attendance being, morning 152, afternoon 144. In 1858 the Sunday afternoon services were discontinued, and Sunday evening services substituted. In 1863 the new trust deed was executed, and twenty-one trustees were appointed, of whom only two, Mr. Joshua Crook and Mr. Thomas Bromley, now survive.

Towards the close of Mr. Baker's honoured ministry, a new departure was made which has had important and satisfactory developments. The new schools at Bank Street were over-crowded, and children had to be turned away. A resolution was therefore arrived at to start a branch school, and on Sunday, 13th July, 1862, a Sunday School was opened at the Hulton Street Schools, Moor Lane. At first there were more teachers than scholars, but the proportion was soon altered, and the school became a growing success. Arrangements were made for services once a month for the parents, conducted by students of the Unitarian Home Missionary Board. This developed into a regular Sunday evening service, for which Mr. John Entwisle was engaged. The trustees of the Hulton Street Schools could not, however, permit the building to be used for denominational purposes; so that temporary premises were secured in Stanley Street until a suitable building could be found. A beer-shop in Commission Street was purchased and structurally adapted to form a chapel, with

a school on the ground floor. This was opened for divine worship by the Rev. Charles Beard, B.A., of Liverpool, on Saturday, 22nd February, 1868. The Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., of Manchester, preached on the next day, and the collections at the opening were nearly £60. Mr. Entwisle was appointed as first minister of the congregation. In 1870 a hand-loom weaving shed adjoining the chapel was secured and converted into a school, and a successful day school was opened. This was carried on until September, 1881, when it was transferred to the School Board, who held it till June, 1893, and then closed it. Mr. Entwisle resigned the ministry in 1876, and was succeeded by the Rev. Albert Lazenby, who, however, only remained two years.

The trust deed, executed on the 16th January, 1867, specifies that the property is 'to be used, occupied, and enjoyed as a place of public religious worship of God, and as a school for the education of children.' The fourth rule of the congregation, which by another rule is made incapable of rescission or alteration, runs thus: 'That the Society or congregation assembling in the before-mentioned chapel and premises abstains from requiring to be taught or observed and from forbidding to be taught or observed any particular doctrines or opinions or mode of regulating worship in the said chapel and premises.' This deserves recording, as being a proof that the same free spirit which was shown by the founders of Bank Street Chapel in the seventeenth century has been preserved unspoiled by their descendants at Unity Church in the nineteenth. The original trustees were Messrs. Joseph William Bridge, Thomas Rigby, George Ransden, Richard Carling, George Pool Gass, Jonas James

Bradshaw, James Brimelow, William Dorning, William Sidlow, John Bramwell, John Cunliffe, George Rothwell, John Harwood, Richard Harwood, and James Taylor. To these have since been added, as vacancies occurred, John Waring, Joseph Pilling, Frank Taylor, Thomas Bromley, John Bradshaw Gass, Thomas Henry Waring, and Joseph Lancaster.

A bazaar in 1878 brought in the handsome sum of £660 towards the reduction of the debt upon the building. The Rev. John Bevan became minister in 1878, continuing till 1884, when the Rev. John James Wright was appointed. The next year, an excellent freehold site in Deane Road was purchased, and the nucleus of a building fund was formed. Mr. Wright left for Chowbent in 1890, and the Rev. James Crossley assumed the ministry in 1891, but removed to Birmingham the following year. The present minister, Rev. Herbert Mann Livens, entered on his duties with the new year, 1893. During his pastorate the commodious new Unity Church has been erected at a cost of £4,778, Messrs. Bradshaw and Gass being the architects. The church was opened on Saturday, 16th December, 1893, by Rev. Dr. Brooke Herford, and special sermons were preached by Mrs. L. Ormiston Chant the next day, the collections at the opening amounting to £54 7s. 4d. By the generous help of the Bank Street members, the North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission, and other friends, in addition to their own gifts, the congregation were enabled to raise the splendid sum of £4,982 15s. 6d., which more than paid the whole cost, leaving a balance of £143 os. 1d. to apply towards any needful enlargement of the premises. This was found necessary last year, and an additional room was built at the back of the church

to make better provision for the needs of the Sunday School and for meetings. The cost of this addition, which was opened on September 18th, 1895, by Mr. Joseph Entwistle, was £496 8s. There is an outstanding debt of about £300 on this account, which perchance some generous heart may be stirred by this Bi-centenary Commemoration to extinguish.

Nothing could be more gratifying to the members of the Bank Street congregation than the success which has attended the efforts of the daughter church. It was not, like the Moor Lane movement, a split from the old stock, but an offshoot which has been carefully watched and nurtured and strengthened into independent vigorous life. All through its career of thirty-four years, it has relied upon Bank Street for encouragement and support; and the old congregation may well take pride in the new one, and note the triumphs of its child as part of its own Bi-centenary record.

Mr. Baker's ministry drew to a close soon after the Sunday School at Hulton Street was opened. In May, 1864, he retired to a well-earned rest, after having spent forty-one years of continuous ministry in his only pastorate. For three years he lived quietly at Caton, near Lancaster, and then went back to his old home in Birmingham, to die there on the 25th May, 1867. Funeral sermons in his memory were preached at Bank Street on Sunday, 2nd June, 1867, by the Rev. G. H. Wells, M.A., an old friend of Mr. Baker's, and the Rev. Jeffery Worthington, who had become his successor. Mr. Wells spoke of the late pastor as 'a diligent student of the Scriptures, and what truths he found there he considered it his

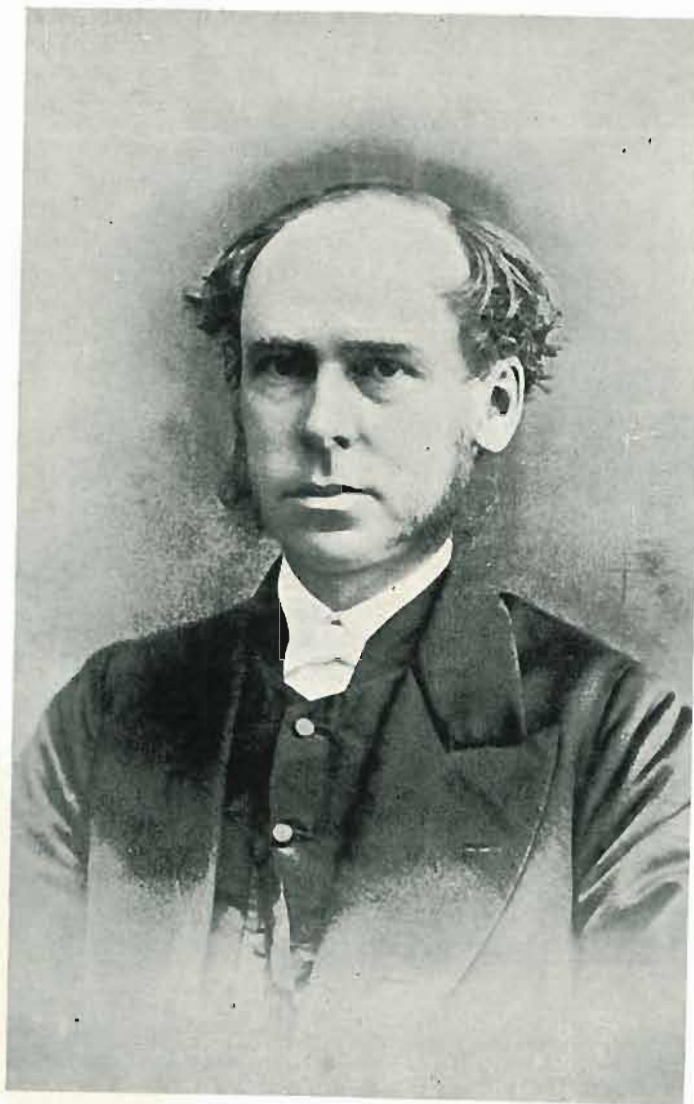
duty to proclaim honestly and fearlessly.' He was 'a sound and ripe scholar,' and his sincerity and clearness of decision were equally remarkable. It may not be generally known that Dr. Benson, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, whose recent death we all deplore, was a nephew of Mr. Baker's, and owed at least a part of his early education to him. Dr. Benson was the son of Edward White Benson, who married a sister of Franklin Baker's. A memorial tablet to Mr. Baker was afterwards placed in the chapel. It describes him as 'a sincere Christian, a faithful minister, a sound scholar, and an ardent friend of civil and religious liberty.' A similar tablet, erected in the Lancaster chapel to which he belonged in his last years, eulogises him as 'decided in his theological opinions, an uncompromising advocate of civil and religious rights, ever ready to aid in the spread of knowledge and the progress of enlightened institutions. To the young he was a faithful guide, to the poor a sympathising friend.'

If it was difficult to fill George Harris's place it was no less so to find a suitable successor to Franklin Baker, whose long ministry had endeared him to the hearts of his people. The Rev. Jeffery Worthington was eventually called from Manchester New College, London, to the pastorate, and entered upon the duties in October, 1864. In 1867 the beautiful rose window in the chapel was given by Mr. Richard Harwood in memory of his daughter Margaret, who died the previous year.

The chief event during Mr. Worthington's nine years' ministry, and one to which his energy and zeal largely contributed, was the erection of the new school

buildings. In 1866 the old 'Seven Stars' inn, which stood almost in front of the chapel, was purchased by Mr. Robert Heywood, and placed at the service of the Sunday School, which was cramped for room in the basement below the chapel. The vestry also had to be used for class work; and in August, 1867, the teachers presented an address to the chapel trustees, pointing out the inadequacy of the accommodation and urging that steps should be taken towards improvement. It was found impossible to take immediate action, and it was not until 1869 that, on the invitation of the late Mr. John Harwood, a subscription list was seriously opened. The remaining property in front of the chapel was purchased for £1095, and the Bank Inn and an adjacent shop were bought for £2750 in 1870. Mr. George Cunliffe was appointed architect. An expected building grant from the Government was not forthcoming, which caused further delay. In 1872 the present chapel yard was formed and enclosed, greatly to the advantage of the chapel; and on Wednesday the 21st of January, 1874, the inauguration of the handsome new schools was celebrated by a service at which the Rev. Charles Beard, B.A., preached. A soirée on the same day was presided over by Mr. John Harwood, sen.; and on the following Sunday special services were conducted morning and evening by the Rev. William James, of Bristol, and in the afternoon an address was given in the new school by the Rev. T. Elford Poynting, of Monton.

The erection of the schools was a very costly affair, partly because of the value of the old property which had to be cleared away, partly because of the nature of the site, and partly because the building was in-



Rev. JEPPEY WORTHINGTON.

tended to serve for day as well as Sunday schools. Day schools for girls and infants had already been begun, and placed under Government inspection, and they were now transferred to the new premises. The total outlay was £9431. The first canvass for subscriptions to the school building brought in £4050 10s. 6d., the second £2035 6s. 9d.; and the sums voted towards the building fund by the teachers from the School Sermons collections for nine years amounted to £573 10s.; but still, at the time the schools were opened, there was a debt of about £2000 remaining on them.

In 1873, at the suggestion of a teachers' meeting, steps were taken to place some permanent memorial in the school of the long and honourable connection which the late Mr. Robert Heywood had maintained with it, and, as a result, the new school was adorned by the window which represents 'Paul at the feet of Gamaliel.' It may be mentioned that there is only one name on the superintendent's register to-day which was on the register when the new schools were opened, and that is Mr. Thomas Harwood's.

Early in the same year, 1873, certain members of the Bank Street congregation, in conjunction with others who did not belong to the chapel, formed themselves into a Free Christian Church, which assembled for worship in the Temperance Hall, St. George's Road, and appointed the Rev. James Kay Applebee as first minister. The Church, which began with about thirty members, was founded 'on the simple and fundamental truth of religion expressed in the words "God is our Father, and all we are brethren,"' and it was constituted at a meeting held in the Co-operative Hall,

on Thursday, 20th February, 1873. The services were well attended in Mr. Applebee's time, and in 1874 there were 160 scholars, with an average attendance of 146, in the Sunday School, which had been begun in Lark Street Temperance Hall, on Sunday, August 10th, 1873. Mr. Applebee left in 1876, preaching a sensational farewell sermon, in which he addressed his hearers as 'fellow-worms.' The Rev. A. B. Camm succeeded him, but his ministry, owing to ill-health, was of short duration. The Rev. Herbert V. Mills undertook the pastorate in 1878, and at the end of that year the congregation removed to the Temperance Hall in Lark Street, previously used for their Sunday School. On referring to my ministerial record, I find that I preached the Anniversary Sermons at Lark Street Free Christian Church on Sunday, 18th April, 1880, morning and afternoon, the Rev. Frank Trotman (Baptist) preaching in the evening. Mr. Mills removed to Colne at the end of 1880, and the Rev. Geo. W. Bannister succeeded him at once. His ministry lasted for four years, and then in December, 1884, the church was closed, as the attendance and financial support had greatly fallen off. The school was carried on for some time after the chapel was closed, the late Mr. James Grundy being deeply interested in the movement to the last. Many of the members came to Bank Street; others went to Commission Street; and the rest were dispersed. Mr. Thomas Bromley maintains that in singing a sacred song at some of Mr. Applebee's popular services—a fact which was strongly commented on and condemned by 'Evangelicals' at the time—he was leading the way for the establishment of the P.S.A. movement, now so popular with the same people.

Mr. Worthington's pastorate terminated in August, 1873, having lasted nine years. He was a faithful and steady worker both for the chapel and the school; and there are many yet in our midst who look back with pleasure to the days of his ministry. His successor, Rev. Charles Clement Coe, F.R.G.S., then of Leicester, was invited on January 12th, 1874, and was present as minister-elect at the opening of the schools, his actual ministry beginning in May, 1874. He lost no time in stirring up the congregation to wipe out the debt on the school buildings. A third canvass brought in the sum of £1,820 9s., and yet a fourth £247 7s., by means of which the total contributions were raised to the splendid sum of £9,491 8s. 3d., which paid off every liability and left a balance of £62, afterwards voted to the managers of the day schools. The day schools were successfully conducted on the Voluntary system until November, 1881, when they were handed over to the School Board. After using the school buildings for a little over three years, the Board closed the school in December, 1885, provision for the children having been made elsewhere.

The excellent organ which so much enriches the services in the chapel was the gift in February, 1877, of Mrs. Haslam and family, in memory of Mr. John Haslam and his daughter Ellen, the wife of Mr. R. M. Knowles. Originally begun by Mr. Holt, of Leeds, it was completed by Messrs. Gray and Davison, of London. In the same year, Mr. John Harwood gave the beautiful stained window, opposite the pulpit, in memory of his father, who died in 1875, and his mother, who pre-deceased him in 1868. A brass memorial was erected in the chapel to Miss Mary Elizabeth Kay, who died in 1879, 'a zealous member of the congregation, and a staunch supporter of all its institutions.'

In 1880 a new bell was presented by Mr. Joseph Kirkham. Certain traditions about the old bell (now in the transept) I will not vouch for. The first is that it was brought away from the parish church in 1662 by the vicar, Mr. Goodwin. Certainly, the bell bears traces of great age, and its almost undecipherable date (if it is a date), looks like 1696, which would suggest that it was cast when the chapel was built, though it seems there was a bell in connection with the older chapel in Mealhouse Lane. A second story is that it was cracked while being rung to celebrate Mr. Robert Heywood's marriage; the news of the wedding came at night, and a crowd assembled when the bell rang, thinking the chapel was on fire. Still another tale is that the bell was cracked while being rung in honour of Mr. Joseph Crook's return to Parliament in 1852. There may be differences of opinion as to how it was cracked; but there is a unanimity of testimony that in the later years of its use its tone was not rich! Mr. Joseph Crook died in 1884, and a marble tablet was erected in the chapel to his memory. It records that 'he was ever faithful in the expression of his personal convictions, and anxious for the welfare of his fellow-men; and his philanthropy has left its mark in the statute-book and in the hearts of those whom in private life he served with unostentatious kindness.'

The Briggs Trust, which appears in the chapel accounts each year, owes its origin to Mrs. Briggs (née Platt), of Halifax, who, prior to her marriage, was a member of the congregation. By her will this lady left a legacy of £100 for the general purposes of the chapel, and a sum of £67 18s. 1d., the interest of which is applied partly to the poor and partly to the Sunday School. The last appointment of trustees for the

chapel was made in 1885. It is sad to note that six of the trustees then living are now dead, viz., Messrs. Joseph Kirkham, Arthur Bromiley, Isaac Barrow, Charles Bowman, Thomas Haselden, and William Inglis. Mr. Charles Bowman's death in 1894 was a great loss to the congregation. The memorial tablet truly says of him that 'he was honoured by all who knew him for his strict integrity, tender sympathy, and old-world courtesy. He was most endeared to those who knew him best.'

Of Mr. Coe's faithful ministry of twenty-one years it is not for me to speak. It is written in your hearts and lives, and it is enough for me to say that he well maintained the high standing and tone of the Bank Street pulpit, and gained respect and affection, not only from members of his congregation, but in other circles, both within the denomination and out of it. His zealous work in connection with the North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission will not be forgotten. Mr. Coe's ministry terminated in October, 1895, and at the beginning of July this year I answered your call to occupy this pulpit.

