

THE BAPTISTS OF YORKSHIRE



SUTTON-IN-CRAVEN.

The Baptists of Yorkshire

Being the Centenary Memorial Volume
of the Yorkshire Baptist Association



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“The Church of Christ is a company of the faithful, baptized after confession of faith and of sins, which is endowed with the power of Christ.”

—JOHN SMYTH, 1610.

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TO THE READER.

The publication of this volume commemorates the centenary of the Yorkshire Baptist Association. At the annual assembly of the Association, in 1908, the Rev. John Haslam, D.D., proposed that the occasion should have its memorials in a "Centenary Fund" and in the publication of a "Memorial Volume." Dr. Haslam successfully undertook the accomplishment of his first suggestion, and a sum of more than £1000 has been placed in trust for denominational loan purposes. The completion of the second proposal is now before the reader.

The Committee appointed to prepare the volume requested Professor H. Wheeler Robinson, M.A., to contribute an article on "Baptist Principles before the rise of Baptist Churches." The result is an essay which will be of permanent educative value to the Churches.

Principal W. E. Blomfield, B.A., B.D., was asked to continue with a historical sketch of "The Baptist Churches of Yorkshire in the 17th and 18th centuries." The article under that title has demanded much patient investigation, and presents a succinct record of the origins of those early Churches, which, in a most humble and primitive environment, first testified to our faith, and hope, and love.

To Dr. Haslam—who of all our brethren is most familiar with the rise and progress of the Association—was entrusted the task of preparing the history of its hundred years. This duty has been to Dr. Haslam a labour of love, and has enabled him to revive the memories of many who, no longer in our earthly company, were in past days devoted to the service of Christ and His Church.

It was further decided to include a brief account of each Baptist cause now federated with the Association. The writers to whom this undertaking was assigned realised at once its pleasure and its difficulty. They desire to ameliorate the gentle criticism to which it may be exposed, by reminding the reader of the limitations of space to which they were necessarily subjected.

The Rev. Henry Dowson wrote an account of the associated Churches of the West Riding, in 1842, at which time the Association was represented by four Districts, with forty-two Churches and a total membership of 4717. In 1843, Dr. Evans wrote the history of the Churches of the East and North Ridings Association, which then numbered fourteen Churches with a membership of 1373.

To-day, we review seven Districts, with a total of 142 Churches, and 22,939 members. Nearly twenty Churches still remain outside the Association, and, therefore, are omitted from this volume.

From the historical accounts which have been furnished by the Secretaries of the Churches it has been necessary reluctantly to omit many interesting incidents. Not a few pages recorded the faithful service of men and women who have been as pillars in the temple of our God, but whose story would require a volume far beyond the possible

limits of the present work. All that our writers could hope to do was to submit a brief chronicle of each Baptist cause, and put within reach of the reader some knowledge, however slight, of every associated Church of our faith and order in Yorkshire.

The one hundred and seventy illustrations comprise a photograph of nearly every chapel, with pictures of ancient documents and properties. This will greatly enhance the interest of the memorial.

The contributors have completed their tasks with a deepened sense of love for their Denomination, and of gratitude to God who has so graciously guarded the dawning life of our early communities. The greater number found their nativity in cottages, barns, small upper-rooms, or hired school-houses, from whence they have emerged, by the patient loyalty and self-sacrificing faith of their people, into their present enlarged positions of testimony and service.

May the mantle of their faithfulness fall upon the Churches of to-day, and upon the readers of this memorial volume.

C. E. SHIPLEY,

General Editor.

37 STEADE ROAD, SHEFFIELD.

The Editor cordially thanks the Secretaries of the Churches for their valued assistance.

He is also indebted to Mr. H. E. Illingworth, of Harrogate, and to Mr. Louis Eberlin, of Sheffield, for help in photographic work.

**BAPTIST PRINCIPLES BEFORE THE RISE
OF BAPTIST CHURCHES.**

BY

Professor H. WHEELER ROBINSON.

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“The great object,” said one of the most distinguished students of history in the last generation, “in trying to understand history, political, religious, literary, or scientific, is to get behind men, and to grasp ideas.”* That is the aim of these earlier pages. Other chapters of this book will show the work of the men of the past, and its issue in the Baptist Churches of to-day. But we do not know these men until we realise their convictions, and penetrate to the permanent principles of thought and conduct underlying those convictions. There is the more need to do this, because a Baptist Church, by its presentation of Believers’ Baptism, claims more emphatically than any other to be built up of convinced men. This ideal it stands for, and offers as its characteristic contribution to the religious life of the world. As members of a Baptist Church, therefore, even more than of any other, we ought to grasp the ideas that justify its existence, chief amongst which is the necessity of personal conviction in religious life.

Baptists are sometimes regarded as Congregationalists plus a harmless eccentricity. There is a certain plausibility in this attitude towards Believers’ Baptism, because the earliest Baptist Churches of England had their origin in the “Congregationalism” of the day, and because the mode of Church government remains the same for these two divisions

* Lord Acton, *Letters*, p. 6.

of the Church Universal. Yet there is a real difference in their tone and temper, not to be ignored by those who have any inner familiarity with both, and often impressing the impartial observer. Here are two examples of the impression made :—“The strong effort made to maintain unity of doctrine is an essential characteristic of the Baptist, as compared with the Congregationalist position, and throughout the whole body the teaching is very definite the Baptist community is virile beyond any other Christian body the Baptist Churches are a great spiritual force in London; and the religious influence they exert is very deep compared with that of the Congregationalists it is far more intense.”* By the side of this opinion of a social observer of to-day, we may place that of a well-known historian, with his eye turned on the origin of the two denominations :—“The weakness of Congregationalism lay in the fact that it was too purely a protest. The more logical and consistent system of the Anabaptists [*i.e.*, English Baptists] contained all that the Congregationalists strove for, and went further The aim of the Baptists is higher than that of the Congregationalists, who discarded the idea of a visible Church that they might affirm the rights of separate congregations. The Baptists, on the other hand, affirmed the right of freedom from outward control not as an object in itself, but as a condition necessary for the discharge of their duty to create a visible Church of perfect purity.”† These words are quoted, not to minister to Baptist self-complacency, but to rebuke that cheap and tasteless witticism which sometimes describes the difference between the sister denominations as one of little or much water. The difference is a real one, whatever we may think of its value. But, granting its existence, the cause can lie only in that assertion of Believers' Baptism, which characterises Baptists.

* Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*. Third Series. Vol. vii., pp. 121-128.

† Creighton, *Historical Lectures and Addresses*, pp. 54, 64. I am indebted to Dr. Whitley for this reference, and for suggestions as to some other points in this chapter.

It is sometimes urged, even by those who are in general sympathy with the ideas for which Baptists stand, that this emphasis is both unspiritual and unnecessary.* It is said to be unspiritual because it lays stress on an external act, whereas the essence of Nonconformity is "the spirit which exalts life above organisation."† We might fairly answer that the name we bear, which does throw an external rite into prominence, was first given us by others (*i.e.*, in the form "Anabaptist"), and not chosen by ourselves, any more than the name "Quaker" or "Methodist." Moreover, this criticism should properly come from those only who have discarded the external rite of baptism in *any* form (*e.g.*, the Society of Friends), and not from those who retain it in a mode and meaning for which no New Testament basis can be found. But we can answer from a higher level when we have once grasped the idea which underlies this rite and justifies its continuance, the idea of a spiritual change wrought in human nature by the Spirit of God in Christ. The New Testament describes this change as a "new birth," *i.e.*, a new beginning of life.‡ But it is not like natural birth, an event of which the new life is itself unconscious; it is not wrought against a man's will, but with it, and that surrender of the will is called "faith."§ Both aspects of this experience find expression in Believers' Baptism, which implies both a profession of faith and a change of heart. This is the meaning of baptism to a Baptist; he values the external rite just as far as it means this, and no further. To emphasise Believers' Baptism is to emphasise *this*; how, then, can it be called an unspiritual emphasis, if the spiritual is to be allowed to find expression in material signs at all? The same answer really meets the second part of the criticism, *i.e.*, that the testimony of separate Baptist Churches to such spiritual truths is unnecessary. If these truths are important—and surely they are of paramount importance in the Gospel of

* *E.g.*, by Clark, *History of English Nonconformity*, pp. 302f.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

‡ John iii. 3f.; cf. Gal. vi. 15.

§ John i. 12, vii. 17; cf. I. Ep. John v. 1: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God."

the New Testament—the clearest testimony to them is also necessary. Members of other Christian Churches may, and often do, hold Baptist convictions as earnestly as do members of Baptist Churches. But individual conviction on the part of some does not make unnecessary collective witness towards all. Both criticisms, in fact, spring from the idea that baptism is, after all, a little thing. But it is not a little thing in its spiritual meaning to the Baptist, any more than it is a little thing in its sacramental meaning to the Anglican. It is a little thing only to those who have first made it little.

The Baptist Churches, therefore, claim to exist as the representatives of a still living idea, of fundamental importance in Christian life. If they lose it themselves, they become its melancholy monument; if they keep it, it will keep them. Here we shall review: (1) the principles implied in the Believers' Baptism of the New Testament; (2) the process by which it came to be abandoned by the Church; (3) the witness of history to these principles apart from Believers' Baptism; (4) the return to Believers' Baptism, culminating in the Baptist Churches of to-day.

I.—THE PRINCIPLES IMPLIED IN BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

The curious spectator of the distinctive rite of a Baptist Church, who knows nothing of the history of Believers' Baptism, usually regards it as a peculiar and unattractive innovation on Christian use and wont. He wonders why the highly inconvenient practice of immersion has replaced the aspersion or sprinkling with which he is probably familiar; he may also notice that more or less grown-up people are being immersed, and may ask why children are excluded from the supposed benefits of the rite. Tell him that what he has seen is no innovation, but a simple return to primitive Christian custom, and let him convince himself by enquiry

that this is the case, and he is likely to swing to the opposite pole, and demand the reason for such narrow conservatism. He will hardly do justice to the Baptist position until his attention is turned from the obvious facts of the manner of baptism, and its limitation to the adult, that he may consider the less obvious, but more fundamental idea it incorporates. Conservatism is an essential condition of progress, when it conserves something of permanent value. In this sense, then, Baptists are conservative; their denominational name means that they retain a New Testament rite in its New Testament meaning; their principles gather round it as their sole and adequate confession of faith. If they are asked what they understand to be the New Testament meaning of this rite, the answer can be put into a sentence. *The baptism of the New Testament is the immersion of intelligent persons, as the expressive accompaniment of their entrance into a new life of moral and spiritual relationship to God in Christ.*

There is nothing peculiar to Christianity in baptism; it is a custom found amongst many peoples, with whom the solemn washing of the body, as a religious ceremony, is believed to purify the soul from evil.* It is more than a symbol, for it is held to have a mysterious potency in its own right. Something of this we may see in the "washings" of the Old Testament, such as the cleansing of Naaman, or the purification of the priest.† In New Testament times, baptism was familiar enough to Judaism, as one of the three requirements from the proselyte, the others being circumcision, and the offering of a sacrifice.‡ This baptism was a cleansing from the stains of heathenism, and a consecration of the new member of the chosen people. It was certainly not designed for infants, since instruction preceded it. The candidate immersed himself, after being addressed by the Rabbis, whilst standing in the water. It was per-

* Examples of such baptisms, infant and adult, are given in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. ii., pp. 367f.

† II. Kings v. 14, cf. Lev. xiv. 8; Ex. xxix. 4.

‡ Baptism, it should be noted, did *not* replace circumcision, as has often been argued, since circumcision was required in addition to it.

fectly natural, therefore, that John, who came to be known as "the baptiser," should borrow an existent and familiar religious practice, and adapt it to his own needs. But, in borrowing it, he gave it a new meaning, and transformed it into something it had never been before. It had been a ceremonial purification; he made it the pledge of a moral conversion, the utterance of a new purpose. The moral earnestness of John made baptism itself moral, and prepared for the yet fuller meaning it was to have for the disciples of Christ. When He came forward, He was first baptised with John's baptism, and proclaimed John's message, as though to remind us that, whatever else Christian baptism may mean, it means something profoundly moral.* The disciples Jesus made outside the circle of those who had been baptised by John were themselves baptised, with His approval, if not by His hands, and the risen Lord was believed to have appointed baptism as the manner of entrance into the new faith for all men.† What, then, was the interpretation put upon the ceremony by those who were so baptised?

