

Chamberlen's First-Day Church.

Mr. Champlin Burrage contributes an article to this number which will be found of considerable interest and importance. Contemporary records of early Separatist churches are rare; we have already presented sketches of Porton and Bromsgrove, of Jessey's church and of Stephen More's; to these may now be added the voluminous papers of Dr. Chamberlen's. Dr. Thirtle has given us a study of the man, and has obtained further information as to the latter history of the church, with which he will deal at length. In these notes we confine ourselves to other matters raised by the records, emphasising the unexpected fact that at this period the church was not seventh-day. We propose also to show the entanglement of the seventh-day movement and the Fifth-Monarchy, especially in Baptist circles about 1656-7, and to rectify Dr. Underhill's dating of the Hexham letters in his "Fenstanton Records"; but these matters need to be treated separately in another issue.

John More, First Overseer.

The church had existed at least fifteen months when Chamberlen came to the front. Its leading spirits were using freely the liberty of the press, and we can see what were the topics interesting them. John More had advanced from evangelism to the doctrine of Laying on of Hands, and was about to issue a tract on the Two Little Horns; Apocalyptic was evidently likely to involve him with the men of the Fifth-Monarchy. A comparison with Toldervy's account of the house where he and More lived, shows that a highly hysterical state of fanaticism prevailed there.

Naudin and French Presbyterianism.

A very different element was represented by Theodore Naudin. He had been engaging in discussion with a Reformed Minister at Paris, and brought to this society all the pre-suppositions of French Calvinism, including its sanity and its strong insistence on the Eldership as a means of maintaining order. To this extent there was some sympathy with the plan of the Genevan Bible-notes, so popular with Scotch and English Puritans, and recently legalized by the Long Parliament. These had had their effect in Separatist circles, and the scandals that arose from the perpetual disciplining, are called to mind by Mr. Burrage in the title that he gives to his article. The churches

seemed to meet more for quarrelling than for worship; gossip, family life, women's dress, pastor's sermons—all are called into question and debated, till some one or other is "humbled" and compelled to apologize. The English Separatists at Amsterdam had had a further debate whether such matters were to be dealt with by Elders or by the whole church. Now Naudin to this Baptist circle contributed stress on the Elders.

The General Baptist Element.

If, however, Calvin's influence touched this little company here, we see three distinct points of contact with the school of thought initiated by John Smyth. The women here desired to take an equal part in worship; one or two lampoons tell us that this was specially common among the General Baptists, Mistress Attaway being a favourite butt. Then we find that two members had quitted this society to join Samuel Loveday, and (according to Mr. Burrage's very probable restoration) Edward Barber, each of them a General Baptist leader. John Spittlehouse, moreover, was engaged in a printed debate with Samuel Oates the great evangelist, because Oates would not practise the Laying on of Hands for all believers.

One Secession Already.

Under the guidance of More, there had already been a division, not quite hopeless, for the parent church made a record of the ten men and sixteen women who had separated. None of them made much of a mark. Thomas Roswell in 1656 issued a public reply to thirty queries propounded by the Quakers. Francis Wilcocks in 1659-60 joined with the principal London General Baptists in a declaration to the restored Long Parliament, protesting against renewed Presbyterian persecution, and disclaiming all wish to dictate in politics. These people then were evidently of the General Baptist type rather than the Calvinistic; but if, as Mr. Burrage thinks, they had separated for some "Heresie," we cannot safely judge the attitude of the parent body on this point. It is rather singular that Roswell was at a business meeting as late as Tuesday, 21st February, 1653-4.

Enter Dr. Chamberlen.

To a church with such interests, came a recruit of very different social standing, evidently drawn partly by his compatriot Naudin. Chamberlen was a man of 52, M.D., F.R.C.S., physician in ordinary to James, Charles, and their wives. In social matters he had thought and written; midwives' baths, taxation, had occupied his attention, as Dr. Thirtle has shown. In constitutional politics he had distinct views, had published, had sent a letter to Cromwell. Now when a man of prominent civil position turns to identify himself with church life, he often produces an extraordinary effect in the circle he enters; so Cyprian, Cornelius, and Ambrose had quite revolutionized the churches at Carthage, Rome, and Milan. Chamberlen had already put himself on record as a Baptist, and as upholding lay-preaching. In both

these points he had offended Arise Evans, and Mr. Burrage's quotation implies that Evans and Chamberlen were both in contact with this particular church. At Christmas, 1653, he comes to the front. By April he has quarrelled with all the old leaders, and the story suggests to Mr. Burrage the imminent dissolution of the whole society; though we must not forget the signatures of this church in September, 1654, reproduced already by Dr. Thirtle. To him we leave the later history, with the note that John More turned away from this church, and signed the same Fifth-Monarchy manifesto as member of the church with Hanserd Knowles.

Members in Ireland.

The army of occupation, settled down in many parts on the soil, included not a few Baptists. But of any at Wexford and Enniscorthy we knew little before. Our chief source was a copy of a letter sent on 24 July, 1653, from London to Wales, enclosed with a call to visitation. This was forwarded to Rippon, and appended to the last volume of his Register. Enniscorthy is not mentioned, but as to Wexford the entry runs: "And a people lately gathered by brother [Christopher] Blackwood, with whom are the brethren Tomlins, Hussey, Neale, Biggs, &c. who have not much help among themselves, but are sometimes visited by Waterford friends." All of these were presumably Calvinists. When we compare the list on this church-roll, Eyre, Walker, Deakin, Worfack, Haddock, we see no point of contact. We have had previous occasion to remark on the rapidity of change in these times; this was the more natural in Ireland since the members were nearly all soldiers, moved about freely. William Deakin was evidently no loss to the church, as he was capable of repudiating his wife: compare Mr. Burrage's note on the case of sister Hownsell, and observe that the Baptist practice of civil marriage was legalized in 1653 by the Nominated Parliament.