Now that I have carefully examined into the long and honourable history of this church, I am the more deeply impressed with the responsibility which devolves upon me as your minister and upon you as members of this venerable congregation, that we may be faithful to the great trust laid upon us. Two hundred years of faithful service of God and man, emanating from the sacred influences exercised on this very spot—it is something to be thankful for, something to strengthen and hallow our resolutions for the future! The history of this congregation is an object-

lesson, setting forth the priceless value of religious liberty and of operative piety, for which glorious principles we stand to-day as our fathers stood. Here, once again, we raise our voice for the free and genuine worship of God without respect of creed or class. The place we cannot dedicate anew; for the saintly lives, the earnest prayers, the devout aspirations, the self-consecration to the service of the Heavenly Father, which have characterised the frequenters of this spot for the last two centuries, have made it holy ground indeed. But ourselves we can dedicate afresh; and here, in the presence of holy memories, fortified by the thought of those who shared the same privileges and have passed on into the Higher Life, we ask God to register our vow. The trust laid upon us shall not be betrayed; the sacrifice demanded of us shall not be withheld; but with heart and mind and soul and strength we will cherish those free principles of personal and practical religion which we have learnt to revere, and hand down the heritage unspoiled and, if possible, enriched to the generations yet to come.

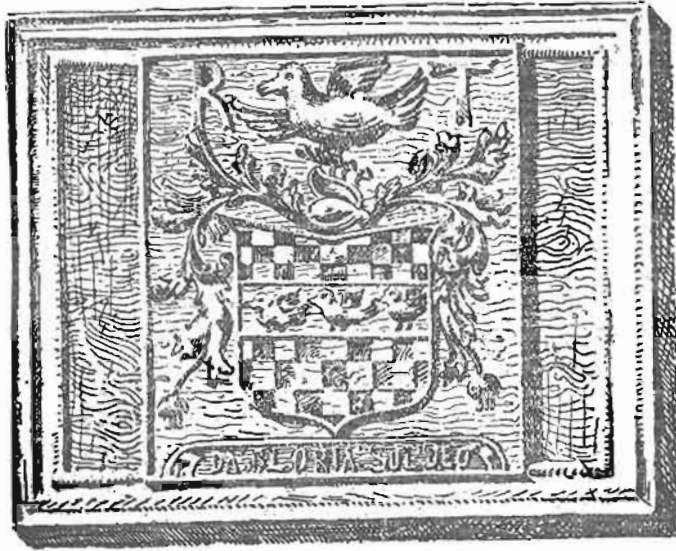


Rev. C. C. COE.

THE BI-CENTENARY SOIREE AND
PUBLIC MEETING,
WEDNESDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 1896.

THE SOIREE.

THERE was a great gathering at the Soirée, which was held in the Schools on the evening of Wednesday, 21st October, 1896. Tea was served at 5-30, and again at 6-15, in the lower school, the room being crowded on each occasion. The upper schoolroom, which, like the lower one, had been suitably decorated for the event, was arranged for the purpose of a *Conversazione*. Various memorials and objects of interest appertaining to the history of the chapel were displayed on the tables. At seven o'clock an adjournment was made to the chapel, the area and gallery of which were crowded by members of the congregation and their friends, together with visitors from other congregations in the town and district. Indeed the great company was perhaps the most representative which has ever gathered within the walls of the spacious building. The platform erected in front of the pulpit bore evidence of tasteful arrangement, being adorned by a collection of beautiful plants, including palms, dracenas, crotons, ferns, and chrysanthemums, besides delicate and choice exotics. An Organ Recital preceded the Public Meeting.



Panel of Mr. Roger Thropp's Pew Door in West Aisle of Bank Street Old Chapel. The Panel is 200 years old.

From a sketch made by Mr. William Dorning, and copied by Messrs. Bradshaw & Goss.

ORGAN RECITAL,

IN THE CHAPEL, AT SEVEN O'CLOCK,

BY THE ORGANIST, MR. J. T. FLITCROFT, F.R.C.O.

PROGRAMME.

ANDANTE ... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	<i>Mozart</i>
FESTAL MARCH ... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	<i>Sir George Elvey</i>
ALLEGRETTO (Symphony to Hymn of Praise)	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	<i>Mendelssohn</i>
JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN...	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	<i>Hymn Tune varied</i>
ANDANTE ... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	... ..	<i>Silas</i>

THE PLATFORM.

PROMPTLY at 7-30, Mr. John Harwood, J.P., occupied the chair, and accompanying him on the platform were the Revs. Alexander Gordon, M.A. (Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester), James C. Street (of Birmingham, father of the minister of Bank Street Chapel), James Harwood, B.A. (London), H. W. Turner, B.A. (Mawdsley Street Congregational Chapel), Edward Allen (Walmsley), H. M. Livens (Unity Church), Christopher J. Street M.A., LL.B. (*pastor loci*), and Messrs. J. P. Thomasson, William Haslam, John Heywood, M.A., J.P., J. J. Bradshaw, F.R.I.B.A., W. H. Higgin, B.Sc., and J. Percy Taylor (one of the Secretaries of the Bi-centenary Committee: his colleague in the Secretaryship, Mr. Thomas Harwood, was also in attendance). The following ministers of other Nonconformist chapels in the town were present: Revs. T. H. Horrell (Wesleyan), B. J. Harker (Congregationalist), B. Stubbs (Methodist Free Church), J. T. Freeth (New Jerusalem), and W. Llewellyn Williams (Baptist). The undermentioned ministers of our own fellowship were also among the audience: Revs. J. Collins Odgers, B.A. (Bury), P. M. Higginson, M.A. (Monton), Edward Parry, B.A. (Todmorden), Sydney H. Street, B.A. (Manchester), J. Ruddle (Accrington), George Ride (Chorley), Samuel Thompson (Rivington), Ephraim Turland (Rawtenstall), George Street (Blackley), R. C. Moore (Horwich), and J. A. Pearson (Oldham).

Programme of Public Meeting.

HYMN I.

Melcombe.

1. **A** GAIN, as evening's shadow falls,
We gather in these hallowed walls ;
And vesper hymn and vesper prayer
Rise mingling on the holy air.
2. May struggling hearts that seek release
Here find the rest of God's own peace,
And, strengthened here by hymn and prayer,
Lay down the burden and the care.
3. O God, our light ! to Thee we bow ;
Within all shadows standest Thou :
Give deeper calm than night can bring ;
Give sweeter songs than lips can sing.
4. Life's tumult we must meet again :
We cannot at the shrine remain ;
But in the spirit's secret cell
May hymn and prayer for ever dwell.—AMEN.
Samuel Longfellow.

Prayer.

REV. EDWARD ALLEN (*Walmsley*).

Chaitman's Address.

Address :—MR. J. J. BRADSHAW, F.R.I.B.A.

Address :—REV. ALEXANDER GORDON, M.A.
(*Manchester.*)

Address :—REV. JAMES HARWOOD, B.A. (*London.*)

Address :—REV. H. W. TURNER, B.A.
(*Mawdsley Street Chapel.*)

HYMN II.

Wareham.

1. **W**E love the venerable house
Our fathers built to God :
In heaven are kept their grateful vows :
Their dust endears the sod.
2. Here holy thoughts a light have shed
O'er many a radiant face,
And prayers of tender hope have spread
A glory round the place.
3. And anxious hearts have pondered here
The mystery of life,
And prayed the Eternal God to clear
Their doubts, and aid their strife.
4. For faith and peace and mighty love,
That from Thy Spirit flow,
Showed them the life of heaven above
Springs from the life below.
5. They live with God ; their homes are dust ;
But here their children pray,
And in this fleeting life-time trust
To find the narrow way.
6. And now, as they before Thee stand,
May Thy rich blessing fall ;
Speak to their hearts each high command,
O Lord, that lovest all.—AMEN.
R. W. Emerson.

Address:—REV. JAMES C. STREET (*Birmingham.*)

Address:—MR. WILLIAM HASLAM.

Address:—MR. W. H. HIGGIN, B.Sc.

Address:—REV. CHRIS. J. STREET, M.A., LL.B.

Address:—REV. H. M. LIVENS (*Unity Church.*)

HYMN III.

Hursley.

1. O THOU, whose liberal sun and rain
Come not upon the earth in vain,
Now let Thy quickening word come down,
The worship of this hour to crown.
2. O hear this church renew its vow,
Its solemn consecration now,
To work with heart and soul and might
For truth and freedom, love and right ;
3. To listen with a willing faith
To whatsoever the Spirit saith,
And year by year to be more true
To Him who maketh all things new.—AMEN.
Samuel Longfellow.

Benediction.

REV. C. J. STREET.

PRAYER.

BY THE REV. E. ALLEN.

ETERNAL God, all-wise, all-good, and all-pervading, we worship Thee. For the time may the things of sense have no dominion over us. May we mount up with wings as eagles and dwell in Thy holy presence. O Thou who art our Father in heaven and the Father of all the families of the earth, may we feel how near Thou art to us, and how dear we are to Thee. We rejoice in the tie that binds us to Thee and to one another. May we be drawn still closer together; may true brotherly love dwell in our hearts. It is our hearts' desire, our souls' prayer, O Father, that the oppression with which Thy strong children oppress Thy weaker ones may cease, and Thy kingdom of universal peace and goodwill be established.

We have come together for praise and prayer. With praise upon our lips and gratitude in our hearts, we commemorate Thy faithful servants of old. At this moment we stretch out our hands across the centuries, and lay hold upon those who founded this house of prayer. We feel their warm embrace; we are in communion with them. Hold us to them, O Lord; warm our hearts; fill our souls with the holy thoughts and feelings that filled them. As with them, may the love of God and the love and service of all God's creatures be the supreme purpose of our lives. As they were, may we be earnest in seeking Thy truth, and fearless in proclaiming it. They have left us an inheritance divine: may we love and cherish it, and

leave it in its integrity to our children and our children's children.

We rejoice at this moment in the sweet thoughts that come into our minds, as we remember holy seasons enjoyed here—the words of counsel and comfort spoken when death had been amongst us ; the time when the little child was consecrated to Thy service ; the mutual vow of youth and maiden. This is a holy place : may we keep it holy. For it and for all Thy mercies we sing our song of thanksgiving, and pray unto Thee in the spirit of him who taught us to say—‘Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us each day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil ; for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.’ Amen.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

I FEEL very much out of my place to-night in taking the chair ; not because I yield to anyone in the interest I take in this congregation and its work, but simply because I know there are many gentlemen in this chapel and also on the platform, who have given much more time to, and are consequently better acquainted with that work than I am. The Committee, however, desired me to accept the position ; so I willingly undertake the duty.

We are met to celebrate the Bi-centenary of the opening of the first Nonconformist chapel in this town. That chapel was built on the spot on which we are now met, two hundred years ago. Many of you, no doubt, either heard or have read the two excellent addresses delivered here on Sunday last, by our Minister, Rev. C. J. Street. If so, you will have learnt from them much of the history of this congregation. I should, however, like to ask you, for a minute or two, to consider what Nonconformity has done during the last two hundred years.

Taking our own town, Bank Street Chapel was then the only Nonconformist congregation ; whereas, at the present time, there are more than forty places of worship other than those belonging to the Church of England ; showing an increase far in excess of that of the population. Taking a wider survey, is it not a fact that Nonconformists have generally been in the front of great movements which had for their object the improvement of the people in every walk of life,

whether socially, morally, or religiously? It will also be allowed that Nonconformity has had its effect on the Church of England itself, by stimulating it to greater efforts of usefulness. And when it is remembered that this has been done under the Voluntary system and without the prestige of the Establishment, there is, I feel sure, every reason to be satisfied with the results.

Considering it, however, from the Unitarian standpoint, I fear we cannot give as satisfactory a report; as we must admit, we have not increased to the same extent as other Nonconformist churches. We have done something, although perhaps not what we ought to or might have done; but it will, I am sure, be admitted that we have exercised an influence on other churches. However this may be, there still remains this question: how is it that Unitarianism has not made more progress? My own opinion is, that we do not care enough about it. We are so afraid of appearing over-anxious to convert others, that we scarcely do justice to our own views. I am bound to say that, speaking for myself, I would rather be in a minority of one all my life, than tell another man that if he did not believe as I did he would be lost. It astonishes me how persons holding such views on a question which can never be definitely proved, can take up such a position. Whatever the result may be, we must give others the liberty we claim for ourselves, and allow them to use their judgment as they think best.

To me, it seems, however, that the question of the future is not so much one of Unitarianism, as distinguished from any other 'ism,' but one of authority versus the right of private judgment. That is the question which will have to be dealt with seriously

at no very distant day. Anyone reading the papers must be struck with the tendency in this country (during the last twenty years especially) towards Sacerdotalism. There are many evidences of this. One or two only I will name. The first is the fact, which I believe is quite true, that there are over 1,500 clergymen of the Church of England, who have adopted the Confessional in their churches; and a second is the well-known fact that a section of the clergy, the High Church party mainly, has applied to the Pope for his recognition of the Anglican orders; as if his granting the request could possibly affect their own position.

There are also other evidences that this will be the issue to be settled before long. I should therefore like to ask the young people especially to consider this question seriously and anxiously, and decide for themselves upon which side they will throw that influence which is possessed by all, even the youngest. I do not myself doubt what the issue will be; but in considering the question, may I ask them to look at what Authority, carried to its extreme as exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church, has done in Spain, France, Italy, and even nearer home, in the Sister Isle. One gratifying circumstance, of which there are many signs, is, that in this matter the Broad Church party is with us, and that its members will put their Protestantism before their Catholicism.

In conclusion, may I just say on behalf of the Committee, how pleased they are with the gathering here to-night, and give to each of you a hearty welcome. We have received letters from several Nonconformist ministers regretting their inability to be present to-night, and also from two former ministers of

this congregation, viz., the Rev. Jeffery Worthington, of Taunton, and Rev. C. C. Coe, of Bournemouth. As both were unable to come, I will ask Mr. Percy Taylor to read their letters to you.

LETTERS FROM FORMER MINISTERS.

SHERFORD, TAUNTON,
Sept. 25, 1896.

Dear Mr. Taylor,

I hope that you duly received the post-card which I sent in immediate acknowledgment of your kind letter of the 20th inst. I have since given a full consideration to the invitation to be present at the Bank Street Bi-centenary gathering on Oct. 21st, which the letter contained; and with considerable reluctance, I have come to the conclusion that I must deny myself the gratification of being a guest upon the occasion. I have a delightful recollection of the meeting of old Sunday School teachers and scholars which I attended earlier in the year, and where I received so kindly a welcome. Some time I hope I may have the privilege of being again in your midst. But, apart from the fact that I have twice been in the North during the present year, too many difficulties associate themselves with a further journey thither at present.

Please assure all friends of my deep sympathy with them in the circumstances of the coming celebration. Trusting that you will have a successful gathering, and that very much prosperity will attend the ministry of Mr. Street. Believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

JEFFERY WORTHINGTON.

WHINSBRIDGE, GROSVENOR ROAD,
BOURNEMOUTH, Sept. 22nd, 1896.

Dear Mr. Taylor,

I am much obliged to you for your kind invitation to be present at the meeting to celebrate the Bi-centenary of the Bank St. Chapel, and for your proposed hospitality on that occasion to Mrs. Coe and myself. I feel, however, that it would be a greater ordeal than I could bear, and I cannot help thinking that for many reasons it will be better that we should not be present. With very kind regards, believe me,

Yours very truly,

CHARLES C. COE.

MR. J. J. BRADSHAW, F.R.I.B.A.

THERE are others who would have better filled this place and spoken from longer experience, even if not possessed of so venerable an appearance as myself. At the same time when the Committee asked me to speak, I did not feel quite at liberty to refuse, though unable to give you a great address, or attempt to rival those who will follow. My position is like that of the two or three performers in the theatrical profession who go through a short piece before the principal drama. My duty is to get the audience into tune for better things to come. At the same time, I can in my own fashion speak about two or three things to which it is perhaps worth while to call the attention of the younger members at all events, because, this chapel having been built in 1856, those who happen to be much under forty-five years of age cannot recollect what the old place was like.

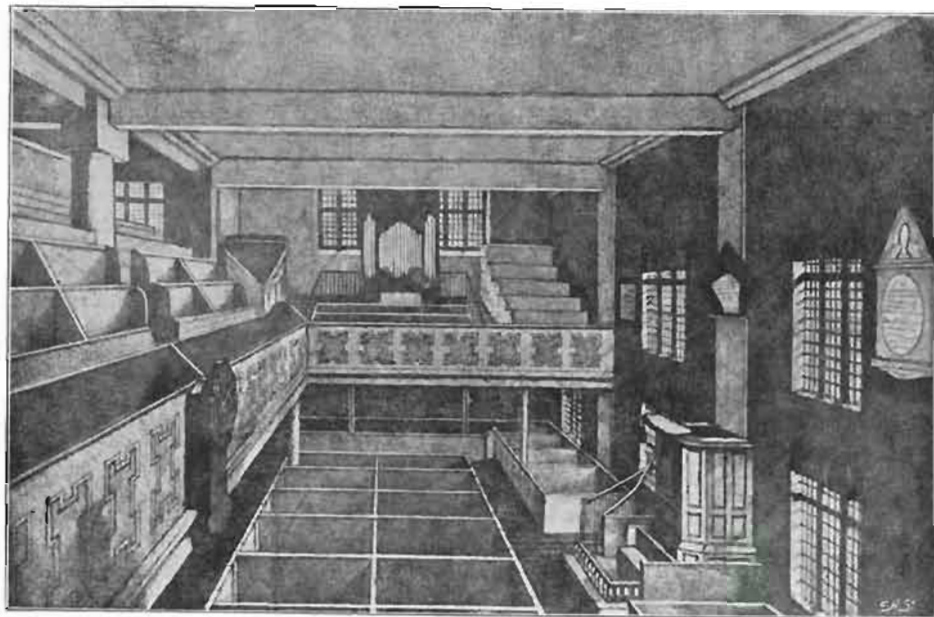
None can have any distinct idea of what the old building was which was opened in 1672. That was twenty-one years after the Earl of Derby had been executed at the Market Cross. The old chapel was, as we have been reminded, in a room over a house and on the site occupied by the 'Old Woolpack.' Somewhere in the forties—towards the latter end of them—I was taken by my father to look at the remaining walls of that old place. They were at the back of the 'Woolpack' and the shop now occupied by Mr. Harris, the tailor. As we went down the passage the old walls of the back of the premises were still

visible. As far as I can recollect, the walls were of old sandstone, much the same kind of material as that of which the old Parish Church was built; and I remember that there were low, heavily-mullioned old windows. These and the walls referred to were all that remained of the old chapel or meeting-house of 1672.