Baptism in the New Testament is so identified with the new experience it initiates that it is difficult to summarise its meaning without describing that experience itself. As Dr. Denney has said, "both the Sacraments are forms into which we may put as much of the gospel as they will carry; and St. Paul, for his part, practically puts the whole of his gospel into each."‡ But Christian baptism in the New Testament certainly means four great things, in the sense that these are its normal accompaniments. It implies a *cleansing from sin*: "Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name."§ It is linked to *the gift of the Holy Spirit*, the experience of those new powers which distinguish it from the baptism of John: "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptised which

* Mark i. 4, 9, 15.

† John iv. 2; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; cf. John iii. 5; Mark xvi. 16.

‡ *The Death of Christ*, p. 137 (ed. 1).

§ Acts xxii. 16; cf. I. Pet. iii. 21; I. Cor. vi. 11; Eph. v. 26; Heb. x. 22, 23.

have received the Holy Ghost as well as we ? ”* It is administered to believers, and there is no evidence† in the New Testament that it was ever administered to any but believers : “ Repent ye and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”‡ For Paul, at any rate, it meant an *experiential union with Christ* in His redeeming acts, deeper in meaning than words can express : “ We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.”§ If it is asked just what the outer act of baptism contributed to these inner experiences of forgiveness, regeneration, faith, and fellowship with Christ, we must reply that *the New Testament never considers them apart* in this detached manner. The baptism of which it speaks is no formal act, but a genuine experience ; on the other hand, the New Testament knows nothing of unbaptised believers. It is only when later generations separate the outer act from the inner experience that it is possible to press the words of the New Testament into the service of sacramentarianism on the one hand, or of the entire rejection of sacraments on the other. We shall see that the later history of baptism is, in large measure, the history of this separation. It became possible to administer baptism to unintelligent recipients only through the transference of emphasis from the moral and spiritual to the sacramental side of the rite.

If justice is to be done to the Baptist position, a clear distinction must be drawn between the principle that believers only should be baptised, and the practice (which usually accompanies it at the present time) of baptism by immersion. Both the principle and the practice can appeal

* Acts x. 47 ; cf. viii. 16, 17, xi. 15, 16, xix. 1-7 ; Titus iii. 5 ; I. Cor. xii. 13.

† Occasional allegations to the contrary spring from faulty exegesis (“ the holiness of believers’ children,” I. Cor. vii. 14) or the “ argument from silence ” (“ household,” Acts xvi. 33), or failure to see the real point at issue (little children blessed, Mark x. 13-16). On these, see Rooke, *The Doctrine and History of Christian Baptism*, pp. 30-44.

‡ Acts ii. 38 ; cf. viii. 12, 36, ix. 17, 18, xvi. 31-34 ; Gal. iii. 26, 27.

§ Romans vi. 4 ; cf. Col. ii. 12 ; Eph. iv. 4-6.

to the New Testament for their justification. There may be perfectly valid reasons for retaining the New Testament mode of baptism. But to equate the practice with the principle would be to stultify the principle itself, which emphasises the inner essential of faith, and declares that without it all external ceremonies are valueless. Baptists are sometimes called ritualists by those who have failed to grasp this principle, their eye being caught by the external act alone. Baptists would deserve the name if they asserted that the mere outward form of a ceremony could be comparable in value or importance with its spiritual conditions. Whatever value or importance can be claimed for the practice of immersion must be due to its ministry to spiritual truth, ranging from the duty of simple obedience to the authority of the New Testament, up to emphasis on the evangelical experiences which are symbolically declared by immersion. The essential principle of *Believers'* Baptism does not stand or fall with the form which that baptism may take, however inexpedient or unjustifiable it may seem to us to abandon the New Testament practice. As a matter of history, the return to *Believers'* Baptism in Switzerland in the sixteenth century and in England in the seventeenth, as will be shown later on, was *not* accompanied in the first instance by a return to the practice of immersion. If those to whom we owe the origin of Baptist Churches in this country are not to be refused the name " Baptist ", then neither could we refuse that name to those who might feel justified in administering baptism to believers only, by affusion or aspersion.

If *Believers'* Baptism (considered apart from the particular mode of administration) be really central and fundamental enough to justify the existence of a distinct denomination to urge its claims, we ought to be able to show that great and permanent principles are implied in it. What, then, are the principles which logically follow from the acceptance of *Believers'* Baptism? The answer to this question is not, of course a statement of the whole outlook, the entire body of convictions and doctrines belonging to Baptists in this, or in any other generation. It is rather a

summary of the truths which must be regarded as essential to the Baptist position, the permanent principles which run on from one generation to another, and gather around them varying expansions or applications suggested or required by the varying circumstances of each successive age. But it must not be supposed that, in claiming these principles as vital to Baptist faith and testimony, Baptists claim any monopoly of them. Just because they are essential principles of the Christian religion, and of cardinal importance to its fullest operation, they will be found at work in many Churches, even alongside other principles or practices which seem to Baptists to be inconsistent with them. All that the Baptist has the right to claim is that his emphasis on Believers' Baptism is the best guarantee that these truths shall be recognised. In fact, his denominational position ultimately stands or falls with this contention.

In the first place, Believers' Baptism emphasises, as no other interpretation of the rite can ever do, the significance, the necessity, and the individuality of *conversion*. If baptism be the accepted and generally recognized mode of entrance into the visible Church, as it is, in some sense or other, for all the Churches which practise it, then to confine it to believers is to assert in the plainest and most unmistakable way that personal faith is the most essential element in religion. But personal faith implies that victory of truth over the whole human personality, in thought and feeling and will, which we call conviction. The Christian Gospel rises so far above the purely natural instincts in its demands, and is so far-reaching in its consequences when it becomes a personal conviction, that we are justified in speaking of a changed nature, a new heart, a surrendered will. It is this change of attitude which is meant by the term "conversion"; it is the significance of this inner change, as the beginning of the Christian life, which is declared by the outer ceremony of Believers' Baptism, in accordance with its original meaning.*

* Cf. Gwatkin, *Early Church History*, vol. i., p. 247: "The primary significance of the rite in early times was confession before men"; Deissmann, *Paulus*, p. 89; "Baptism [for Paul] does not produce fellowship with Christ, but sets the seal upon it."

