

there for seven years at least. In 1671 he was ardent enough to preach on London Bridge, prominent enough to be thrown into the Tower, military enough to excite the intercession of Colonel Blood. He now proves to have given the bent to the Baptists on and near the Usk, which resulted in the Millmans holding by the Seventh-day, and attracted a Stennett to the district.

While we have to thank Mr. Thomas Richards for the new light on General Baptist and Seventh-day Baptist origins in Wales, it ought to be said that his work has no narrow scope, but is a thorough and wide study of the whole movement in the Principality which began its conversion from Papal ignorance, till it became ultimately the stronghold of the Free Churches.

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## London Preaching about 1674.

THE Puritans took their preaching very seriously. As the universities trained men to debate rather than to preach, gatherings were instituted in many counties, when young ministers received weekly criticism, much on the lines of a college sermon class-to-day. Lancashire was specially favoured by Queen Elizabeth, who allowed the Bishop of Chester to organize these throughout the county. What instructions the ministers received as to length of sermon is not on record; but it is well known that the parishioners in many places defended themselves by putting up an hour-glass, which dribbled out its contents in sight of all. One minister was bold enough to invite his congregation to take a second glass, but this is the exception which proves that the rule was to the contrary. In those days there were no golf-courses or charrs-à-banc or newspapers advocating Sunday trains, and a favourite pastime for Sunday afternoon or evening in Puritan homes was for the children to recount the morning sermon. In a few cases the elders entered up the result of the family memories, and such sermon books give many valuable peeps into the religious life of the time. One such book, kept by the Hartopps of Newington, was recently analyzed in the *Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society*. Another has come into the keeping of Mr. E. Williams, of Hove, who has lent it for study. It is a pocket octavo of twelve sheets, bound in vellum, filled with minute writing.

A great many sermons have no name attached, which suggests a regular pastorate. The names of about fifteen ministers are recorded, and most appear to be nonconformists of the time of Charles II.: Baines, Carr, and Ward predominate. The last seems to be the man ejected from Stapleford Tawney; not Nathaniel, who died at Shenfield 1653. Carr can hardly be Gamaliel of Aldham and Lambourne, who died 1662; it may be Nathaniel Carr of Ardley, or the incumbent of Boxted. Bethell, Goade, Rider, Rook, Skipworth have not left any conspicuous trace, but we find apparently Daniel Williams, Obadiah Hughes, Jeremiah Baines, and Nehemiah Cox to represent the Old Testament, Matthew Mead, Joseph Osborn, Philip Lamb, and Thomas Hardcastle for the New. As three of these men ministered in Horsleydown, Clapham, Peckham, and nearly all were in London about 1674, we may have some closer idea of time and place.

All the reports are drawn up in a way that reminds us of Ian Maclaren's sermon-taster, who ranged her heads mentally by the shelves of her dresser, the sub-heads on the plates there displayed in order. They are mostly brief sentences, numbered and labelled as Argument, Objection, Answer, Doctrine, Exhortation: just in the atomistic style suggested by numbered chapters and numbered verses rather than a flowing discourse. Whatever disadvantages attach to the plan, at least this particular hearer obtained an astonishing amount of argument and doctrine, and was manifestly trained to orderly thinking. An illustration may be welcome to show by what fare the Puritans profited. We choose much the shortest, anonymous, perhaps only a week-evening address by the pastor: the contractions are expanded, punctuation and spelling modernized.

Acts xvi. 30. *And brought them out, &c.* The words contain in them a weighty question propounded by the trembling jailor, occasioned by a miracle which the Lord wrought for His eminent servants, Paul and Silas.

Doctrine. That it is the main concernment, and ought to be the continual care of every child of God, diligently to enquire, How he may be saved.

Reason I. Because of the hardness and difficulty here: for though all expect and look for heaven and promise themselves as good a title as the most exact and circumspect walk, but 1 Peter 4, 13. certainly not before God Hab. 1, 13. not before Christ II Thes. 1, 7. not even before men Matthew 7, 13, 14; 16, 24; I Cor. 6, 9, 10.

Reason 2. Because all other questions unless they may be reduced hereunto are altogether unprofitable and vaine, Psalm 4, Psalm 15, 1. This is a necessary question, Psalm 24, 3.

Now if God's holiness be such that the righteous, though

their sins be pardoned, can scarcely be saved because of their sins, then certainly the wicked whose sins are not pardoned shall certainly be damned.

If they who are God's children, his jewels, &c.—Then certainly those who are his open enemies.

Were there no difference betwixt the godly and the wicked &c. But there is a vast difference and disproportion betwixt the godly and the wicked in view of their spiritual condition.

1. The wicked need these helps.

2. Those obstructions which the godly have which render their salvation difficult.

1. The godly were converted, they were regenerated. Now by virtue of this they are exalted to know God; but yet for all this they shall scarcely be saved, and through fire.

2. The godly have the effectual & powerful aid of God's spirit; they are made partakers of the divine nature, which is as sure a forerunner of glory as the day-star is of the rising of the sun. But those that are wicked, that are strangers to the Holy Spirit—the spirit of worldliness and uncleanness and pride &c., they are forgetful, not having the Spirit.

3. The godly are able to pray in an acceptable manner.

4. They have the promises of God.

5. They have a lively faith.