Then we come to the chapel built in 1696 behind the house of Mr. Seddon. There is a curious fact mentioned about a petition sent up from the trustees stating that the chapel as built was not and had not been a hindrance to the market. Now before the opening of the new market hall in 1855, the market-place was near the market cross, which stood about where the cabman's shelter now is, at the front of the 'Man and Scythe.' The Town Council—and I was then connected with it, and had a share in this work—were foolish enough to pull down that old cross, on the ground that it was an obstruction to public traffic. Afterwards they put up a cabman's shelter, and so they got the public obstruction without any poetry or association about it. Well, the market was there and in the streets. Later on, the pot market, etc., was held where the present town hall stands. The butter market was at the top of Bank Street, or as it was then called, 'Windy Bonk.' People were very shrewd in their fashions in those times. About 1810 the spy system and the infamous black face system were in full force in this town; and if people wanted to tell a 'buz' to somebody and did not want to say who told it them, they always said, 'I heard it on the Windy Bonk.' It was then impossible to trace its origin; for everyone in those days used to go to the market at the market cross.

If people in those days were shrewd in their fashions, they were also steadfast in their purposes. During these celebration services something was said, quoted, I believe, from Mr. Gladstone,¹ about the continuity of congregations; something might also be said in this place about the continuity of families. I may mention the Dornings, the Heywoods (Robert and Peter Heywood), the Longworths, the Haseldens, the Harwoods, the Crooks, the Kenyons, and the Pillings; and there are many others that will naturally occur to you. Just to mention one family. There are some hard-working young men connected with this school of the name of Pilling. You have one of the same name who is secretary to the Chapel Committee. Now these young people may not know that we can trace back for 120 or 150 years the connection of their family with this place. The same thing occurs with a great many others; and therefore we have not only continuity of congregation, but also continuity of families.

Next, to take you down to the old chapel; I mean the chapel that stood here before the one in which we are now assembled, and which was opened in 1696. Coming down Bank Street, past where the butter market was held, the chapel was approached by a narrow alley at the back of shops of little depth next to Bank Street. These shops and the alley stood on the area now forming the chapel front yard, the southerly gable coming to the lines of the palisading between the gates and Bank Street. As the road went further north it got narrower as the shops got deeper, until from about fourteen feet wide it narrowed down



Interior of Bank Street Old Chapel.

¹ *The Courses of Religious Thought*, § 6, reprinted in *Gleanings of Past Years*, by the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, Vol. III. London: John Murray, 1879.

to six feet at the north-east corner of the chapel house. Going along the alley and passing the shops then standing, one came to a pair of big doors like those of a large barn. These gave access to the passage leading to the chapel. Beyond this was the chapel house, used after 1835 as a Sunday School.

Turning to the left and going in at the barn doors, you first went along a passage about ten feet wide with a blank wall on the south side: on the right hand were two rooms; one was the chapel library and the other the chapel vestry. Further on and at the end of the passage was a door about four feet wide, which led past the gallery stairs and under the gallery, giving entrance to the chapel ground floor. Going into the chapel, on the ground floor, there was on the left hand a long pew occupied by the boys who came from the Sunday School, and who were under the charge at one time, I have been told, of a man called 'Black Adam,' and who was also, probably, the chapel keeper. Later on, Thomas Kay and William Parkinson had charge of them. Coming into the chapel on the right of the entrance, protected by a screen from the draught, was the minister's pew, occupied in my time by Mrs. Baker, who had always a kindly look and word for everyone. In the centre was a block of pews, two deep—those to the west and close to the pulpit being the largest. The pulpit was against the wall, with large square pews on each side. The east transept was filled with other pews, and the passage in the middle gave access to the vestry. These pews I remember being occupied by the families of Mr. Henry Hollins, Mr. Kay, the Crooks, Harwoods, Longworths, and others of local note—all of worthy memory. The gallery was on three sides of the chapel, with the organ and choir at the south end;

and a large pew at the top of the east transept was where the girls from the Sunday School sat. The interior of the chapel is very well seen from a drawing¹ made by Miss Mary Heap, and which forms the frontispiece of the historical sketch written by the Rev. Franklin Baker. The pews and gallery front, the pulpit and communion rails, were all of old black oak, and gave a venerable appearance to an otherwise very plain and bald structure. The chapel in the neighbourhood most like the former old one is the Chowbent Chapel, but, whereas Bank Street was hemmed in by buildings, Chowbent was out in the open country.

The chapel-house was a good roomy dwelling with a fairly wide central entrance—wide doors, rather low, and a staircase, wide, with broad treads and easy rise, and a good oak balustrade. The chapel-house was used for the minister's residence up to 1835. Mr. Baker used to keep a school there, and Mr. Joshua Crook tells me he went to school in the room used afterwards as a chapel library. On the ground floor was a class-room used for young men taught by Mr. Heywood. On the second story were four class-rooms and a library, where my Sunday School work began by assisting Mr. William Horrocks. On the third story there were two class-rooms and a large room used for girls and as a general assembly room for opening and closing school.

Amongst the active teachers and officers at that time were Mr. John McKeand, a very tall man with a peculiar looking face, Isaac Barrow, Thomas Bromley and Messrs. Brimelow, Kirkham, Dorning, Horrocks, and others. In 1856 the school was held under this chapel, and was carried on there until the present

¹ Reproduced on a smaller scale in this volume.

schools were built. I need not say anything about the good work done in that department. I will just say, however, that among the teachers was an old man named William Gabbott, who, for many years, taught the infant boys. Curiously enough, a portion of the site of Unity Church was a small property called Gabbott Fold. The school field days were then held on Whit Friday; once or twice at Fairfield, the parsonage; once or twice at White Bank; but, after Mr. Heywood began to reside at The Pike, regularly there, though, as you know, a different date is now taken. I have a grateful recollection of the pleasure that used to be given to many of us by the glees sung by Messrs. Bromley, Parkinson, Allen, and others. It is a pity that this seems now to be almost a lost art. A dramatic society gave occasional treats, and one wet field day at White Bank, in the barn, beguiled the time with portions of the drama of 'William Tell,' recitations, and songs. Allen had a peculiar long thin face, with mobile features, which it was almost a comedy just to look at. He often took female parts, dressed up accordingly, and was a first-rate comic reciter. William Ashley, afterwards, was a superintendent and an active worker. As there was no large room available before 1852, congregational and school tea parties were held in Hulton School, somewhat, I fear, to the inconvenience of the old day-school master, Thomas Kenyon.

Now let us leave the school, which would take up too much time. The union of the Moor Lane and Bank Street congregations was decidedly the best thing, and gave energy and life to the cause. The remembrance, however, of the strong feelings to which the division gave rise and which did not die away wholly for many years, has always caused me to dread their

recurrence from any source. This has led me in every way to do all in my power (especially with regard to the daughter church), to prevent any appearance of separation, and to retain to the utmost possible degree the family relationship of mother and daughter. I have kept up the double connection personally, giving help at either where it seemed most needed. At the beginning of this effort, many others, like Mr. George Cunliffe and myself, did duty at both schools alternately; and after a time some apportioned themselves to one or the other as seemed best. With a number it is still double labour; with still more it is double pay in one shape or another; but to spread our principles such sacrifices will be cheerfully made. Let us hope there will be still more daughter churches in the years to come.

Turning back to the old chapel, the Sunday service began much as usual; but I often got a little bit of a start by finding that Mr. Baker had come so quietly from the vestry and along the aisle that he was in the pulpit before we knew it. At that time he wore no gown, but his grave, serious air always gave that reverence proper to the service. I think the chant book now in use was introduced in 1856 along with the present *Marrineau's* hymn book. Previously the *Exeter* collection was used. One of the hymns in this, which I have not seen elsewhere, began:—

The man who was crowned with thorns,
The man who on Calvary died,
The man who bore scourging and scorns,
Whom sinners agreed to deride.

This hymn attracted my attention as a boy, because of having been told that it was sung by Palmer on his way from Glasgow prison to the ship in which

he was taken to Botany Bay. He was the last man in Great Britain to suffer transportation for life for being a Unitarian. I don't know who was the first organist, but at one time it was 'Blind Billy Lonsdale' who had filled that post at the parish church. He was a local celebrity as a fiddler, and in great request about Christmas and New Year's time. At this period he slept all the sermon through, and there are tales told of his sudden awakenings at any pause of the preacher and beginning to play. At both places these mistakes got Billy into trouble and led to his dismissal from each, and what became of him afterwards is not known. At that time I think Mr. Charles Darbishire was choir-master; afterwards, as you know, we had for many years great pleasure in listening to the organ playing of Mrs. Bromley and her daughter, and the singing was then under the leadership of Mr. Thomas Bromley. Of the old singers I cannot say much, but may mention John Kenyon, William Parkinson, Miss Jones (now Mrs. Farrar), and Miss Tong (now Mrs. Coleman), and others.

Of the old preachers I cannot say anything beyond what my mother and others told me; they used to speak of Mr. John Holland as 'young Mr. Holland,' to distinguish him from Mr. Philip Holland, who was spoken of as 'old Mr. Holland.' An irreverent old uncle of mine said that Mr. John Holland was always preaching about 'little dicky birds.' Mr. Holland was in the habit of regularly catechising the children after morning service. What the catechism was that he used I cannot tell you, but I rather think it was Dr. Watts's. My mother used to tell that if she could see Miss Pilkington's face (daughter of Major Pilkington, of Silverwell House, uncle to Charles Darbishire), she

always felt so encouraged as to be able to repeat it without hesitation.

Mr. Baker was an earnest and effective, but quiet, preacher, and passages from his sermons will probably recur at times to the minds of all his hearers; a devoted pastor, regularly visiting, I believe, every family once or twice at least during the year, and frequently in cases of sickness. Like many other ministers at that time, and following his father's example, he kept a private school. This made him a strict disciplinarian, and perhaps something of a martinet, and his scholars kept the feeling of his mastership when grown up to manhood. He hardly seemed as if he could lose the school-master's air. In the Temperance Hall, at a large public meeting held years after his school was given up, this was shown, to the great amusement of a small boy who had pushed his way to the front of the audience to listen to Mr. Baker's speech. On the platform were several of the most influential men of the town, and amongst them was Mr. Peter Rothwell Arrowsmith, who was a very fine, tall, broad-shouldered, imposing-looking man. He had been in Mr. Baker's school as a scholar. Mr. Baker made some remark to which Mr. Arrowsmith demurred, and he got up to explain or object. Mr. Baker paused for a moment, and then, giving a sharp look at the interrupter, said curtly, 'Sit down, sir.' Mr. Arrowsmith looked as if he expected punishment to follow at once if he disobeyed, and sat down with a celerity and quietness that caused a smile on the faces of many present. None of the young folks were neglected willingly by Mr. Baker, and, as they grew up, he had from time to time classes in the vestry after the morning service for such as did not attend the Sunday School. It was my privilege to be a mem-

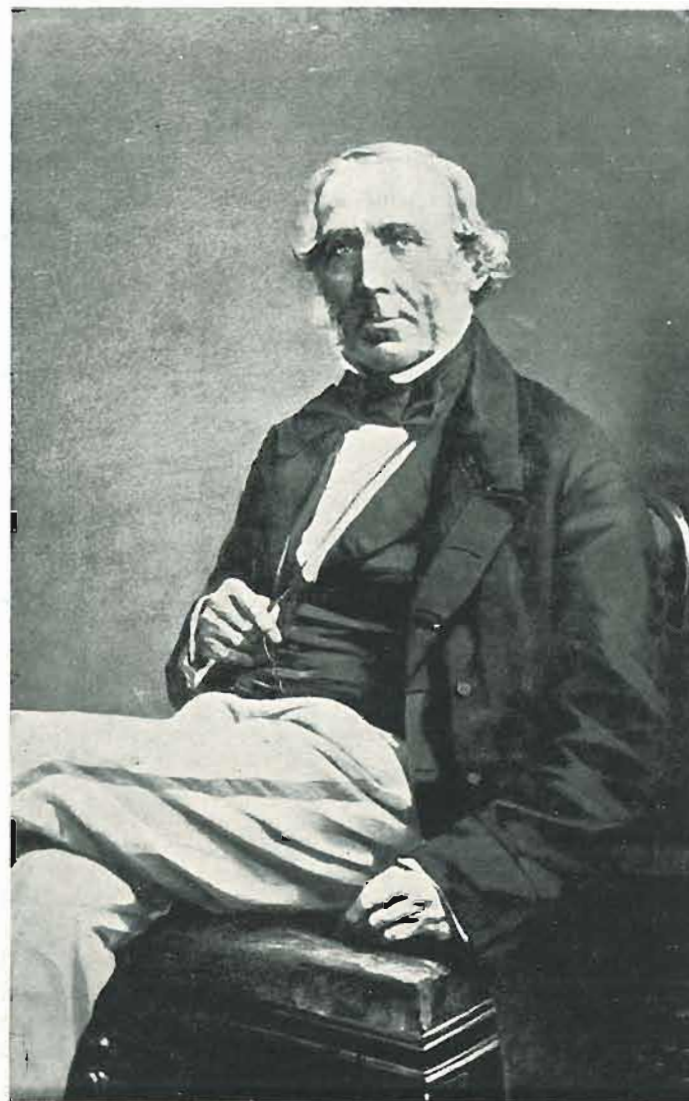
ber of one of these classes, and I cannot bear better testimony to him and to the value of the services he gave to us in those days than to say that the best workers and the truest friends of this congregation have been those who were brought under his influence in such and other classes. In the same way he had classes for those who were grown up to nearer manhood: occasionally classes, as opportunity arose, were held at his own house during the afternoons or evenings of the week.

I must omit further mention about the Sunday Schools and about the sewing school which was under the direction formerly of Miss Mason, and lastly of Miss Sutton, afterwards Mrs. W. C. Frankland. Mr. Baker's strictness as to discipline and the want of judgment and tact on the part of a teacher led on one occasion to a much regretted rupture with the young men's class. This was a great sorrow to him and many others, but was the only instance of the kind I knew. In addition to his pastoral work and duties as a minister, Mr. Baker took an active part as a voluntary teacher, aided by Mr. Darbishire, in the classes in the Mechanics' Institute, and assisted in other efforts for the common good of the town. His standard of character was lofty and his integrity stainless, and he was singularly free from any traces of meanness. However he might differ with one of his flock (the young folks particularly), he never for a moment hesitated to throw his whole energy into giving them any help or kindness in which he saw the least opportunity of giving assistance.

Looking back over the past, I am struck with the union of aim and purpose which used to exist between pastor and congregation, owing no doubt, to the cir-

cumstances of the time, which led to efforts being directed to the same ends and by similar methods. There must have been a good deal of quiet, joint consultation with one another, and, when a matter was taken up, each in his own way did the best he could to help the others and to promote the general end aimed at.

The sort of congregation which filled the chapel is best shown perhaps by an incident told me by the late Richard Carling. A young man, who for a good many years had heard Unitarians spoken of with the usual horror as heretics, determined, after much screwing up of his mental courage, to go to the chapel and see what it was like. Selecting a quiet Sunday morning, he made his way, after service had begun, into the gallery, and found a place from which he had a good view. Looking down, he saw, sitting below, the leaders in every good movement in the town or in business, whose character and standing gave weight and authority to all they took in hand; who were acknowledged leaders in every liberal effort or institution for the general good. Their word was worth most people's bond; they were known for their kindness, integrity, and uprightness, and they had won the respect of all. The women he saw were the common refuge of all in trouble; he knew them to be kindly helpers to anyone in need, and generous in personal help and assistance, stately and dignified in looks, and with hearts ready to feel and hands active in the cause of pity. The man left the chapel with a conviction that it would be well for the town and well for others if they could be as good Christians as those he saw there. If these people were the sinners he had been told of, all he could say was that they were far more truly filled with the spirit



Mr. ROBERT HEYWOOD.

of Christ than those who vaunted their superiority to such heretics.

To this audience—having the proud possession of the examples and memories of such men as the preachers whose memorial tablets are on our walls ; of such men in their flock as the succeeding generations of Pilkingtons, Brandreths, Deans, Heywoods, Darbshires, Crooks, Harwoods, Taylors, Bromileys, and their companions and fellow-workers ; of such noble women, who, as sisters, wives, or daughters, ably took their part in every duty with stainless purity and untiring zeal—I need say nothing, but to urge that they shall be had in everlasting remembrance which may stir us up to deeds and lives worthy of such an ancestry, and make us worthy to be called their followers by those who come after us. Let us hope that this occasion may in its measure stimulate those to whom the work must fall in a few short years, to maintain with energy, vigour, and uprightness, freedom for the untrammelled search for nobler truths, a better ideal and practice of life ; so that they may in their time pass on to succeeding generations a purer, brighter, and more ennobling discipleship, and that they may be still more truly, along with our Elder Brother, worthy to be called 'children of the Most High.'