The change of character which is thus signified by Believers' Baptism can hardly be called a little thing by those who are willing to grant its possibility. A man who is converted in the New Testament sense is one who has surrendered to forces immeasurably greater than anything he has of himself; one who has awakened to the overwhelming consciousness of a spiritual world brought to a focus before him in the Person of Christ; one who finds the little bay of his individual life, with all its little pebbles, and little shells, and little weeds, flooded by the tide of a great deep over which the very Spirit of God broods. The converted man, as has been said, is the convinced man, and to be convinced means literally to be conquered. The man thus conquered by the Spirit of God becomes, to the measure of his conviction, a lever by which human life is lifted. Convictions are the key to history; its chapters might draw their titles from the convictions of the world's great men. At each cross-road someone has arisen, having for his chief equipment not birth nor wealth, not intellect nor influence, but a conviction. Convictions lie at the back of life, and down among its roots. They have built our hospitals and churches, have framed systems of philosophy and the constitutions of states, have struggled for adequate expression in art and literature, have sent Columbus westwards and Carey eastwards. A conviction, when it is not a mere borrowed opinion, flaunting in the disguise of that which it dishonours, when it is not mere stubborn prejudice, buttressed by ignorance—a conviction meriting the name is worthy of all reverence, for from it, and from the heart that is possessed by it, flow the issues of life. There has been no conviction in history more stupendous in its consequences, more daring in its assumptions, than that which is expressed in a confession of Christian conversion—the conviction that the unseen God has stooped from His unimaginable throne above the Universe, and has worked this miracle of grace in a human heart, changing its nature by the breath of His Spirit, and enabling it to say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Baptists cling to Believers' Baptism because

they can see no better way of recognising the supreme importance of this conviction, and of the conversion it actually works in those who are dominated by it. The criticism that Baptists are no better than other people, whether true or false, does not touch the present issue. We are concerned with the *effective* recognition of a vital truth, which many other Christians hold along with ourselves. We claim that this truth is more clearly expressed by Believers' Baptism than in any other way, and that it is obscured by the adaptation of baptism to the expression of other ideas, which were not original to it, even if some of those ideas be true in themselves.

One objection that is sometimes made to such an emphasis on conversion—that it tends to force the rich variety of Christian experience into too narrow a channel—springs from misunderstanding of what that conversion is which Believers' Baptism emphasizes. Conviction implies an individual surrender to truth, and where there is individuality there must needs be variety. Baptists have sometimes erred by requiring conformity to one type of experience in conversion, but the mistake is not peculiar to themselves. In fact the best safeguard against it lies in the clear declaration of the individuality of faith. Faith must be individual, if it is to be faith. It may begin in one truth, and radiate from that as centre, without failing to be genuine faith in its earlier stages because it is as yet incomplete, judged by normal Christian standards. One truth, it has well been said, was enough to make a prophet of the Old Testament. One truth, we may also say, makes a believer in the New. Bunyan's fine reverence for the facts of life is never seen more clearly than when he shows the humble beginnings of conversion. What Evangelist said to the Pilgrim was simply this: "Do you see yonder wicket-gate? The man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining light? He said, I think I do. Then said Evangelist, Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto, so shalt thou see the gate." And just as it is a secondary matter where you start with Christian truth, so

long as the truth is Christian, so is it of secondary importance whether conversion be "sudden" or "gradual." We may be as ignorant of the dawn of our Christian consciousness, as we all are of the dawn of personal consciousness. In fact, the more we study the psychology of conversion, the more apparent it is that such hard and fast lines as "sudden" and "gradual" imply cannot be drawn. Silent and unnoticed influences are shaping character, only to emerge, perhaps, in some overwhelming hour of intense thought and feeling; on the other hand, such hours reveal their full meaning to us only gradually. A genuine conviction is, in fact, the product of life as a whole, and not of any single one of its influences. It is built up like the coral reef beneath the visible ebb and flow of the tide, by a myriad unconsidered trifles. Many lines of preparation converge on that hour of opportunity, in which great issues are first clearly seen. Prayers have gone up from Christian homes, even at the cradle side; on those prayers, as on eagles' wings, believing hearts have risen to behold from afar the appointed hour of their child's conversion. The Sunday School has helped to bring the answer to those prayers; some friend or companion has become, even unconsciously, the ambassador of truth. The loneliness of a sundered companionship has made vital and winning the promise of a Saviour Friend; the firm grip of vicious habit by its very cruelty has provoked appeal to the Spirit's aid; remorse for the unforgotten sin has lifted on its dark wave some despairing soul, and flung it into the haven of penitence, and the calm waters of the Father's forgiving love. We do not ignore these cumulative influences when we baptise those only whom they have brought to conscious faith and open confession. We do not forget the place which little children have in the Father's heart, and our own responsibility for them to Him, because we wait until the years of adolescence have made them capable of an intelligent choice, and taught them the need of religion by the storm and stress of those very years. It is true that Baptists might well develop and systematise more thoroughly than they have yet done something cor-

responding to the early catechumenate. But this, after all, is a question of method. In principle, Believers' Baptism leaves ample room for the fullest possible recognition of the claims of the child on the Church, and for the manifold variety of Christian experience into which that child may grow. Its central assertion is that conversion is not some stile opening on By-path meadow, leading to morbid gloom, but the one gate on the King's highway, through which every traveller must pass, though at his own time, and in his own manner.

In the second place, Believers' Baptism forms a *direct* link of relation to the spiritual authority of the New Testament, and of the Lord it reveals to us. No other baptism but that of believers, as we have seen, can find a precedent in the New Testament, which means that every other type of baptism is indirectly related to it, by way of the authority of the Church, or the custom of the ages. Those who build their faith and practice on the authority of the New Testament, yet offer to the world a baptism other than that of believers, and inconsistent with its teaching, are contradicting their own position, and weakening their own testimony. Those who loyally continue the New Testament principle of Believers' Baptism are constantly thrown back upon that book for their justification. It means much in the way of education to be dealing with original documents, first-hand sources. To have the New Testament in one's hand, *as a necessary consequence of one's denominational testimony*, is the great safeguard against un-Scriptural teaching, the surest foundation for a faith that claims to continue the principles of the Reformation. This does not mean that Baptists, any more than other Christians, are committed to theories of the inspiration of Scripture which will not stand the test of enquiry. That which they are committed to maintain, by the very practice of Believers' Baptism, is the spiritual authority of Scripture, its unique and permanent worth as the spring and source of Christian faith and practice throughout the generations. That spiritual authority springs from Christ, and Believers' Baptism directly relates the believer to Christ, not simply because it is in His name (for this applies to all

forms of Christian baptism), but because here alone there is *conscious* acceptance of His authority, *personal* submission to His will, the confession of *individual* loyalty. Many consequences flow from this direct relation to Christ, which can be merely indicated. It gives the right of individual interpretation of Scripture, in the light of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. It asserts the spiritual priesthood of all believers, since nothing comes between the soul and Christ, no Church, no priest, no custom, however hoary and firmly established. It summons all believers into the apostolical succession of missionary labour, at home and abroad, for every one of them holds a direct commission from his Lord to evangelise, and is personally responsible for its fulfilment, according to the measure of his powers and opportunity. It secures the Gospel from being identified with the Law, even with the Law in the form of a creed, for it says in effect to the believer, "See, you have been brought to the feet of Christ your Lord, and nothing ought to come between your enlightened conscience and Him; work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure." Indeed, the Pauline interpretation of Christ essentially and intrinsically depends on the establishment of such a direct relation as is the ideal implied in Believers' Baptism.

Lastly, Believers' Baptism, as a result of the two principles already stated, carries with it an unmistakable definition of *the Church*, to which it is the door of entrance. The Church is a spiritual society, composed of converted men, who acknowledge the supreme Lordship of Christ. In this definition the full New Testament meaning must be given to the word "spiritual." The Church is the creation of the Spirit of God; for the Spirit is the agent in that regeneration which is the Godward side of conversion, and in the completion of the work of "the Lord the Spirit." The three great metaphors used of the Church in the New Testament all illustrate this. The Church is conceived as built up of "living stones" that it may be "a spiritual house";* it

* I. Pet. ii. 5; cf. Eph. ii. 20-22.

is a family made one in the Father by His Spirit, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God";* it is a body, animated by the one Spirit throughout its members, "dividing to each one severally even as He will."† We need not be surprised, therefore, that the New Testament so closely links the gift of the Spirit with Believers' Baptism, and indeed makes the experience of that gift the test of the rite.‡ To recognise this, as we must do if we are faithful to the New Testament, does not commit us to any theory of baptismal regeneration. There are two distinct ways of representing the operation of the Spirit of God in regard to baptism. We may think of the external act, and the material means, as the prescribed channel of the work of the Spirit, and then the result is what is commonly known as sacramentarianism. Or we may think of the internal conditions, the personal faith and conversion emphasised in Believers' Baptism, and see in them the true realm of the Spirit's activity; "the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God."§ In fact, when we speak of Believers' Baptism, we mean that baptism in the Spirit of God, of which water baptism is the expression. We can hardly exaggerate the importance of this experience as the common bond in the fellowship of New Testament Christianity. The consciousness of the presence of the Spirit of God gives to the New Testament Church a peculiar and subtle atmosphere, a transfiguration of common things in more than common light, a baptism of life and thought that makes all things new. The sense of illimitable and exhaustless vitality which impresses us as we read the New Testament is due to nothing so much as to this assurance of the immediate and ever-present activity of God. The emphasis on unseen energies gives a new value to all that relates to the Church—its sacraments, its organisation and ministry, its confession of faith, and the morality of its members. As

* Eph. iii. 15; Romans viii. 14.

† I. Cor. xii. 11, 12; cf. Eph. v. 30.

‡ *Supra*, pp. 8, 9.

§ Romans viii. 16.

there is one Lord, and one faith, so there is one baptism in the energies of that spiritual world which Christ rules, and faith enters.* The Lord's Supper is a communion of the body and blood of Christ,† but one enjoyed along the high-road of the Spirit, and not the valley path of a materialised presence. The ministry of the New Testament is, on its higher level, a ministry of gift, the service of those who can preach or teach or prophesy because of the Spirit of God given to them; even the lower ministry, the local ministry of "bishops" and deacons, is appointed by the Holy Spirit.‡ No man can make the primitive and fundamental confession of faith, "Jesus is Lord," but in the Holy Spirit.§ The Christian character is summed up in the phrase, "the fruit of the Spirit." || All this ought to be implied when we speak of the Church as a spiritual society, and all this *is* implied when we accept Believers' Baptism. Baptists are the enemies of sacramentarianism, not because they deny the presence of the Spirit of God within the Church and its activities, but because they are bound by the principle involved in Believers' Baptism to look for that presence along the highest line of experience, and to find the true temple of the Holy Spirit in the human personality itself. Their testimony is the clearest antithesis to sacramentarianism, because it brings into prominence the positive principle which replaces it. However true it be that they have failed to realise the great ideals to which they are committed—and perhaps the failure is more marked in regard to this doctrine of the Holy Spirit than anywhere else—they can still claim to offer the simplest, most direct, and most unmistakable contrast which the religious life of England affords to the conception of the Church as a sacramental institution. The contrast does not depend on the Congregational or any other form of polity. Baptist principles are, or ought to be, independent of external forms here or elsewhere. From the standpoint of Believers'

* Eph. iv. 5.

† I. Cor. x. 16.

‡ *E.g.*, I. Cor. xii. 28; Acts xx. 28.

§ I. Cor. xii. 3.

|| Gal. v. 22.

Baptism, the Church is free, like its individual members, to work out its salvation in the forms which best minister to the truths for which it stands. If it be found that some kind of Congregationalism be most congenial to those forms, this is enough to justify its adoption, while leaving the Church free to change its polity from generation to generation, that it may the better preserve the permanent presence of the Spirit of God.

To this summary of the leading principles which spring from *Believers' Baptism*, there may be added some indication of the reasons which induce Baptists to retain the New Testament *form* of baptism, viz. : immersion. First of all, though the manner of the administration of the rite is quite subordinate to the principle that it is to be administered to believers only, there is an added closeness of relation to the New Testament in maintaining the New Testament mode. Some practices of the New Testament, such as the laying on of hands, Baptists in general no longer continue, and the actual mode of New Testament baptism might reasonably fall into the same class, if it could be shown that its practice was no longer expedient or advisable. But granted that there is no such reason, as Baptists maintain, then the continuity of form has a certain subsidiary value in contributing to the sense of direct obedience. He that is faithful in that which is least is in training to be faithful in that which is greatest. There is a strong simplicity in the adherence to Believers' Baptism which is symbolised, we may say, by the retention of its most ancient form, though that form can have no spiritual value apart from the attitude of the baptised to it. Then, secondly, baptism by immersion is an impressive and memorable landmark of self-surrender, and of confession before men. Properly administered, as it can be with ordinary care and fitting reverence, it can hardly fail to impress both the candidates themselves, and those who stand by, in a way that no other form of the rite does. It is something to which the candidate himself usually looks back as an hour of peculiar consecration ; it is a clear witness to the definiteness of decision, not lightly