THE REV. ALEXANDER GORDON, M.A.

I AM disappointed in the weather, having fully made up my mind it was going to be a wet evening; and accordingly I accepted a kind invitation to come here and talk history, so as to dry it a bit. I was here at the settlement of my friend Jeffery Worthington, and that was the first time I ever was in this place. I conceive, however, that I have a right to take some interest in the history of Bolton; for looking close at the armorial crest of your borough, I perceive that you have enticed away a 'huge earth-shaking beast' from the shield of the ancient city where, as the Irishman said, 'I first drew the light and saw the breath of heaven.' I further conceive that I have a claim to take interest in the Nonconformity of Bolton, having once upon a time been a Nonconformist minister in the city of Norwich; and the planting of Nonconformity in Norwich was effected under the authority, and by the determination of the hearers, of a Nonconformist minister of Bolton. It is not always well to rake up the history either of families or of congregations. I observe that the authorities of congregations like to depute that sort of business to strangers, and especially to persons who do not know too much. However, I shall simply attempt to hold up before you one or two prominent figures of the early past of the Nonconformist cause in Bolton.

But before we get even so far on, let us look for a moment at the remarkable figure of James Bolton, Vicar of Bolton all through the Reformation period.

Instituted in 1513, four years before Martin Luther was heard of, and dying in the year (1556) in which Archbishop Cranmer was burned, that worthy man had recited the Latin Mass, had read the Litany in English, had used the First Prayer-book of Edward the Sixth, had gone on to the Second Prayer-book of Edward the Sixth, the most Protestant of Anglican formularies, had gone back again to the Latin Mass, and found no difficulty about any of it. For a champion Conformist James Bolton is my man. During his tenure of office the parish of Bolton had been transferred from see to see. It had been in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, and was transferred in 1541 to the then newly formed diocese of Chester. James Bolton's first bishop (Geoffrey Blythe) was a burner of Lollards; his second bishop (Rowland Lee) gained his promotion for marrying Henry the Eighth to Anne Boleyn; his third bishop (John Bird) was deprived for having got married during his short spell of Protestantism. Although the poor man declared, with lamentation, that he was as tired of his wife as he was of his Protestantism, and was perfectly ready to renounce them both, that as a matter of fact he had married the lady against his will and had no desire to live with her—yet they deprived him. But, for his maintenance they gave him a living, and made him, of all places, Vicar of Dunmow. That is a good old-fashioned way of saving your bacon!

The Nonconformity of Bolton need not talk about celebrating a mere bi-centenary. It is a great deal older than 200 years. It can more than celebrate its tri-centenary. It began with the appointment, as Lecturer, of the Rev. James Gosnell, and that was before 1582. Gosnell was appointed by the people of Bolton as their own supplementary man. For the

successors of James Bolton, though inclined in the Puritan direction, did not lean as heavily in that direction as the popular mind of Bolton desired. We have been told that Bolton always pays up well when it wants anything. Hence James Gosnell was provided with the magnificent stipend of £30 a year. When, in 1598, Ellis Sanderson became vicar, the extra man was quite to his mind; so much so that, more than once, these two friends found themselves pulled up before the authorities for their Nonconformity. Before he died Gosnell made a will, as all folks should do, and in his will (1622) he thought of the keeping up of the lectureship. It seems that in those hard times £30 a year had been no easy matter to raise; Gosnell had been helped out by bequests and donations and so on; and in his will he left it thus—that £8 a year was to go from his estate towards the £30, and people of Bolton were expected to find the rest. The Lecturer was to be 'a preacher distinct from the Vicar of Bolton,' and was to lecture on every Sunday and Monday. That foundation is the first foundation by a Nonconformist in Bolton. Gosnell in his will distinctly stated that, for doctrine, he is with 'the religion now established'; but 'for the matter of formality' he describes himself as opposing an unyielding negative to the 'simply unlawful and inconvenient' requirements of the authorities. His ministry of 'above forty years in Bolton' was the seed-plot, I take it, of all the subsequent developments of the Nonconforming spirit.

Scarcely was the breath out of Ellis Sanderson's body (he was buried on the 19th December, 1625) when his successor was presented to the living (on the 16th December). I do not know the reason for that haste, but perhaps the bishop who presented him, if he

had waited a little, would not have done it; for the man whom he then presented was Robert Parke, an Emmanuel man, who thus became vicar of his native parish in 1625. He had learning, piety, and wit, all of them excellent things. We do not know very much about him as vicar here; we know a good deal about him after he had ceased to be vicar. There is much interest in his story. When and why he ceased to be vicar we do not know. Perhaps he had a conscientious fit, as even clergymen have sometimes, and felt he could not stay. Perhaps his bishop told him he had better go. At any rate his successor was instituted in November, 1630.

His successor was William Gregge, a Cheshire man. Gregge had been a student at Gray's Inn before he graduated at Oxford, and thus had got in some law before he gave himself to the gospel. Gregge was the man who baptised Oliver Heywood, though he did not finish it. Oliver Heywood's godmother, when she saw that William Gregge was going to imprint a liquid cross upon the forehead of the child in her arms, jumped 'off from the steps,' for her heart within her cried 'No Popery!'

That happened in March, 1630, and by that time, then, we may presume that Robert Parke had ceased to officiate. Yet he did not immediately leave Bolton; for we find that he buried his wife here in May of the following year (1631). How long he stayed we do not know. Ultimately, on the approach of the Civil War, says Calamy, he went to Rotterdam, and there was minister of an English church. But what English church? I hesitate to tell you, and I hope you will forgive me for mentioning it, but the lamentable fact is that Robert Parke was not a Presbyterian. In those days

there were at Rotterdam four churches whose services were conducted in the English tongue, or something like it. There was the original church of the English merchants, maintained in the Puritan style, but with a sort of casual connection with the English Establishment. Then there was the Scottish church, where they used as good English as they knew how. And there was the Independent church, of which Hugh Peters had once been, and Sidrach Simpson now was minister. Parke did not connect himself with any one of these three. But there was a fourth, a little Independent church which had been a split from Simpson's, because the members were determined to be Independents of the Independents, to encourage the gift of prophesying, to let the gifted brethren have scope in the services for the exercise of their unordained voices, in short to allow lay preaching. This unconventional little church was started in 1639, under the pastorate of Joseph Symonds; and Robert Parke became associated with him as assistant minister. The civic authorities of Rotterdam began to say: 'What does this handful of Independents mean by having two churches? They must get together again.' They got together again, with some ado, and Robert Parke became pastor of the re-united church. Presently some of their members went colonising, and came to Norwich, having as leader the famous William Bridge. They wanted to hive off from the Rotterdam community, and settle down for themselves as a filial church. According to their views of church order, they could not do this without permission. When John Robinson let some of the Pilgrim Fathers go over to America, and they wrote to him in Leyden, seeking sanction for their administration of the Lord's Supper, his reply was to this effect: 'I am your

pastor; you have an elder who may preach; but no man may administer the ordinance except myself.' But Robert Parke gave the liberty that was desired. He set his old members free to make their own church; and in his letter to them, signed by himself in the name of the mother church, he commends them 'to the sweet guidance of the spirit of Christ, with earnest desires and prayers that truth and peace may be their portion.' This letter, of which a copy is still extant, and has been printed by Browne, was written in 1642.

Before that date, Richard Heywood (Oliver's father) made, as his custom was, a journey from Bolton to London, on business. His business agent in London was his cousin, whose name you well know, Nathaniel Hulton, who lived at Newington Green. While in London, not later than 1640, perhaps earlier, Heywood met, somehow or other, a young man fresh from college, named Richard Goodwin, who was looking out for a place. Heywood had a vacancy to fill. It was not at Bolton, it was at Cockey, where 'good old Mr. [William] Rathband' had been silenced. The two Richards soon came to terms; Heywood brought Goodwin back with him to Lancashire, and got Bishop Bridgeman to ordain him for Cockey. John Bridgeman (who had presented Parke) was a bishop in whose heart there was a good deal of sympathy with Puritans; and his wife had a good deal more. For her sake he 'winked at' the Nonconformity of John Angier, of Denton. Halley says of Bridgeman that 'he loved neither to threaten nor to strike, but when he did strike, he did it as effectually as if he loved it.'

A few years after Bridgeman had ordained Goodwin, Richard Heywood took a longer journey than usual. The reason was that William Gregge, the vicar,

departed this life in 1644, early in the year. Heywood, whose choice of a man for Cockey had been approved by the whole district, was now commissioned by the people of Bolton to proceed to Rotterdam, and try if he could fetch back Parke. Surely his old flock had a better claim on him than a parcel of Independents. Heywood went on his expedition, making a business journey of it, and visiting several towns in Holland. Meanwhile there was another man on the ground in Bolton, a very strong man, and that was John Harpur, who had been Gosnell Lecturer for at least nine years, and had been busy with excommunications in 1637 and 1640. Harpur had his eye on the Bolton post, and very soon got his hand upon it. There was something of a Scottish turn of mind about Harpur, if it be true, as they say, that a Scotchman is a man who keeps the Sabbath, and every other blessed thing he can lay his hands on. Well, Richard Heywood came to terms with Parke, and returned to find that the town of Bolton had just been sacked by Prince Rupert (28th May, 1644). He reported that Parke was coming back; and back he came, 'within a year or thereabouts,' says Oliver Heywood. I cannot tell you when he got back, but I incline to interpret 'thereabouts' somewhat liberally; for, if I read the record aright, the date when he finally severed his connection with Rotterdam was 19th Nov., 1649; it is just possible that he may have visited Bolton in the interim.

Calamy specifies two separate Bartholomew confessors of the name of Robert Parke (or, as he spells it, Park). But on examination it seems practically certain that these two are one and the same person. It follows from this identification that Parke became assistant to Cromwell's Expurgators of 1654, was settled at St.

Mary's, Mortlake, in 1656, and held the rectory of Lavant from 1658 to 1660. Long before he got back to Bolton to stay, Harpur, as 'minister of Bolton,' had been authorised by Parliament (13th Dec., 1644) to be one of twelve ordaining ministers for Lancashire. This was a sort of pilot boat for the sailing in of the Parliamentary Presbyterianism. The ordinance settling that system for Lancashire was passed on 2nd Oct., 1646; the Second Classis, having jurisdiction in this district, first met at Bury on Lady Day, 1647. In this organisation there was no room for Parke; he is never mentioned in the minutes. At its third meeting the Classis passed a resolution declaring that 'No known Independent'—I seem to have seen a like distinction somewhere else—'no known Independent, Arminian, Anabaptist, or Antinomian shall be permitted to preach in any of our congregations.' So did they fence their pulpits; giving Parke fair warning of the kind of hospitality he was to expect. At a meeting later in the same year (20th May, 1647) they imported Goodwin out of Cockey, placing him side by side with Harpur as assistant minister of Bolton. Neither of these men was instituted as vicar; though Goodwin speaks of himself as 'settled in the vicaridge,' he means thereby the residence, Harpur having a house at Halliwell. They were simply ministers of the place under the authority of the Parliamentary Presbyterianism. When they set their names to a public document John Harpur signed as 'pastor' and Richard Goodwin as 'minister' of Bolton. Thus they divided things between them.

I regret to say that the public document, to which we find these signatures of John Harpur and Richard Goodwin attached, was the manifesto of 1648, purporting to be the 'Harmonious Consent' of the ministers of

Lancashire with their brethren in London. What had their brethren in London been doing, to which they thus harmoniously consented? They had been pressing Parliament, and with success, to pass an ordinance, making it death to deny the doctrine of the Trinity. The ordinance was passed (2nd May, 1648); but, in regard to putting it into power, Cromwell was a man to be reckoned with. No heads were lopped off nor necks throttled in consequence of that ordinance; yet it acted as a terrorising influence. Those who signed the 'Harmonious Consent' say they 'detest' toleration; they describe it as 'impious and wicked'; they affirm that, if 'liberty were given by a law (which God forbid) for men to preach and practise what opinions they pleased,' the English people would become 'the loathing of all nations,' and would be 'to God an intolerable burden.' In fact, 'on the subject of toleration,' as Dr. Halley says, 'nothing more horrible was ever put upon paper by religionists of any sort.'

Of course Robert Parke did not sign that document. What he was doing about this period we cannot say, but there was a great deal more of Independency in Bolton and the neighbourhood than has generally been allowed for. The minutes of the Classis make frequent reference to it. For example there was a minister at Edenfield. I do not know where that is; in fact I did not know that Eden, or anything like it, was anywhere in this neighbourhood. A minister at Edenfield, a Robert Hill, had to appear before the Classis because he presumed to preach, before he had been licensed or ordained by the Classis. Hill said that the Presbyterian government was anti-Christian; and declared that 'he would preach in despite of ye gutts of ye classis.' I presume the Moderator was a portly man. It was a

rude saying; but what can you expect of an Independent? At this period also there was a parishioner of Bolton, bearing the very strong name of John Bullocke. The Classis tried to get at him in 1657, because, being an Independent, he, though a layman, not only presumed to preach but to baptise. Then there was a worthy farmer named Ellis Bradshaw, who had both a religious and a scientific turn of mind. Bradshaw was a considerable man, well worth studying by way of insight into the ecclesiastical mind of an intelligent layman. He wrote at least nine tracts, copies of which ought to be procured for your Public Library. We have most of them in the Manchester Reference Library, but I can hear of none of them in Bolton. Some of his tracts are on science; and here let me say that it is curious to note the persistency with which we find in Puritan biographies a sort of feeling after science, observation of the wonders of nature, curiosity directed towards physical marvels, and a desire to penetrate the mysteries of the visible world. We find it, for example, very strongly in the diaries of Philip Henry. Doubtless it is all in a tentative way, and mixed with odd moralising.

Ellis Bradshaw wrote one tract on 'The Strange Apparitions seen in the Air at Bolton.' These were a double rainbow, and a parhelion; Bradshaw said it all meant that we were to stick to a uniting Covenant, and were to make up our differences, not to have divisions. It meant, in short, that Presbyterianism and Independency were not working together, whereas they should. The moral was good, though the science was queer. Bradshaw also has a tract in which he gives his opinion on 'The True and Proper Natural Cause of the Ebbing and Flowing of the Main Sea.' On this topic I must admit

that he is much more successful from a negative than from a positive point of view. He finds it very easy to dismiss the opinion of Aristotle that the moon has something to do with the tides, because, as he justly observes, the moon is not hot enough to swell the sea. He also disposes very satisfactorily of the theory which, making the earth a sort of round bottle enclosing a quantity of imprisoned air, accounts for the fact that the bottle does not burst when the air gets hot, by assuming the existence of 'vent-holes,' provided by Divine Providence to avert catastrophe. For, as he remarks with much wisdom, no traveller has ever come across these 'vent-holes,' and lame science must not be eked out by the gratuitous imagination of 'vent-holes.' His own explanation, which I leave you to seek, though simple enough, is simple in more senses than one. He is more successful in his admirable discourse on 'The Preaching of the Heavens,' which he describes as 'a week-daies lecture, or continued sermon,' the vivid word of God, displayed for all men in the majestic characters of the sky. But I call attention especially to the largest and best of his tracts, in which, as a layman, he discusses the ecclesiastical situation. We know how a learned layman would have done this, a man like Selden, with his scraps of Latin and Greek, his apparatus of authorities, and his notes and marginalia. Bradshaw calls his tract 'An Husbandman's Harrow,' and designs it 'to pull down the ridges of the Presbyterian government, and to smooth a little the Independent.' It is a contribution of real value to our knowledge of the attitude, in those times, of the hard-headed, hard-handed, yet warm-hearted, thinking layman. He criticises both the parties then striving for the mastery, and endeavours, as well as he can, to hold the balance between them.

He had himself, as an elder from Bolton, attended the Classis, but only twice, and after that they summoned him to little purpose. He is with the Presbyterians in the matters of ordination and of church authority; but, while he thinks the Independents too strict in their terms of admission to the sacraments, he yet thinks that in the main they stand firmer than the Presbyterians to 'such Christian liberties wherewith Jesus Christ hath made us free,' and better maintain the 'supremacy of Christ' than did Parliamentary Presbyterianism.

As illustrating the chopping and changing of the times let us turn to a curious episode in the life of our friend Richard Heywood. Heywood was not an Independent; and the Bolton Presbyterians were beginning to play at Independency by making their own rules. They did it in a rather foolish fashion, as people often do when they are imitating others. The Bolton parish was administered by a 'presbytery' containing a dozen elders. These worthy persons started a plan of metal tokens, to be produced by all intending communicants. Heywood refused to use a token, saying it was an innovation unknown to any church in the district. Others agreed with him, but Heywood alone stood out in high-backed assertion of his rights, and was accordingly suspended from communion. He appealed to the Classis. It was perhaps no easy matter to go against the Bolton congregation in the Classis. The Bolton ministers sat there alternately, with two of the Bolton eldership; for they always had at least twice as many laymen as ministers in the Classis. The Classis found fault with Heywood's 'unfit carriage'; and, incredible as it may appear, for over two years the contention went on over these leaden dumps. At last Heywood took his appeal from the Classis to the Provincial Assembly. This

reverend body settled the matter in a moment, on good Presbyterian principles. The Bolton people had gone over the line. The Provincial Assembly at once ordered both Classis and eldership to free Heywood from censure and admit him to communion. As a matter of fact, however, Heywood never communicated with his Bolton friends again; he went for this purpose to Cockey, to the end of his days. He was annoyed especially that Goodwin had gone against him, considering who brought Goodwin to Lancashire. Before the Classis came to an end, it passed a resolution permitting ministers, who were not members of the Classis, to preach, even at classical meetings, with 'the approbation of Mr. Goodwin.' This was soon after Harpur's death (1657), and perhaps it was meant to set half open a sort of side door to the public pulpit for people in the predicament of Parke.

Well, now we push on to the Restoration time. The Restoration came, and it did two things for our friends. It made Goodwin Vicar of Bolton, under the Act of September, 1660, which gave to men in possession (if their predecessors were dead or had resigned) the same rights as if they had been regularly presented and instituted. Simultaneously it made Parke the Gosnell Lecturer. From January, 1660, (when the funds of the lectureship had got into order again, after a long Chancery suit) Goodwin had received the endowment. But the last quarterly payment (£1 14s. 8d.) for 1660 was made to Parke, and in 1661 and 1662 Parke received the whole. Then came the Act of Uniformity (1662), when Goodwin resigned the vicarage, Parke the Gosnell lectureship, and the two men came out, taking their stand side by side in the ranks of ejected Nonconformity.

On the very day when the Act came into force (24th August, 1662) Bishop George Hall issued a faculty permitting Robert Harpur, the new Vicar of Bolton, to hold also the Gosnell lectureship. It shows the egregious folly of the authorities that they gave promotion, at such a time, to such a man as Robert Harpur. He was of the same family as the old Presbyterian minister, son of another John Harpur, and an Oxford graduate from Brazenose. So unpopular was he that in spite of the bishop, the seoffees of the Lectureship would not pay him anything, till in 1665 they gave him three years' income to compromise a suit. Oliver Heywood says that Harpur 'could not officiate by reason of debt'; and intimated that he was fond of something else that begins with the same letter. He had a dispute with Richard Heywood in 1674 about a sum of £40, which Heywood would not pay; the good Nathaniel Hulton paid it, to save bother. He appears to have vacated the living before April, 1671; after which, strange to say, he re-appears (if it be the same man) as parish clerk, but had lost this post in July, 1676. At length he disappears altogether, being picked up one night in Charles's Acre, at the beginning of February, 1677; and then they buried him.

In succession to this person the bishop presented a man who, if he had been appointed before, might have delayed for a generation or more, the establishment of Nonconformity in Bolton; just as in other places Nonconformity was staved off by the appointment of competent clergy. This was Michael Stanford. Stanford, a member of both Universities, was, as Oliver Heywood says, 'a notable scholar.' Heywood knew of him as tutor to his nephew at Cambridge; and used, when in Bolton, to go and hear him preach, and com-

mended his sermons. But Stanford was not here very long, only from 1671 to 1673. He left for Aldingham, and died Vicar of Kendal in 1683. His tombstone describes him, in choice Latin, as 'a second Hooker, and a hammer of fanatics.'

We must now let the Vicars of Bolton alone, and see what our Nonconformist friends, Parke and Goodwin, were doing. They were preaching, wherever they could do so without interference. Then came the Five Miles Act, according to which, from Lady Day, 1666, no Nonconformist minister might set foot (except on a journey) within five miles of any corporate town, or any place where he had formerly ministered. So Parke went off to Broughton, while Goodwin removed to Manchester (not then a corporate town) and studied chemistry,—another touch of the Puritan appetite for science. The Act was not strictly enforced; for we find Goodwin back by 1669; Parke died in Bolton at the end of the previous year, and was buried on Christmas Day.

When the Declaration of Indulgence came (1672), Parke, you see, was dead, and Goodwin stood alone. He at once opened the Mealhouse Lane Chapel of which we have heard this evening; and there he went on until his death in 1685. At this point I must differ a little from your local historians. I think there is an absolute break in the succession of Nonconformist ministers, settled in Bolton, after Goodwin's death. John Lever followed Goodwin, but not at once. There was another John Lever, vicar of Bolton from 1673 to 1691; but the Nonconformist John Lever, called 'little Mr. Lever' for distinction, was at Cockey till the Toleration Act of 1689, and then came and settled at Bolton. This is Calamy's account, and as Calamy got

his information from Oliver Heywood, I cannot doubt its correctness. The fact is, the other John Lever, 'stout Mr. Lever,' was a good man; Nonconformists liked him; Nathaniel Hulton gave the parish church a communion cup in his time (1677), so good a cup that in 1712 they melted it down and made two of it.

With 1685, then, ends my chapter of your story. It is a chapter which covers about sixty years of good old English thought and deed, from 1625 to 1685; counting from the year when Parke came to Bolton, and Charles the First came to the English throne, to the year when Goodwin died, which was also the year when Charles the Second died. This is a nice little pair of historical coincidences, which you will be able to carry away and keep in your memories.

I have spoken of the past; I see before me the evidence of the present; and I believe in the future.

REV. JAMES HARWOOD, B.A.

My first duty must be to thank you for your observance of 'Auld Lang Syne' in remembering on this interesting occasion those who are of you indeed, but who through circumstances can no longer be with you in your general meetings for worship in this place. If for a moment I may venture to speak in the name of those prodigals who have wandered from their early religious home here, I desire to thank you most heartily for including us in your gathering to-night. We share in the thanksgiving which a continuous history of two hundred years must awaken in the minds of every one of us; and perhaps, above all, we rejoice and we congratulate you on the fact that, while you have such a long and honourable history in the past, you still obviously retain the signs of your youth, and are now ready to step forth to make another century of history, with the glorious uncertainties of the future before you, and with your belief undiminished in the faith which has brought you to the present point of your religious development. Another cause of congratulation I find in noticing that the gentleman who is to speak after me belongs to another church in the town, and he, I understand, is not the only representative of other denominations in coming here to-night to join in this interesting celebration. I am sure we hail their presence here, not in any sense as a compromise with their own principles: there will be no-one so ungenerous as to suspect this; but we welcome their sympathy as a sign of that widening fellowship among men, who in various ways and under different names

are all trying to bring about the Kingdom of God upon earth.

Now it is only natural on an occasion of this kind that we should become reminiscent, and call up the history of the past. I follow the historian of Nonconformity and the biographer of many of its confessors, and you have shared in my wonder and delight at the ease with which Mr. Gordon can speak of the people who lived two hundred years ago, as though they were intimate personal friends. I shall, for prudential reasons, avoid the field which he has so ably occupied, and I shall not attempt to cover the ground which your minister went over on Sunday morning and evening. But perhaps I may be allowed to touch upon one or two memories and associations, personal to myself and shared by many who are now with us.

Naturally, as I stand here, many forms rise unbidden before my mind, and the air seems vocal with the voices of those whose love and companionship make this place indeed doubly sacred. Next to my own home and relations I think it is around Bank Street that my earliest associations gather. I must have been very young when I was first brought to the old chapel, because I find I was somewhat in the position of the man, who, in speaking about music, said 'he only knew two tunes: one was 'God save the Queen' and the other wasn't. When I come to think of the service as I first knew it, it consisted of singing and of not-singing, and I am afraid I must confess that the latter part seemed to me to be a trifle long. Mr. Bradshaw has spoken of those old pews with high backs, and I remember very well it was the custom to stand during prayer, and I used to be put up to stand at the corner of the pew. In the next pew at the

corresponding corner was a gentleman who wore spectacles; he always used to employ the time of the last prayer in carefully taking his spectacles off and putting them in his case; and the eagerness with which I looked for that gentleman's movements, and the spectacles and the case being brought out, I recollect with great vividness to the present moment. I also remember thinking what a wonderful person Mrs. Bromley must be to be able to extract music from the organ. Then there was the Sunday which came only once a year, known as 'Charity Sermon Day.' We had but one collection a year in those days—you are not quite satisfied with that now. It was a high day when the hymn papers were laid in the pews, and the scholars were dressed in white, and the choir, brought up to anthem pitch, inquired with loud and repeated emphasis, 'Who is the King of Glory?' Last of all came the collection. That collection was really the most important event, because you had a coin given to you before going to the chapel, and you were so afraid of what would happen to it that you kept handling it in your pocket. Then you pulled it out to look at it, and the chances were that you dropped it, and it rolled from one end of the pew to the other. What a relief when the coin was safely deposited in the collection box!

All this comes very vividly before me when I think of those early days. Though the service seemed long to us as youngsters, I rejoice to say that it would have been a greater punishment to have been kept away from it than it was to come to it. There was something about the singing and the services that made one always feel it was a privilege and a pleasure to be able to come and worship on this spot. In fact, we never thought of

anything else, whether the day was wet or fine. So much hold had these services upon us that some of us, five or six cousins, all about the same age, when the afternoon service was over, frequently used to have tea at each others' houses, and after that we played at what we called 'chapel.' We were very ambitious, and conferred degrees upon each other, and I may say that the present Junior Member for Bolton could not have very long enjoyed the dignity of tailor-made garments when he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. I also enjoyed a degree which no university has given me yet. With regard to these services there was one incident I remember specially. Since those days I have often had to preach 'Charity Sermons,' at which there was a collection. But never since I was a child have I had to preach and beg for a good collection, and then to give notice that at the close of the service a meeting of the congregation would be held to decide what should be done with the collection. It was extremely awkward to ask for a collection when you had not settled what to do with it; but Mr. Street and other ministers will agree that we were very wisely guided, for we decided that we could not do anything better than purchase a bible for Mr. Baker, which was graciously accepted. While speaking of Mr. Baker, I may say that my own impressions and recollections of him quite correspond with those which Mr. Bradshaw has given. We all esteemed him, but I think the esteem was tempered with a certain amount of fear and awe; for Mr. Baker was not exactly the sort of man whom one could slap on the shoulder and say 'How do you do?' But undoubtedly the influence he exercised on this congregation was of a stimulating and wholesome character.

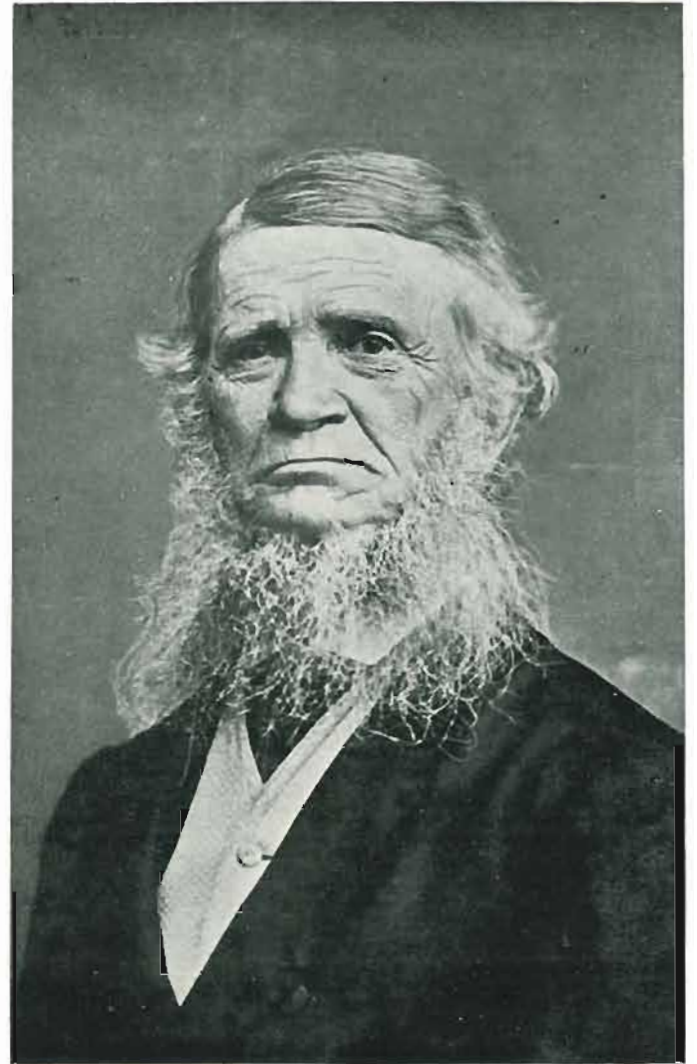
So much for the old chapel. When the new chapel was opened, we thought ourselves getting on in the world very much indeed. The minister had never worn a gown before, and the sight of that gave us a new sense of dignity. The first sermon I heard in the new chapel was preached by the father of our friend, Principal Gordon, on the Opening Sunday morning. He was a man of remarkably fine presence, with a powerful voice and most animated delivery. His sermon was about the 'seven golden candlesticks,' and I must say if those candlesticks had been in the pulpit with Mr. Gordon they would have had a very hard time indeed. On that day, too, I saw for the first time a man from whom I have since received some of the most precious and deepest influences of my life. For the afternoon service Dr. Martineau came over—not to preach, but to be present as one of the congregation. It had been Mr. Baker's strong wish that Dr. Martineau should preach one of the opening sermons, but owing to some scruple this was not possible. However, as a mark of respect for Mr. Baker and sympathy with the congregation he came over to attend one of the opening services, and a month or two later he preached the first Sunday school anniversary sermons in this chapel.

I must not further linger on these memories, for it seems to me we shall overlook the significance of this commemoration if we confine ourselves to the past only. Much as I value honourable traditions, and deeply interested as I have been in the story of the past, I am more and more convinced that we cannot live on the past, or safely rely on its traditions alone to sustain a living fidelity. The fact that our forefathers were what they were only lays upon us a greater responsibility to uphold the principles of which

we are the heirs. I feel it of the greatest importance that, while glorifying the past, we should also ask ourselves, 'What are we doing to combine and enlarge the contribution to the history of our town and time?' Well, in the first place, we must know for what we stand: in the second place, we must know why we stand for that; and thirdly, we must not be afraid to let the world know where we are. You remember the story of Mr. Mark Philips, when he first offered himself as a candidate for Manchester. A man asked him, 'Is it true you are a Unitarian?' Mr. Philips replied, 'I don't think that is a fair question.' 'Now,' the man said, 'are you not one of them?' whereupon M. Philips again answered, 'I have come to ask you for your vote, not to discuss religious questions.' 'Now come, it's no use fencing,' continued the man, 'I want to know whether you are a Unitarian.' Mr. Philips replied, 'Well, if you insist upon an answer, I suppose I am.' 'So am I,' said the man, 'and I'm going to vote for you.' I believe this is what often happens if people only have the courage of their convictions.

When I visit some old parish church with a snug parsonage standing by, I admire more than ever the courage of the two thousand clergymen who made so great a sacrifice, leaving church and parsonage, and going forth into the world at the simple command of conscience. And if in that day men could do that who were substantially in harmony with the religious standards of the Established Church, how much more important is it in these days for us who dissent from the creeds and confessions of the Church, that we should stand forth to proclaim and try to propagate the principles which commend themselves to our own minds and consciences.

This, then, my friends, is my last word, that, while we honour the past and glory in our forefathers, we should at the same time try to enrich their traditions, to carry forward their principles, and never fear the guidance of truth wherever it may lead us.



MR. CHARLES J. DARBISHIRE.

REV. H. W. TURNER, B.A.

SEEING the late hour at which we have already arrived, and in view of the long programme which still remains to be gone through, it will, I think, be only just to you for me to confine myself to a few very simple words of goodwill. This is the first time I have had the pleasure of standing on this platform, not from any unwillingness on my own part, but simply because it happens to be the first opportunity I have had, and I very gladly welcome that opportunity and come here this evening. I have been told, Mr. Chairman, that in coming to this meeting and in taking part in it I am not doing right. I would rather do wrong believing I am right, than do right believing I am wrong; and I do not think that I am in the wrong place this evening in coming to a meeting of this kind. We don't mean by coming here that we think little of the differences which separate us one from another. We don't forget those differences, nor do we minimise them. They are wide and deep, and there are certain lines along which it is best we should go our own way, each of us respecting profoundly, as I believe we do, the opinions of the other. But, at the same time, the fact that those differences exist is no reason why we should hold aloof one from another when the opportunity does come for us to co-operate on ground which is common to us all; and, surely, the more we can come together the better we shall learn to understand each other. We shall be able to see and understand one another's position more fully; and thus we shall learn to value, more than we have ever done before, the work

which each is permitted to do. There is a large area of common ground upon which we can stand, and we shall be committing a sin if we do not stand on that common ground, side by side.

I feel, personally, I owe a debt of gratitude to some of your great teachers, more especially one of them who has been mentioned this evening. I have a vivid recollection of two books which came into my hands in my college days, when my old friend, Mr. Livens, and myself were sitting side by side on the same bench, listening to the same professors—two books which very deeply influenced my own life. One was called 'Endeavours after the Christian Life,' the other 'Hours of Thought,' and the author of these works was the venerable Dr. James Martineau. The reading of those books formed an era in my own life and thought, and I have never ceased to be grateful to that great man for having written them. Men like him are not the property of one denomination or of any one corner of the church of Christ, but the common property of the whole of the church. You and I, surely, may claim to be working for the same end. We may not be working along the same lines with quite the same tools, but we are working for the same end. If you are trying to secure the uplifting of man, the purifying of the social life, and the brightening of the sorrowful, as I believe you are, so are we; and therefore I should be ashamed of myself and of any man who, knowing as we know that we are all working for an end like this, could not stretch out the hand of brotherhood and say, 'God bless you in that work you are trying to do.'