accepted. Thirdly, and most important of all, in the present writer's view, baptism by immersion takes the place amongst Baptists of a formal creed. Its symbolic significance, the spiritual death to self, union with Christ, and resurrection of the believer, was emphasised by Paul; it expressed in vivid manner the very heart of Christian experience, as he conceived it. It is an action that speaks louder than words; by its unspoken eloquence, it commits those who are baptised to the most essential things. Yet it leaves each generation free to interpret the fundamental truths in its own way. It leaves much to each believer's loyalty to Christ, and the best things in spiritual life are attained only through such freedom. Give the believer that which baptism sets before him as the heart of his faith, and we can well leave him to interpret and apply that truth as the indwelling Spirit of God may guide him. In baptism by immersion, even more than in the Lord's Supper, we show forth the Lord's death till He come. The washing away of sin, and the strength of a life already victorious over death are linked with the death and resurrection of our Lord. Need we wonder, then, that even without any common written creed, the Baptists as a body are conspicuously faithful to evangelical faith?

II.—THE ABANDONMENT OF BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

We have next to review the gradual process by which Believers' Baptism came to be abandoned by the Church. As already stated, this process essentially consisted in the divorce of the sacramental aspect of baptism from its moral and spiritual meaning as interpreted in the New Testament. When the Church outgrew its Hebrew childhood and went to school in a Greek world, the home emphasis on the spiritual experience accompanying baptism was transferred to the outer act, with the result that the sacrament could

plausibly be interpreted in a manner foreign to the New Testament. This may be clearly illustrated by the comparison of two well-known passages. The first belongs to the middle of the second century, and describes the custom of baptism as known to Justin Martyr, before there is any evidence for the rise of infant baptism :—

“ *As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father and Lord of the Universe. . . . And this washing is called illumination, because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings. But we, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptised person.*”*

Here it is evident that baptism is not represented as doing something apart from conscious faith. Now let us set by the side of this a passage from the fourth century, written by the great Augustine. He is describing the illness of an intimate friend, who shared his then anti-Christian views :—

“ He was sick of a fever, and lay long unconscious in a deadly sweat. All hope being at an end, he was baptised, while yet unconscious, nor did I care, for I felt sure that his soul would retain what he had learned from me, and that it mattered little what was done to his insensible body. Yet it turned out quite otherwise, for he was newborn and made whole. As soon as I

* Apology i., 61, 2, 65, 1; Eng. trans. by Dods in the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, pp. 59-63. The italics are mine.

could have speech with him—and that was as soon as he could bear it, for I never left his side, and we were bound up in one another—I ventured a jest, thinking that he would jest too, about the baptism which he had received, when he could neither think nor feel. But by this time he had been told of his baptism. He shrank from me as from an enemy, and, with a wonderful new-found courage, warned me never to speak so to him again, if I wished to remain his friend.”*

This example is the more impressive because it shows Augustine being convinced against his own judgment of the miraculous power of baptism on the unconscious subject. Anyone who will carefully compare the two passages which have been quoted may satisfy himself of two things. A great change has come over the interpretation of baptism within a couple of centuries, and this change consists in laying stress on the external act of baptism at the cost of its moral and spiritual meaning. Without such a change, the administration of baptism to unconscious infants would be inexplicable, because implying a contradiction in terms.†

The rise of this practice may be tersely summarised in the words of Professor Loofs, one of the most distinguished living historians of dogma: “Infant baptism, first demonstrable in Irenaeus, still contested by Tertullian, was for Origen an apostolic custom”.‡ In other words, absolutely no evidence exists for the baptism of unconscious infants before 180 A.D.; the practice could be criticised by a distinguished thinker at the end of the second century; but by the middle of the third, it is old enough for its real beginnings to have been forgotten. In the case of Irenaeus the reference is indirect, but hardly to be questioned in view of the terms he uses. He says of Christ that “He came to save all through Himself; all, I say, who through Him are *born again unto God*, infants and little children, and boys and young men, and old men.” Elsewhere he describes

* *Confessions*, iv. 4; Eng. trans. by Bigg.

† Modern explanations of infant baptism as the sign and seal of a covenant with believers' children, or as the simple dedication of the child to God, may be plausible enough in themselves, but they are certainly not true for the ancient world. They are simply attempts to explain an existent practice by those who repudiate its original meaning. Baptists are more logical in their repudiation of the practice itself.

‡ *Dogmengeschichte*, ed. 4, p. 212.

baptism as "the power of new birth unto God," so that he must be taken as referring to all these classes as the subjects of baptism.* Tertullian objects to the baptism of little children, not because he considers them to be incapable of receiving its benefits, but because those benefits are best reserved for later years:—

"According to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children. . . . Let them come, then, while they are growing up; let them come while they are learning, while they are being taught whither to come; let them become Christians when they have become able to know Christ. Why does the innocent period of life hasten to the remission of sins?"†

Within half a century, we find Origen saying that "the Church has received a tradition from the Apostles to give baptism even to little children."‡ His contemporary Cyprian expressly directs that infants should be baptised as soon as possible, on the ground that this secures the forgiveness of the "original sin" (the contagion of their descent from Adam) with which they enter the world.§ When Augustine elaborated the doctrine of original sin, and defended it against Pelagian criticism, a century and a half later, he could appeal to the existent practice of infant baptism as conclusive proof of that doctrine—a proof so far beyond challenge that the Pelagians were driven to invent a new explanation of a practice which they dare not impugn.||

But even when the custom of infant baptism was fully established it was by no means universal. Baptism was often delayed until adult life, or the near approach of death, for the reason assigned by Tertullian. Novatian, for example, as we are told by a contemporary writer in the middle of the third century, "fell into a severe sickness; and as he seemed

* *Against Heresies* ii., 22, 4; iii., 17, 1.

† *On Baptism*, Ch. xviii.; Eng. trans. in ANCL, vol. xi., p. 253.

‡ *Commentary on Romans*, v. 9.

§ *Ep.* 64; Eng. trans. in ANCL, viii., pp. 195f.

|| *Against two letters of the Pelagians*, iii. 26 (x); Eng. trans. iii., p. 327.
Baptists have not always realised that the dogma of "original sin" partly rests on the existence of the very practice they condemn, *viz.*, infant baptism.

about to die, he received baptism by affusion, on the bed where he lay ; if indeed we can say that such a one did receive it."* The Emperor Constantine postponed his baptism until death was close upon him (A.D. 337), "firmly believing," as his biographer tells us, "that whatever errors he had committed as a mortal man, his soul would be purified from them through the efficacy of the mystical words, and the salutary waters of baptism."† The reason for such delay is clearly given by Augustine ; owing to a sudden and severe illness in his own boyhood, preparations had been made to baptise him, when he suddenly revived. "And so," he says, "my cleansing was deferred, as it seemed certain that I should be still further defiled, since I was to live ; because, forsooth, after that bath the guilt and the vileness of sin would be greater and more perilous." In fact, people used to say then, "Let him do what he likes ; he is not yet baptised."‡

It was not until the fifth century that infant baptism became the general practice.§ About the middle of that century we find it enjoined on all, at least in the Syrian Church : "Let the lambs of our flock be sealed from the first, that the Robber may see the mark impressed upon their bodies and tremble. Let not a child that is without the seal suck the milk of a mother that hath been baptised. . . . Let the children of the kingdom be carried from the womb to baptism."|| Up to this time, the catechumenate, *i.e.*, a period of prebaptismal instruction, had been an important feature in the discipline of the Church. In fact, many seem to have remained without baptism as catechumens, or as we might call them, adherents, of the Church throughout their lives. But the discipline provided by the

* Eusebius, *Church History*, vi. 43 (p. 288 of McGiffert's trans.).

† Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iv. 61 (Eng. trans. by Richardson, p. 556).
Other well-known cases of adult (postponed) baptism are those of Gregory of Nazianzus, and Basil of Caesarea.

‡ *Confessions*, i. 11.

§ The fullest account of baptism in the fourth century is supplied by the Catechetical Lectures given by Cyril of Jerusalem to candidates, who are obviously adults, not infants.

|| Assemani, *Bib. Orientalis*, I. 221 ; quoted in *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, vol. i., p. 170.

catechumenate was now largely replaced by the penitential system which is characteristic of the Church onwards to the Reformation. Heathen peoples were now enrolled into the Church by the mere act of baptism, without anything corresponding to moral and spiritual conversion. We need not wonder, therefore, that children were similarly included as a matter of course. The obvious result was a marked degradation of the Christian standard of morality and religion. Let us listen to the words of a distinguished Anglican scholar, who cannot be accused of Baptist prejudice: "when infant baptism became general, and men grew up to be Christians as they grew up to be citizens, the maintenance of the earlier standard became impossible in the Church at large. Professing Christians adopted the current morality; they were content to be no worse than their neighbours. . . . that which had been the ideal standard of qualifications for baptism became the ideal standard of qualifications for ordination; and there grew up a distinction between clerical morality and lay morality which has never passed away."* The contention of Baptists is that wherever the New Testament ordinance of Believers' Baptism is degraded to the custom of infant baptism, there will always be the tendency to a parallel degradation of Christian morality and religion. This contention is not met by saying that the necessary instruction and discipline can follow baptism as well as precede it. The majority of men will continue to believe that the baptism which has preceded the training has done something for them in spite of themselves, whether that baptism be interpreted as a dedication, a covenanting, or an act of sacramental efficacy. But morality and religion must necessarily suffer when the emphasis thus falls on the external act, rather than on the internal attitude.

So far our concern has been simply with the *subject* to whom baptism is administered, and nothing has been said as to the change in the *mode* of baptism from the immersion

* Hatch, *The Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, p. 140.

which is described in the New Testament,* to the aspersion or sprinkling which is common at the present time. This change came about in a perfectly intelligible manner, because circumstances might easily arise in which the original mode was difficult or impossible. This is clearly illustrated by a document probably belonging to the beginning of the second century, known as "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles":

"But concerning baptism, thus shall ye baptise. Having first recited all these things [*i.e.*, the moral instruction known as "The Two Ways," which forms the first part of the treatise] baptise in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit in living (running) water. But if thou hast not living water, then baptise *in other water*; and if thou art not able in *cold*, then in *warm*. But if thou hast neither, then *pour water on the head thrice* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."†

Here four varieties in the mode of baptism are indicated in their preferential order, viz.: immersion in a stream, immersion in standing water, either cold or warm, and triple affusion, or pouring. This last mode of baptism is therefore recognised as valid at an early date, although immersion is preferable where possible. How far the practice of affusion prevailed in the early centuries we can hardly say. In case of sickness, immersion might be impossible, and affusion was the natural alternative, as is illustrated by what was said of Novatian above.‡ The prevalent type of baptism illustrated in early pictures is that of a nude youthful figure standing in the water, whilst the hand of an older man is on or above his head. Sometimes a stream of water is seen flowing from above. This suggests a method of immersion or submersion somewhat different from that practised by most Baptists at the present time.§ "The primitive mode appears to

* Rom. vi. 4f. This is now generally recognised by scholars of all denominations, and needs no argument.

† 7 (Lightfoot's trans.; italics mine).

‡ The objection to Novatian's baptism was not that affusion replaced immersion in this case, but that the baptism was accepted under the constraint of fear, and was never properly confirmed.

§ The average depth of 29 early baptisteries described by C. F. Rogers in "Baptism and Christian Archæology" is 3ft. 2in. The baptistery in the Catacomb of S. Ponziano, Rome, is said to be 4½ft. long, 3½ft. wide, 3½ft. deep, which would be ample for immersion of a kneeling candidate (cf. the Paulician method).

have been this: The administrator and candidate both standing in the water the former placed his right hand on the head of the candidate, and, pronouncing the baptismal words, gently bowed him forward, till he was completely immersed in the water."* No evidence for aspersion (sprinkling) has been discovered within the first eleven Christian centuries. The facts as to the history of the mode of baptism are concisely summarised by Professor Drews as follows, and the summary should be remembered alongside that already quoted from Professor Loofs in regard to the subject of baptism: "Until Cyprian's time (A.D. 250) submersion was the prevalent custom, unless in peculiar circumstances. After the fourth century, it was customary in some Churches to replace submersion by a copious pouring on the head; the person to be baptised stood, however, in the water. The sprinkling of the head, as we practise it, first became the generally recognised custom after the thirteenth century, but only in the West. The Eastern Church still maintains complete submersion."† In England, dipping appears to have remained the standard mode of baptism until the middle of the sixteenth century, as is shown by the rubrics of "The Book of Common Prayer." As we shall see further on, the revival of immersion on the Continent came through some of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, and in England through the Particular Baptists in 1642.