We none of us have all the truth. We see one side of the truth: there are other sides which are hidden from our view. The Spirit of God works in

many ways. The Kingdom of God will not come by all of us thinking exactly alike. And surely in these days we cannot but recognise the manifold forms in which the Spirit of God works in His people. Each pipe of the organ speaks its own note, and in its own way, but all are filled with the same breath. And so it is with the great Spirit of Truth. He speaks in many ways; He speaks in many hearts, and asks you and me to open our hearts to His voice, and to obey that which He teaches us. There is a saying of one of the early Christian Fathers which is wonderfully beautiful and true. He says, 'It is the same rain which falls from heaven, and which becomes white in the lily, red in the rose, purple in the violet and the pansy.' So it is the same Spirit of God, which is teaching His people; and if we are to be faithful to the light that is in us, we must be listening to that which the Spirit of God has to say. And that means freedom—the freedom of developing our own life, to formulate our own lines of work, and it is on that common ground of freedom that you and we can stand side by side. That has been the keynote of your history as it has been the keynote of our history during the 200 years; freedom for every man to think for himself, freedom for every man to obey the voice of conscience, freedom from the tyranny of Pope and priest and man-made creeds. And it is in this struggle for freedom that you and we have stood together during the centuries that lie behind us; and it is in that further struggle for freedom that still lies before us that you and we ought to stand side by side in the years to come.

This is a very interesting occasion. One of the speakers this evening, whose remarkable historical knowledge we all admired, has pointed out to us that

200 years ago England was in a very peculiar position religiously. The Revolution was an accomplished fact. What did that Revolution mean? Was it not the voice of England saying she would not have the priest to rule over her conscience? James II. had tried to thrust England into the arms of the Pope, and that endeavour cost him his throne. And there is a certain sense in which history is repeating itself to-day. We have already had reference made to the great wave of sacerdotalism which is sweeping over this country, and would, if the authors of it had their way, swamp the free churches. The Roman Catholic Church has been boasting of the recruits which it has got. Where did those recruits come from? They didn't come from the Unitarian Church. They certainly did not come from the Congregationalists; nor did they come from the Methodists. There is only one place from which they could come, viz., from the ranks of the Established Church. There can be no doubt that in that church there has been for a long time a certain trend in the direction of sacerdotalism. Religious equality is not yet won. This has been shown more especially in connection with the question of education. What did the late Education Bill mean? Did it not mean a deliberate attempt on the part of the priest to lay hold of the child for his own purposes? That is something which shows us the direction in which the current is tending in connection with that part of the Christian Church.

Surely resistance to this tendency is common ground on which you and we can stand side by side. This fight is not over. The old Education Bill is gone, but it is going to have some sort of a resurrection; what kind yet remains to be seen. But we may be sure of this, that the authors of that late scheme will

leave no stone unturned, if they can by any means get the hands of the priest upon the head of the child. That is what you and I have to contend against. The battle is not over. In the spring we shall have another election again as earnestly perhaps as we did last spring. It may be that the result may be what it was! Let us then stand side by side. We have clearly shown what the Free Churches can do when they set their faces in a certain direction. It was the Free Churches that kept the Education Bill of this year, and if we can stand side by side in the fight that is coming, we may be sure that the victory will be ours.

REV. JAMES C. STREET (of Birmingham).

WHEN I look at the clock and the programme, showing that several speakers have to follow me, I should think it a great act of impropriety to occupy your time. I will only say one or two sentences. The first is this, that I have a peculiar reason for satisfaction at being present to-night, quite independent of the fact that you are celebrating your Bi-centenary. I am carried back to the thought which was so painfully pressing upon me last year, that I might never see my son resume his work as a minister of religion. I am so overcome with the sense of gratitude that his health is fully restored, and that once again he is ministering to a body of men and women who are striving after the divine life, that you may well imagine to me at least the over-powering sentiment of to-night is one of profound thankfulness to Almighty God.

I share with you, however, the feeling of delight that you have in looking back upon your varied story in the past. I have listened with almost inexpressible pleasure to the speeches which have been delivered to-night. They have occupied much time, but I do not think I need condole with you in any sense in having sat out the time to listen to them. If you have been as charmed and interested as I have been, you will feel that every moment has been wisely occupied, and that you have learned lessons of the past, bearing upon the life of to-day and to-morrow. If ever the dry bones were made to live it has been to-night, and I think there is not one who is present, even the youngest, who will not carry away the most vivid recollection of

the story of past years as told to-night, and who will not have in his mind a picture of the growth of religious thought, consecrated life, and conscientious devotion to duty by a successive band of worshippers in this Church.

The only further word that I want to speak is one which seems to grow out of this story. It is said that the Unitarians are celebrating their Bi-centenary to-night in Bolton. It is not so. The Unitarians who are here (and I rejoice there are and have been so many of them) are celebrating the Bi-centenary—or, as Mr. Gordon has shown to us, a much longer history—of the protest against intellectual and spiritual slavery, and a determination to have at least one place, one altar, where God could be worshipped in absolute freedom. That has been the protest of the past; that is the proclamation of the present. Unitarianism has come, as it seems to us, out of our freedom; but we have preserved our freedom, and what may yet come out of it who can tell? We are not so vain as to say that we have sounded all the truth of God, and that our children and our children's children shall worship God in exactly the same way as we do. We are here, feeling that we have learned thus much in consequence of our freedom, that our children shall learn more. God is life, and the revelations of God are new every morning and fresh every evening. Each generation catches new light, new life from Him; and who shall tell what will be the feelings, yearnings, and aspirations of those who may gather two hundred years hence to thank God they have followed in the line of our freedom? Ah! brethren and sisters, we point to the future with confidence. Our religious opinions may be wrong; they may be right. Even if they be wrong,

we know that we have not been wrong in reaching out our hands to the Almighty Father, saying to Him, 'Lead us whithersoever Thou wilt.' To that leadership we have trusted, and we confidently hope those who succeed us will do the same.

MR. WILLIAM HASLAM.

I HAVE been asked to propose—

'That the best thanks of this meeting be and are hereby given to the Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., the Rev. James Harwood, B.A., the Rev. James C. Street, the Rev. H. W. Turner, B.A., and other visitors for their presence and support at this Commemoration this evening.'

I may say we have all been delighted to hear these gentlemen. Mr. Gordon's address has been particularly interesting to me, because I have a taste for that sort of antiquarian lore. We are all very much indebted to Mr. Turner for his speech.

My earliest recollection of the old Bank Street chapel was that one entered through a very long passage, and our pew was one of the farthest from the door on the left hand of the pulpit, a large, square pew of oak, lined with green baize. I well remember the place where the boys from the Sunday School sat, as mentioned by Mr. Bradshaw: this was on the opposite side of the chapel, and to the right of the pulpit. They were in charge of a man who had a long stick with which he used to rap any boy who was restless or inattentive, and I am told that, if he could not reach them with his stick, he never forgot to punish them when he got hold of them afterwards.

Mr. John Gordon sat in the pew in front of us, and he always seemed to us, as children, a man with a stern countenance. I suppose my brother and I were often restless during the service, and amused ourselves with rolling our heads against the high pew back. Once, when my mother was paying her pew rent, in

one of the rooms as you entered the chapel, he was the collector. He looked at my brother and myself, and said in a very serious tone: 'Now, you boys, if you will only sit still in chapel I'll tell you what I will do; I will vote for your uncle Joseph at the election.' Mr. Crook was at that time a candidate for the Parliamentary election, and was elected in the year 1852.

I also remember the closing lectures given by the Rev. Franklin Baker, which created much interest, and I think the attendance was large. It may be of interest to mention that I have in my possession several pieces of furniture made out of the old oak from Bank Street Chapel. Some of it was carved by Mr. Aspinwall, whose family were members of the congregation, and was made for his own use.

MR. W. H. HIGGIN, B.Sc.

IT is as a member of the congregation connected with the Sunday School that I rise to express to you the great interest and pride that the scholars of the school feel in this celebration. To one who recalls the history of that institution, and whose memory can restore to him a long line of teachers and scholars, some of whom became teachers in their turn, it must seem that our school is of respectable antiquity, and an effort is required to realise that after all the congregation is more than twice as old.

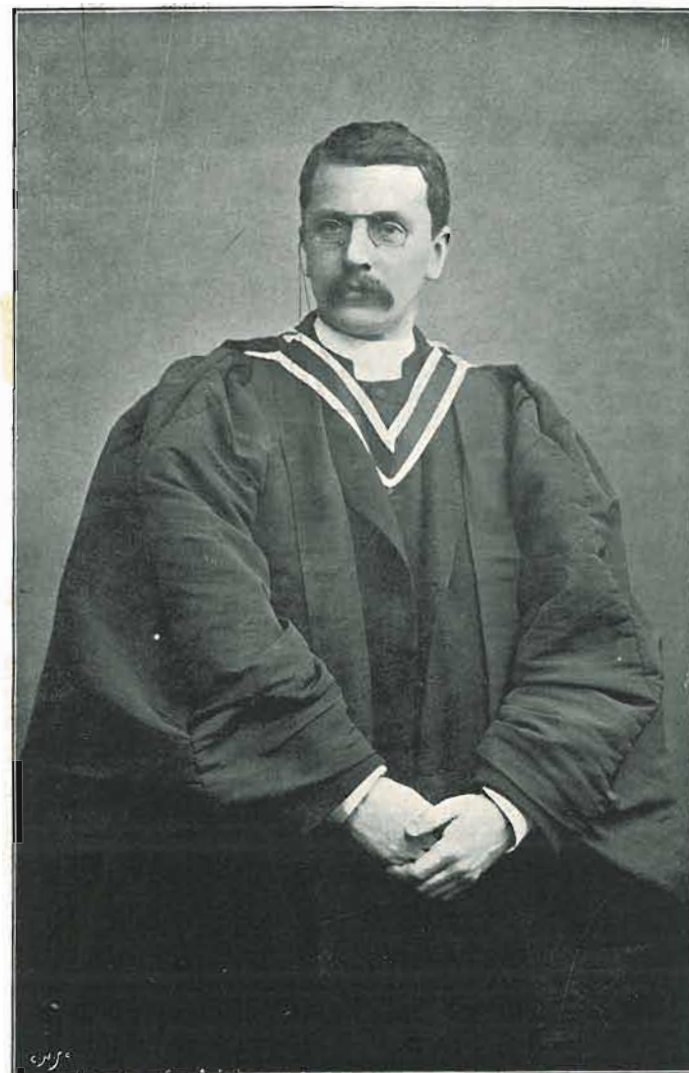
Now it is not my intention to attempt to compete with the several gentlemen, to whom our best thanks are due for the complete and eloquent expression which they have given us of the thought which our Bi-centenary celebration renders proper to our minds. As a mere layman this does not seem to come within my province, and it is plainly beyond my power to adequately enter on that field; but in this very capacity as 'a voice from the pews,' I think that I am correctly representing your sentiments when I put on record that the occasion has profoundly interested and moved us—that we do take pride in the history of the congregation, and love to have recalled to our minds the honourable lives of our sturdy ancestors.

I should like to add, before resuming my seat, that all appearances point to a fresh lease of energetic life for the old place under the leadership of our new minister. This seems the general feeling, and it seems proper that it should find expression on such an occa-

sion; for, after dwelling with proud remembrance on the past, nothing is more natural than that our thoughts should pass to what the outlook for the future seems to be. Already we are confident that our friend and leader, Mr. Street, will in every respect fully maintain the tradition of the Bank Street pulpit, both amongst us, the members of his flock, and in the town amongst our worthy fellow-citizens; and we pray that he may long be preserved to us in life and health. Experience shows that in most forms of public service, either social or philanthropic, he will find that amongst the leaders a large proportion consists of members of his own congregation. It is by this active public service, largely, that we can best justify in the eyes of others the liberty we boast of, by thus proving that it does not mean only the liberty to believe in nothing and to do nothing for the service of others.

In conclusion I have, sir, much pleasure in seconding the resolution of thanks to our visitors which has been proposed.

The resolution was carried by acclamation, and responded to by Rev. Alex. Gordon. Mr. Harwood having vacated the chair, it was occupied by Mr. John Heywood, M.A., J.P.



Rev. C. J. STREET.

REV. CHRIS. J. STREET, M.A., LL.B.

A VERY pleasant duty falls upon me, which I have the greatest possible pleasure in performing. I am not going to make a speech—I made my speeches on Sunday, and pretty lengthy ones they were. On account of time I did not then give you all the information I had, but some additional particulars at any rate will be published in the memorial volume which we intend to issue in connection with the Bi-centenary, and which I hope you will all carefully read, as it will be of permanent interest. It gave me much pleasure, even though it involved some trouble at such short notice, to acquire a knowledge of the details of the history of our congregation, and I am afraid I rather wearied some of you by my pertinacious enquiries, which, however, have elicited some very valuable and not a few curious facts.

Before moving my resolution I want to give two bits of information which I happen to have obtained in the course of these historical researches. The first is contained in an original document which I hold in my hand, and which is dated Sunday, March 10th, 1799. I have also here a much older document, which must be rescued from the oblivion of the safe, and framed and placed in some part of the chapel, so that all may have access to it. It is the original certificate of registration of the old chapel, and is dated 30th September, 1696. The handwriting is that of Mr. Bourn, the first minister of this congregation after the old chapel was built. The other quaint document I will read for your edification. [Addendum No. 5.] I think

this is one of the smartest and most original documents I ever read.

The other bit of information I almost hesitate to repeat, lest you should be shocked. I mentioned on Sunday the secession from the Methodist New Connexion in 1841, and told how a number of the seceders went to 'the Sawpit,' where services were held by Mr. Entwisle, Mr. Richard Carling, and others. Amongst those who attended these services at 'the Sawpit,' or 'the Woodyard' as it was sometimes called, was Mr. Peter Charlton, of whose family there are still representatives in the town. By some who knew Mr. Charlton I have been told that the story I am about to relate is very characteristic of the man. Mr. Charlton had seceded from the Wesleyan Chapel in Fletcher Street before he went to 'the Sawpit.' He had for some time been studying theological questions for himself, and he went to his minister to express certain doubts and ask a few questions. The minister said, 'Mr. Charlton, I perceive you have been reading for yourself.' 'Yes, sir,' was the reply. 'And thinking for yourself, too,' the minister added; and Mr. Charlton replied, 'Yes, sir, I have.' Then the minister exclaimed, 'But you must not do that; you'll be damned if you do.' Mr. Charlton promptly observed, 'I'll be damned if I don't,' and took his departure. The Wesleyan Chapel lost one member forthwith, whom 'the Sawpit' gained.

There is a curious point with regard to the past history to which I must call your attention. Somehow or other Bank Street seems to have had a remarkable predilection for negotiating with public-houses. There were, for example, 'Seven Stars' that used to twinkle in front here, and they were suppressed through the

generosity of Mr. Robert Heywood. There was also the 'Bank Inn' which was purchased at a very high price in order to make way for the new schools. And when the time came to establish a new church in Commission Street it seems to have been a matter of course to buy up a beer-shop. I suppose it must be out of revenge for the way in which you have shut up the public-houses that the original Mealhouse Lane Chapel has been turned into the 'Old Woolpack' inn. It is one of the satires that history sometimes makes, that your first chapel has become a public house!

Now, to be serious, I am devoutly thankful for the success of this great meeting we have had to-night. It is a most inspiring and helpful gathering and will long live in our memory. I hope this splendid meeting and the enthusiasm displayed on Sunday may spur us on for the future, and that we shall not rest content with the good that has been done in the past, but go forward to still greater achievements. Something has been said about the generosity of Bank Street people. No one can have read the history of this congregation without being struck by the continuous succession of kindly and generous hearts that have been associated with the chapel. There is still room for them in our midst to-day; there is plenty yet to be done. Out of love for the cause, for example, someone might be disposed to bear the financial loss of the forthcoming publication of the memorial volume, instead of allowing it to fall upon the ordinary funds. The book will be a valuable memento of this chapel, following in natural course on its predecessor, Mr. Baker's *Nonconformity in Bolton*, which it is intended to supplement. Then Bank Street has a daughter, Unity Church, and it would be a graceful thing for some good friend, with

or without assistance from others, to wipe off the debt of about £300 incurred in building an addition to the school, and to do it as a little token of goodwill in connection with this Bi-centenary.

There is still another matter upon which I feel constrained to say a word. There are many here to-night who do not often come to chapel, and probably others, formerly connected with it, who do not attend at all. I give them all a most cordial and earnest invitation, not only in my name but on behalf of the whole congregation, to associate themselves closely with our fellowship; and I trust they may once more return to these pews, and revive their old earnestness and attachment.

I rose to propose a vote of thanks to the Chairman for his able services, and I venture to add that we not only heartily thank him for his services to-night, and as chairman of the Bi-centenary Committee, but all who have in any way contributed to the success of our meeting. I must specially mention the ladies, who have worked hard in connection with the soirée arrangements and in the beautiful decoration of the platform. We must also thank Mr. Thomas Harwood and Mr. Percy Taylor, our efficient secretaries, for the great amount of work they have admirably done.

REV. H. M. LIVENS.

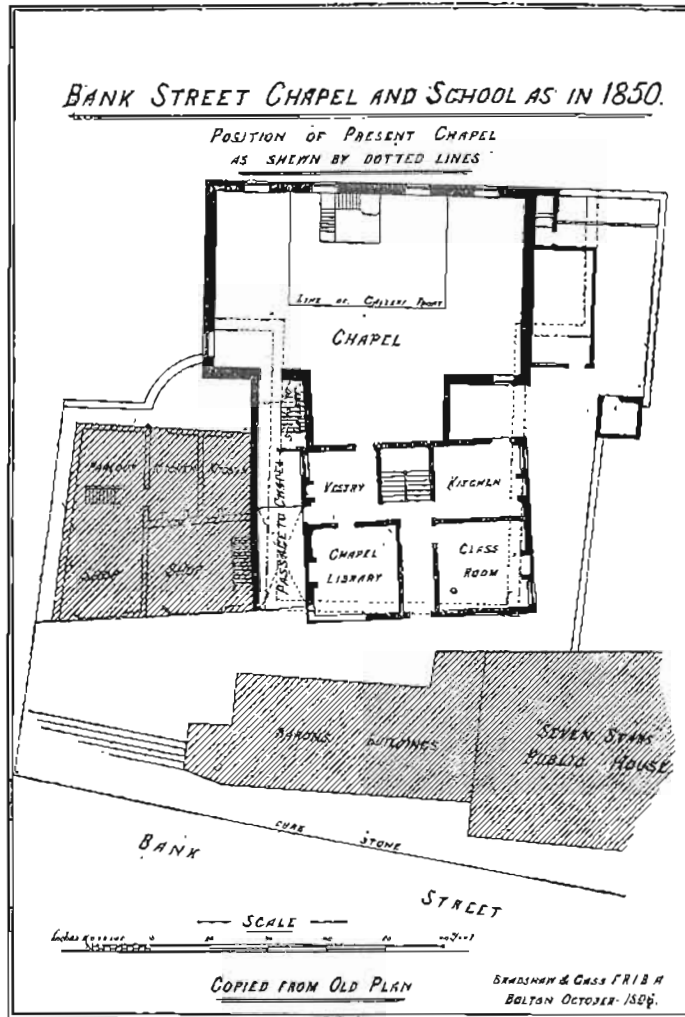
I RISE to second this vote of thanks with great pleasure, and would include in that vote all those who have in any way helped in the success of the present celebration. I am very glad to have an opportunity, however brief, in order to make an acknowledgment. More than once within the last fortnight, my friend, Mr. Street, has made some generous allusion to my own church, and I can only say that I reciprocate from the depth of my heart the kind sentiments he has expressed. I trust that a bright prospect may be before both churches.

We do not forget that this is one of the most memorable days in the calendar. It is the day on which the battle of Trafalgar was fought, and Nelson won his great victory. It is ninety-one years since that great fight took place. It is also 404 years to-day since Columbus, standing on the quarter-deck of the 'Santa Maria,' on the dawn of the 21st October, 1492, espied the low-lying shore of San Salvador, and thus became the discoverer of the New World. And it seems to me that we may legitimately draw a parallel between such events and the history of this church; for it is by reason of the great spiritual contests, and the great spiritual discoveries of our predecessors that we stand where we do to-night; and just as that victory at Trafalgar and that discovery of America led to great and unknown issues, so in the wonderful future that is before us will spiritual struggle and illumination continue, I trust, to advance your history, and lead to vaster issues and more beautiful prospects than any that are within the compass of our vision now.

Reference has been made to Unity Church as the daughter of Bank Street. While, on the one hand, we shall dearly cherish and do nothing to cloak our own individuality, we shall, on the other, never disguise or renounce the fact of our allegiance and our relation to you as your daughter. But just imagine! It took you one hundred and seventy years before you had your first child. No parallel to that can be found in history, unless you go back to the patriarchal ages; and there you may find such a case of venerable maturity as Lamech's, who was one hundred and eighty-two years old before he realised the advantages of paternity, and called his son 'Noah,' saying, 'This same shall comfort us for our work and for the toil of our hands.' I can only hope that, having waited so long for your first-born, we shall give you great comfort for your work and for the toil of your hands, and that we shall not be a shame and humiliation to you. And I hope the patriarchal case will find a further parallel; for those patriarchs continued to live for centuries, and begat sons and daughters. Therefore, I hope that Unity Church is but the first of many a filial institution of one kind or another owing its origin to Bank Street, and spreading far and wide the intense spiritual life which ought to characterise this place. Of one thing I feel quite confident, and that is that if my friend, Mr. Christopher—not Columbus, but—Street, continues to occupy his place on the bridge in command of this vessel, before five years are gone you will find yourselves led into some enterprise which you had not dreamed of, and doing some things whose achievement will give you pride and delight.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried with hearty unanimity; and Mr. John Harwood briefly acknowledged the vote. The meeting closed with hymn and benediction.

ADDENDA.



I. ROLL OF MINISTERS.

I.—MEALHOUSE LANE CHAPEL [Opened, 1672].

1. Richard Goodwin, M.A. 1672-1685 Date of Death.
(Cantab).

[An apparent break of four years without regular ministry].

2. John Lever 1689-1692 Date of Death.
3. Robert Seddon, M.A. 1692-1696 Date of Death
(Cantab).

II.—BANK STREET OLD CHAPEL [Built, 1696].

4. Samuel Bourn 1696-1720 Date of Death.
5. Peter Withington 1720-1722 Date of Death.
6. Thomas Dixon, M.A.,
M.D. (Edinburgh). 1723-1729 Date of Death.
7. John Buck 1729-1750 Date of Death.
8. Thomas Dixon, *fls* 1752-1754 Date of Death.
9. Philip Holland 1755-1789 Date of Death.
10. William Hawkes 1785-1789 Removed to
(assistant) Manchester.
11. John Holland 1789-1820 Retired.
12. Noah Jones 1821-1822 Resigned, ill.
13. Franklin Baker, M.A. 1823-1864 Retired.
(Glasgow).

III.—BANK STREET NEW CHAPEL [Built, 1856].

[Mr. Baker, until 1864.]

14. Jeffery Worthington, B.A. 1864-1873 Removed to
(Victoria). London.
15. Charles Clement Coe, 1874-1895 Removed to
F.R.G.S. Bournemouth.
16. Christopher J. Street, M.A. 1896-
(Queen's), LL.B. (Royal).

II. ROLL OF TRUSTEES.

	1695.
John Andrews.	Nathan Dorning.
Nathan Mort.	John Collyer.
Edward Richardson.	James Seddon.
Peter Finch.	Thomas Booth.
Joseph Crompton.	William Bridge.
	1743.
Joseph Wilson.	Ellis Bradshaw.
Alexander Walker.	Joseph Pilkington.
Joseph Andrews.	John Dorning.
Ralph Laithwait.	Robert Lord.
Samuel Darbshire.	
	1760.
Robert Taylor.	John Crompton.
James Darbshire.	William Yates.
John Bradshaw.	Thomas Marsh.
Samuel Aspinwall.	John Lord.
	1802.
John Pilkington.	John Heywood.
Joseph McKeand.	Peter Smith.
Jeffery Smith.	James Smith.
Robert Nuttall.	Edward Best.
Robert Darbshire.	
	1811.
Edmund Ashworth.	Henry Holme.
James Haselden.	Peter Baron.
John Turner.	Peter Smith, jun.
Robert Heywood.	Joseph Bourn.
Richard Marsden.	James Dean.
Robert Eveleigh Taylor.	James Bromiley, jun.
Richard Scowcroft.	Robert Kay.
John Noble.	

	1833.
Edward Coe.	Francis Darbshire.
Thomas Cooper.	James Fray.
John Armstrong.	John Gordon.
William Aspinwall.	William Heaton.
Arthur Bromiley.	Thomas Kenyon.
George Cunliffe.	William Scowcroft.
John Dean.	Thomas Scowcroft.
James Dean.	William Sutill.
Charles James Darbshire.	
	1863.
Joseph Crook.	John Kenyon.
John Harwood.	Thos. Blackledge Garstang.
James Taylor.	Joshua Crook.
Alexander Lawson.	Arthur Bromiley, jun.
Richard Harwood.	Thomas Bromley.
Joseph Kirkham.	George Cunliffe.
Joseph Gerrard.	John Thirlwind.
Charles Naylor.	
	1885.
Isaac Barrow.	William Haslam.
Thomas Henry Biggs.	James Carter Hollins.
Charles Bowman.	William Inglis.
Jonas James Bradshaw.	John Lawson.
William Broughton.	William Waller Midgley.
J. B. Howard Crook.	Joseph Ormrod, jun.
Robert Crook.	Edmund Peel Potter.
Miles Gerrard.	Daniel Kay Ramsden.
John Harwood.	James William Scott.
Thomas Harwood.	Frank Taylor.
Thomas Haselden.	

III. NOTES OF SOME EARLY BOLTON MINISTERS,

Referred to in Rev. A. Gordon's address.

JAMES GOSNELL.—Lecturer at Bolton before 1582. Cited for Nonconformity 3rd October and 28th November, 1604, and 28th July, 1620. Endowed lectureship by will of 9th January, 1622. Buried 2nd May, 1622. [The first Gosnell lecturer was Richard Dickinson, appointed 1623, died 7th March, 1626.]

ELLIS SANDERSON.—Son of William and Margaret Sanderson. Born at Brightmet about 1567. Matriculated, Brazenose College, Oxford, 5th March, 1585, aged 18; B.A. 16th November, 1588; M.A. 5th July, 1592. Vicar of Bolton, instituted 29th September, 1598. Cited for Nonconformity, 3rd October and 28th November, 1604, and again in 1605. Buried 19th December, 1625.

ROBERT PARKE.—Son of John and Elizabeth Parke. Baptised at Bolton, 17th August, 1600. Entered as pensioner at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 20th June, 1615; M.A. 1622. Vicar of Bolton, presented 16th December, 1625; vacated before 15th March, 1630. Left Bolton after 19th May, 1631. Assistant minister (1639?) to Rotterdam Independents; afterwards pastor; connection severed 19th November, 1649. Probably the Robert Parke who was appointed, June, 1656 to the sequestered curacy of St. Mary's, Mortlake, Surrey, being a clerical assistant to the county expurgators; and who subsequently held the sequestered rectory of Lavant, Sussex, 1658-1660. Gosnell

lecturer in last quarter of 1660, and continued 1661-62. Resigned, 1662. Removed to Broughton, 1666. Buried at Bolton, 25th December, 1668. Twice married, and had issue by both marriages. Left large library.

WILLIAM GREGGE.—Son of Thomas Gregge, of Bradley, Cheshire. Born about 1602. Student of Gray's Inn, 1620. Matriculated from Brazenose College, Oxford, 10th November, 1621, aged 19; B.A. 23rd May, 1622. Vicar of Bolton, instituted 27th November, 1630. Died in February or March, 1644. Married Alice, daughter of James Crompton, of Brightmet; other daughters were married to Richard Goodwin, John Okey, and Oliver Heywood (second wife). His son, Thomas Gregge (died 1681), was incumbent of St. Helens, and a Nonconformist in 1662.

JOHN HARPUR.—Son of Francis Harpur, of Halliwell. Probably of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, entered 31st January, 1614, M.A. 1622. Gosnell lecturer before 6th July, 1635. Minister of Bolton, and ordaining minister for Lancashire, 13th December, 1644. Died, 25th February, 1657; buried, 26th February, at Deane Church. Married and left issue.

RICHARD GOODWIN.—Born in Sussex, about 1613. Entered as sizar at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 23rd June, 1632; M.A. 1639. Perpetual curate at Cockey about 1640. Left in 1644 (after February), for Hull and London; settled for a short time in the rectory of Hargrave, Northamptonshire. Assistant minister at Bolton, 20th May, 1647. Sole minister from 25th February, 1657. Gosnell lecturer, on three-fourths pay, 1660. Vicar of Bolton, September, 1660; resigned 1662 (before 24th August). Removed to Manchester, 1666; returned before 23rd February,

1669. Licensed to preach in Mealhouse Lane Chapel, 1672. Died 12th December, 1685, in 73rd year; buried 25th December. Married (3rd August, 1641), Sarah, daughter of James Crompton, of Brightmet; wife died 18th February, 1651.

For later ministers see *Record of the Provincial Assembly*, 1896, edited by Rev. George Eyre Evans.



Interior of Bank Street New Chapel.

IV. CERTIFICATE
OF 'WINDY BANK CHAPEL,' 1797.

County Palatine of } These are to certify that at
Lancaster to wit } the General Quarter Session
of the Peace held by Adjourn-
ment at the New Bailey Court House within Salford
in and for the said County the eighteenth Day of
January in the thirty-seventh year of the reign of his
present Majesty King George the third that a certain
building situate in Bolton in the said County called by
the name of Windy Bank Chapel was certified to the
Justices here assembled as a place of Congregation
or Assembly for religious Worship and that the same
was recorded at this Session pursuant to an Act of
Parliament made in the first year of the reign of his
late Majesty King William the third and Queen Mary
Intituled 'An Act for exempting their Majestys Pro-
testant Subjects dissenting from the Church of England
from the Penalties of certain Laws.'

TAYLOR,
Deputy Clerk of the Peace for Lancashire.

NOTE.—This would seem to be a formal certificate of registra-
tion, sought and obtained in self-protection, at the time of
the 'Church and King' riots, during which the minister, the
Rev. John Holland, was burnt in effigy and publicly insulted in
other ways.

V. SUBSCRIBERS TOWARDS
RE-BUILDING CHAPEL WALL, SEP-
TEMBER, 1798.

Subscribers of Two Guineas. *Subscribers of less than Two Guineas.*

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Mr. Peter Smith	2	2	0	Mr. Edward Best	1	1	0
Mr. Jas. Kay, Rumworth	2	2	0	Mrs. Best	0	10	6
Mr. Jeremy Crook	2	2	0	Miss Alice Bromiley ...	0	3	0
Mr. Joseph McKeand ...	2	2	0	Mr. William Longworth	0	10	6
Mr. Edwd. Coe	2	2	0	Mrs. Battersby	0	5	0
Mr. Joseph Best	2	2	0	Mr. John Hall	0	5	0
Mr. Richd. Kay	2	2	0	Miss Booth	0	10	6
Mr. Joseph Heywood...	2	2	0	Miss Kay	0	5	0
Mr. John Kay	2	2	0	Mrs. Butler	1	1	0
Mr. Rob. Smith	2	2	0	Mrs. Howel	1	1	0
Mr. John Noble	2	2	0	Mr. Davenport	1	1	0
Mr. Pilkington	2	2	0	Miss Darbishire	0	10	6
Mr. Wm. Aspinwall ...	2	2	0	Mr. William Gordon ...	0	10	6
Mr. James Cunliff	2	2	0	Mr. Roger Walker	0	10	6
Mr. Turner	2	2	0	Mr. Alison	0	10	6
Mr. James Smith... ..	2	2	0	Mr. Hardman	0	2	0
Mr. Edmd. Ashworth...	2	2	0	Mr. Manerty Taylor ...	1	1	0
Mr. Robert Nuttall ...	2	2	0	Mrs. Crompton	1	1	0
Dr. Taylor	2	2	0	Mr. Wm. Whalley	0	2	0
				Mr. John Scrocroft ...	0	2	0
				Mr. James Longworth	0	5	0
	£39	18	0	Mr. James Bromiley ...	0	10	6
	14	7	6	Mr. Peter Smith, jun... .	0	5	0
Total received	54	5	6	Mr. Thomas Yates	0	5	0
Expended	38	0	0	Mr. Jas. Kay, Folds ...	0	5	0
Remainder	£16	5	6	Mr. Edward Kay... ..	0	10	6
				Mr. Samuel Bromiley... .	0	10	6
				Mr. John Nuttall... ..	0	2	6
				Mr. Saml. Marsden	0	5	0
				Mr. Peter Heywood	0	5	0
					£14	7	6

Bolton. Sunday, March 10, 1799.

It was agreed when the subscription was first entered into that if more money should be raised than should be found necessary for the purpose the re-

mainder should be divided equally amongst the subscribers of two guineas in order to bring down their subscriptions more nearly to a level with those of the rest of the congregation.—If therefore the over-plus of £16 5s. 6d. be divided into nineteen shares each subscriber of two guineas will be entitled to receive back **seventeen shillings and three half-pence** which upon application to Dr. Taylor¹ will be immediately repaid.

This overplus would have been sooner divided and distributed to its respective owners had it not been for waiting in expectation of some further subscriptions from a number of Gentlemen who tho' members of the same body respectable in themselves and opulent in circumstances have not as yet thought proper to contribute anything.—It is hoped from their known zeal for the general interests of Religion and their peculiar attachment to the liberal principles of this Society that they will e'er [*sic*] long come forward with their mite in support of the tottering foundations of the Church.—As soon as this shall be done the Society may depend on the money being equally proportioned and faithfully applied.—There is reason to believe they feel great compunction of conscience for having so long neglected their duty and there can be but little doubt of this painful [*sic*] sense of past neglect leading to true repentance and practical amendment.—If however contrary to all just and reasonable expectation they should neglect to come even at the eleventh hour we can only say in the language of another church Lord have mercy upon them miserable offenders.

¹ It was through this Dr. Taylor's efforts that the spy and black-face system was exposed and broken up. In 1812 he was presented with a hundred guineas [? and a piece of plate] in recognition of his services in this way.

VI. MEMORIAL TO THE REV. NOAH
JONES, 1821.

To the Rev. Noah Jones, of Walmesley.

WE the undersigned being members of the Unitarian Christian congregation who meet for Religious Worship in Bank Street Chapel, Bolton, feel constrained by a sense of duty to you and to ourselves and by a sincere regard for the principles which we profess to lay before you some remarks relative to your appointment to be Pastor of this congregation.

Reviewing the transactions we have witnessed amongst ourselves in the course of the past year and bringing to mind the conduct of some persons who have so actively and unscrupulously exerted themselves in accomplishing your appointment we must say and we say it with deep regret that we have been very, very much deceived. Their situation in life, their professions of liberality of sentiment and of attachment to our principles, did lead us to expect that they who had on all previous occasions recommended that we should keep our minds open to think and to judge for ourselves, would have acted conformably thereto. That they should have descended to stratagems the most mean and have sacrificed every Christian principle in order to have you elected did surprise us; because they knew it to be in opposition to the declared will of the majority of the Congregation. This they knew was the fact, a fact fully demonstrated by the opposition with which a motion for your nomination to stand as a candidate was negatived.

That you were afterwards nominated was merely a matter of courtesy and was understood as such, and as such assented to. That you may not be misled by being in ignorance of this fact, we have thought it a duty thus to make you acquainted with it. It is not anything which has recently happened, nor any considerations that have lately occurred, that has led us to believe that your acceptance of the Pastoral charge of this Congregation will not answer the expectations you may have formed, or benefit the cause we advocate. Under this conviction which we have long had, we cannot approve but must highly, and we think, justly condemn the conduct of those persons to whom we have alluded, by whose manœuvres your appointment has been accomplished. Did not the Revd. John Holland our late Pastor find the situation so uncomfortable by the election of himself being managed in a similar way, that he was induced at length to give up the Pulpit? Afterwards he was re-elected in a manner more gratifying to the Congregation, and more satisfactory to himself. We also take the liberty to state that any misrepresentations which may have arisen respecting you if they did not entirely originate with, they were most generally circulated by those who thought proper to interest themselves in your election merely for the purpose of refuting them; forgetting the good advice which has been so often repeated to us from the Pulpit by our late Pastor, 'not to do evil even that good may come.' And further—we cannot approve of your own conduct towards the Congregation at Walmesley by the acceptance of the invitation to Bolton. Your motives for thus treating them, what they are we cannot pretend to say, but we do conceive that they are not right ones.—A declaration has frequently

been made to us and to others of our Congregation that had you been an Arian you would still have been enjoying the patronage of Mr. Coward's Trustees of Wymondly Academy, but we are informed that Unitarians are still receiving benefit from that institution. How are we to reconcile these different representations? With these feelings and these views impressed upon our minds we cannot anticipate either much satisfaction to ourselves in our union, or much usefulness from your Ministerial instructions to the Congregation, on which account we feel very great and unfeigned concern that you have accepted the invitation. It will most certainly cause a very serious schism in the congregation, which we shall sincerely lament. Of what are your views and expectations in persisting in the acceptance of the invitation, we, to be sure, can only guess but we foresee only disappointment and vexation to yourself, and serious harm to the Congregation. Should you think otherwise, we must say that we are very sorry that it is so, and that we would gladly have avoided the mischief we apprehend.

Oliver Nicholson.	James Heywood.
Isaac Barrow.	Robert Hope.
John Nuttall.	Robert Heywood.
Peter Heywood.	William Smith.
James Pendlebury.	John Unsworth.
Peter Heywood, jun.	Joseph Taylor.
Edmund Seddon.	Samuel Horrocks.
James Pilkington.	Thomas Taylor.
Richard Scowcroft.	E. Makin.
William Nelson.	John Cunliff.
Samuel Taylor.	Joseph Masson.
Benjamin Wrigley.	P. Heywood.

John Walsh Bowden.	Betty Seddon.
Jhn. Seddon.	Sarah Seddon.
Giles Cunliff.	Hannah Kay.
J. Taylor.	Mary Cunliff.
Matthew Wolstenhulme.	Rachael Bullough, sen.
A. Heywood.	Rachael Bullough, jun.
John Parkinson.	Robert Briscoe.
Thomas Stevenson.	Robert Scowcroft.
Robert Ellison.	Andrew Nelson.
John Brandreth.	John Crook.
John Haselden.	Richard Hope.
W. Platt.	Peter Smith.
Robert Salter.	Betty Barrow.
John Feltham.	Joseph Settle.
Robert Kay.	James Settle.
John Pilkington.	Ellen Settle.
Richard Pilkington.	Sarah Settle.
Jane Pilkington.	Robert Flitcroft.
Alice Pilkington.	Betty Scowcroft.
Mary Pilkington.	Thomas Smith.
Margaret Crompton.	Betty Smith.
Thomas Grundy.	John Smith.

VII. SUBSCRIBERS FOR THIS VOLUME.

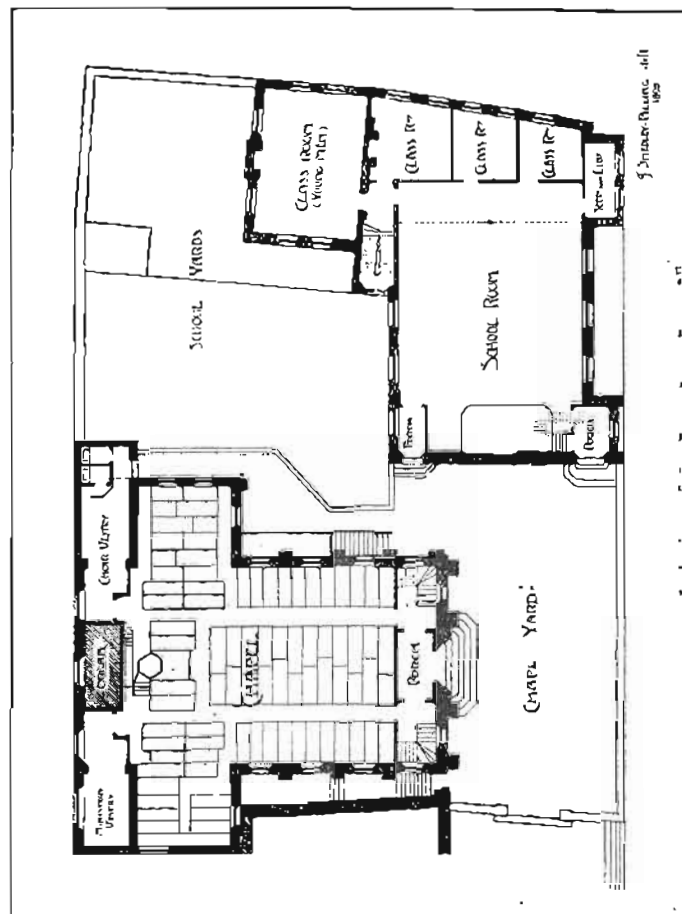
Appleyard, Miss	Bolton.	Broughton, William	Bolton.
Armour, Mrs.	,,	Broughton, Mrs. W.	,,
Armour, Robert	,,	Broughton, Percy	,,
Atherton, Edwin	,,	Broughton, Miss Emily	,,
Bamber, Richard	,,	Broughton, Mrs. Henry	,,
Barlow, Mrs.	,,	Broughton, T. H.	,,
Barrow, Mrs.	,,	Broughton, Miss C.	,,
Barrow, Miss	,,	Broughton, J. R.	,,
Battersby, Miss	,,	Broughton, Herbert	,,
Battersby, J. T.	,,	Broughton, John	,,
Battersby, F. W.	,,	Broughton, Alfred	,,
Bennett, John	,,	Broughton, James, Pendleton.	
Bennett, Mrs.	,,	Broughton, Mrs. James	,,
Bentley, Miss	Blackpool.	Burgess, Mrs.	Crumpsall.
Bentley, Robert	Bolton.	Caldwell, Harold	Bolton.
Bentley, William	,,	Carling, Miss	,,
Biggs, Mrs. T. H.	,,	Cattlow Mrs.	Moses Gate.
Birtwistle, Miss	,,	Chadderton, Joseph	Bolton.
Bottomley, Mrs.	,,	Chadderton, Mrs.	,,
Bottomley, F. W.	,,	Coe, Rev. C. C.	Bournemouth.
Bowman, Mrs.	,,	Coventry, Joseph	Liverpool.
Bradshaw, J. J.,	,,	Crankshaw, W. P.	Bolton.
Bramwell, Miss	Blackpool.	Crankshaw, Y. E.	,,
Bright, Tom	Bolton.	Crompton, Miss	,,
Bromiley, Mrs.	Thornton.	Crompton, Andrews,	Rivington.
Bromiley, James	Bolton.	Crook, Mrs.	Bolton.
Bromiley, Miss	,,	Crook, Joshua	,,
(Hall i'th' Wood)	,,	Crook, Mrs. Edward T.	,,
Bromiley, Mrs.	,,	Crook, George H.	,,
Bromiley, Miss	,,	Crook, J. Sidney	,,
(Tipping Square)	,,	Crook, Arthur T.	,,
Bromiley, Arthur	,,	Crook, Mrs. A. T.	,,
Bromley, Thomas	,,	Crook, Mrs. Henry	Swinton.

Crook, Robert	Bolton.	Greenlees, Samuel	Bolton.
Cropper, Lindsay	,,	Grindrod, Alfred	,,
Cropper, Mrs.	,,	Grindrod, Mrs. W. A.	,,
Cunliffe, Mrs.	Bowdon.		Scarborough.
Davenport, I.	Sheffield.	Hague, Edward	Halifax.
Dickinson, Miss M.	Bolton.	Hampson, J. H.	Bolton.
Dickinson, Miss A.	,,	Hardman, Miss	
Diggle, William	,,	(Waterloo St.)	,,
Dorning, William	,,	Hardman, Robert	,,
Elsom, Jos. S.	Hull.	Hardman, Fred	,,
Eutwisle, Miss	Bolton.	Hardman, George	,,
Evans, Rev. G. Eyre	Whitchurch	Hardman, John T.	,,
Farrar, Mrs.	Bolton.	Hardman, Henry	,,
Fish, Mrs.	,,	Hardman, Miss	
Flitcroft, J. T.	,,	(Astley St.)	,,
Flitcroft, Robert	,,	Hargreaves, Mrs.	,,
Flitcroft, William	,,	Hargreaves, Mrs. Edward	,,
Fox, Mrs. J.	Leeds.	Hargreaves, William	,,
Frankland, W. C.	Bolton.	Harrison, E. W.	,,
Frankland, Mrs.	,,	Hart, Frank	,,
Frankland, Miss A. B.	,,	Hart, Miss	,,
Frankland, Miss E. M.	,,	Hart, James	,,
Freeston, Rev. F. K.	London.	Harwood, Mrs.	Bournemouth.
Garstang, Mrs.	Bolton.	Harwood, John	Bolton.
Gass, George P.	,,	Harwood, Mrs.	,,
Gass, John B.	,,	Harwood, Miss	,,
Gerrard, Miss	Bury.	Harwood, Rev. Jas.	London.
Gerrard, Miles	Bolton.	Harwood, Thomas	Bolton.
Gerrard, Mrs.	,,	Haselden, Miss	,,
Gerrard, William	,,	Haselden, Miss Emily	
Gerrard, Miles, junr.	,,		Horsham.
Gerrard, James	,,	Haselden, Mrs.	Bolton.
Gerrey, Henry	,,	Haselden, Miss E. M.	,,
Green, John	,,	Haslam, Mrs.	,,
Greenhalgh, Geo.,	Moses Gate.	Haslam, William	,,
Greenlees, Mrs.	Bolton.	Haslam, Mrs. W.	,,

Haslam, Miss	Bolton.	Hope, Joseph	Moses Gate.
Haslam, R. H.	"	Hutchinson, William	Bolton.
Haslam, J. Percival	"	Hutchinson, Miss	"
Haslam, Miss E. C.	"	Hutchinson, Wm. G.	"
Haslam, Algernon H. C.	"	Hutchinson, Thomas	"
Healey, Miss	"	Hutchinson, Henry	"
(Doffcocker)	"	Jackson, Miss A.	"
Healey, Miss	"	Jackson, W. M.	"
(Vernon St.)	"	Jackson, A. B.	"
Healey, Miss S.	"	Jones, J. E.	"
Healey, Miss A.	"	Jones, W. C.	"
Healey, Thomas	"	Kay, Nathan S.	"
Hensor, Charles	"	Kay, Miss B. A.	"
Hensor, Miss E.	"	Kay, James	"
Hensor, John	"	Kay, T. G.	"
Hensor, Fred	"	Kay, W. H.	"
Hensor, Richard	"	Kay, H. A.	London.
Hesford, W. H.	Southport.	Kennett, H. E.	Bolton.
Hesford, Mrs. James	Bolton.	Kenyon, Mrs.	"
Hesford, Miss M. A.	"	Kenyon, Miss K.	"
Hesford, Miss F.	"	Kenyon, C. W.	"
Heywood, Mrs.	"	Kirkham, Mrs.	"
Heywood, John	"	Kirkham, John	"
Heywood, Mrs. John	"	Kirkham, William	"
Higgin, William H.	"	(Chorley New Road)	"
Higgin, Mrs.	"	Kirkham, Mrs. William	"
Higginson, Mrs.	"	Kirkham, Arthur	"
Higginson, Miss	"	Kirkham, William	"
Higginson, John W.	"	(Chorley Old Road)	"
Higginson, Richard	"	Knowles, Henry	"
Hill, Ralph P.	"	Lancaster, J.	Blackpool.
Hill, John	"	Laws, Mrs.	Weymouth.
Hodgetts, G. R.	"	Lawson, John	Bolton.
Holme, Miss	"	Lawson, Mrs.	"
Holt, Miss	"	Lawson, Reuben	"
Hope, Miss	Moses Gate.	Lee, Miss	"

Lewis, Fred	Bolton.	Pilling, Henry	Manchester.
Liddell, Mrs.	Huddersfield.	Pilling, Charles	Bolton.
Lomax, George	Bolton.	Pilling, Alfred	"
Lomax, James	"	Pilling, James	"
Lunn, Mrs.	Moscow.	(Rishton Lane)	"
Macfee, John	Bolton.	Probert, James	"
Makin, John	"	Probert, Joseph	"
Malcolm, Henry	"	Ramsden, D. K.	"
Mangnall, Thomas	"	Ramsden, Mrs.	"
Marsb, Mrs.	"	Ramsden, Miss Mary	"
Marsh, Henry	"	Ramsden, T. K.	"
Marsh, T. R.	"	Ramsden, Mrs. T. K.	"
Marsh, B. H.	"	Ramsden, W. K.	"
Mather, Walter	"	Ramsden, Fred	"
Mather, James	"	Ramsden, John	"
Mather, Charles	"	Ridings, Mrs.	"
McMurtrey, H. C.	"	Rigby, William	Stoneclough.
Midgley, W. W.	"	Rigby, Miss	"
Midgley, Miss S.	"	Rigby, Joseph	Bolton.
Naylor, Misses	"	Rigby, Mrs. Joseph	"
Naylor, Walter	"	Rigby, Misses	"
Naylor, Mrs.	"	Rigby, Thomas	Blackburn.
Naylor, Henry	"	Roscoe, James	Bolton.
Nicholson, Charles	"	Rothera, Mrs.	"
Odgers, Rev. J. Collins	Bury.	Rothwell, Miss	"
Ormrod, Joseph, jun.	Bolton.	Rothwell, Miss M. R.	"
Ormrod, Mrs.	"	Russell, William	"
Ormrod, Alexander L.	"	Rutter, R. S.	"
Ormrod, Miss	"	Rutter, Samuel	"
Orrell, George	"	Salter, Miss	Colwyn Bay.
Perry, George	"	Scholes, Charles	Manchester.
Pickering, Thomas	"	Scott, J. W.	Bolton.
Piggott, A. E.	Manchester.	Scott, S. H.	"
Pilling, Miss	Bolton.	Shepherd, Mrs.	"
Pilling, Joseph	"	Sidlow, Joseph	"
Pilling, James	"	Simpson, J. T.	"
(Mayfield Avenue)	"		

Simpson, Walter	Bolton.	Thistlethwaite, Joseph,	Bolton.
Smith, Mrs.	„	Thomasson, J. P.	„
Storie, G. B.	Pendleton.	Thompson, Miss	„
Street, Rev. C. J.	Bolton.	Thornley, James	„
Street, Mrs.	„	Tong, Miss	Landport.
Swift, Mrs.	Manchester.	Uttley, Mrs.	Bolton.
Taylor, Mrs.		Vose, Miss	„
(The Glen)	Bolton.	Waddington, Mrs. H.	„
Taylor, Miss „	„	Wadsworth, Joseph	„
Taylor, J. Percy	„	Walker, James	„
Taylor, Edgar M.	„	Ward, Miss	„
Taylor, Frank	„	Whalley, Walter	„
Taylor, William	„	Whalley, Mrs.	„
Taylor, Mrs. William	„	Wild, Mrs.	„
Taylor, Miss F. B.	„	Winder, Thos. H.	„
Taylor, Miss Editha	„	Winterburn, Mrs.	„
Taylor, Oswald	„	Winward, Mrs.	„
Taylor, Miss Rebecca	„	Woodhead, J. W.	„
Taylor, Miss E.	„	Woodhead, Mrs.	„
Taylor, Miss Violet	„	Woodhead, T.	„
Taylor, Mrs. (Kent St.)	„	Worthington, A. H.	Manchester.
Taylor, Fred	„	Worthington, Rev. J.	Taunton.
Thistlethwaite, T.	Southport.	Wrigley, Miss N.	Bolton.



Ground Plan of the New Chapel and Schools.