III.—THE HISTORICAL WITNESS TO NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES.

We have seen that Believers' Baptism implies the three primary principles of conversion by conviction, loyalty to the Scriptures and the risen Lord they reveal, and the spiritual

* *The Archaeology of Baptism* (p. 31), by Cote, who gives references to the evidence for his statement. Dr. Whitley informs me that he has seen baptisms in Bengal by this method, borrowed from the Hindus at their daily immersions.

† In his article on the ritual of baptism in the leading theological Encyclopædia (*Realencyklopædie*, ed. 3, vol. xix., page 432).

constitution of the Church. As a matter of history, all these truths were imperilled when Believers' Baptism was abandoned by the Church, a fact highly significant for its value. With the great Augustine, we pass into a period extending over many centuries in which the Church becomes a vast sacramental institution, an authoritative corporation vested with supernatural powers, controlling the secular arm in this world, and reaching far with its own right hand into the other. Her service to the world was often great and noble, and must not be forgotten. But her power to serve too often became a temptation to tyrannise. It is difficult for most of us to-day to realise the immensity of that power in the Middle Ages, for the progressive nations of the world have largely escaped from the influence of the assumptions on which it rested. The Church controlled the sacraments, and the sacraments were essential to salvation; the terrors of the world to come were brought home to men by the judicial perils and social disabilities of those from whom the Church withdrew her protection in this world. The Lord's Supper, after the first two centuries, had been transformed from a thankful remembrance of the Lord, and, in particular, of His death, to a repetition of the sacrifice offered by Him. Baptism had been transformed from a personal confession of faith into a quasi-magical operation on an unconscious subject. To these two sacraments, thus transformed, there had been added a third, the Sacrament of Penance, which became in practice the most important of all. With these prerogatives in his hand, and the Church at his back, the priest was omnipotent, because having a monopoly of that which all men must buy. "Just as the Lord's Supper removes venial sins, and baptism the guilt of original sin, so is Penance appointed for doing away with mortal sins. . . . The whole religious life had its centre in the institution of Penance."* This towering background of priestly authority is the characteristic feature in the religious life of the Middle Ages. When we look for any independent assertion of those

* Seeberg, *Dogmengeschichte*, Part ii., pp. 117, 159.

principles which spring from the abandoned Believers' Baptism, we must not look for it in the form of a continuously existing Baptist Church, nor even as always linked to Believers' Baptism. Baptist Churches do not exist in England, if we are to use words with their accepted connotation, until the seventeenth century ; whilst the very extensive "Anabaptist" movement which arose on the Continent in the early part of the sixteenth century was checked in its normal ecclesiastical development by the persecution excited by its excesses, and survived chiefly in the Mennonites. But, if we cannot expect to find Baptist Churches, we may reasonably look for the activity of the great principles of New Testament religion already noticed. Apart from the eventual return to Believers' Baptism, this activity may be illustrated from various attempts (*a*) to assert the spirituality of the Church ; (*b*) to oppose sacramentarianism ; (*c*) to revive Scriptural religion.

In regard to the prior truth of conversion by conviction, illustrations will recur to all, and they need not be amplified. Great souls can never be fettered, even by the very errors they may perpetuate. An Augustine would break through to God under any system of thought we might conceive ; a Francis would see visions and dream dreams of the Eternal in any century. It need not surprise us, therefore, when we read the famous stories of the conversion of these men, to be lifted up into a realm of great issues, and of permanent values, above all controversy ; for these men were brought by the experiences of life face to face with God in Christ. The voice that Augustine heard in the garden at Milan, and Francis in the little chapel of Assisi, is the voice of One who is the same yesterday, to-day, yea, and for ever, though our interpretation of His call will vary from age to age. Wherever there is religion at all, there will be the possibility of such experiences as these, for man will be seeking God, as God is always seeking man. Whatever be the system of thought and practice under which they live, great souls will find God. But for smaller men, men of the rank and file, the way of salvation needs to be made very

plain if they are to find it. In an age which held that there was no salvation outside the visible Church and its sacraments, we cannot measure the average man's religion by the spiritual experiences of an Augustine, or a Francis, though we may be sure that many a lesser man, in spite of current superstitions, was feeling after God, if haply he might find Him.

As early as the middle of the second century, a classical example of spiritual protest against the growing ecclesiastical organisation of the Church is afforded by Montanism. This movement began in a part of the Roman Empire where Christianity was then strongest, viz. : Asia Minor, and in that part of Asia Minor conspicuous for the intensity of its religious life, viz. : Phrygia. The scattered Christian Churches were then being welded together into the Catholic Church, and Montanism was an instinctive reaction against the emphasis on the external side of the Church's life which accompanied, if it did not constitute, that consolidation. The form taken by the Montanist reaction was a return to the New Testament liberty of prophesying ; this was naturally linked with a renewed emphasis on the nearness of the end of all things, a New Testament doctrine which was fading away from the consciousness of the Church in general. The best modern parallel to Montanism is the movement which arose under Edward Irving in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and the parallel extends to the vagaries as well as to the truth that was urged in both movements. Montanus and his prophetesses were justified in asserting the New Testament emphasis on the Spirit of God, though not in identifying their own narrow outlook with the complete revelation of the Paraclete. They were right in recognising the perils of officialism, as later history has amply shown ; but they did not escape the perils of their own unregulated enthusiasm. Their protest against the lax and worldly discipline of the Church of their day deserves our full sympathy, even though we must not extend that sympathy to their ascetic teaching, and condemnation of marriage. It has often been pointed out that a movement which could win to itself a great thinker and passionately

earnest Christian like Tertullian, and a martyr so pure and lovely in thought and character as Perpetua, could not have been barren in great and permanent spiritual truths.

A further attempt to assert the spirituality of the Church, though on altogether different lines, characterises the followers of Novatian in the middle of the third century. The Novatianists were, and indeed called themselves, "Puritans." They shared entirely in the orthodoxy of their day, but they maintained that mortal sin after baptism disqualified for re-admission to the Church. Whatever we may think of their rigorism, we cannot deny the truth of their main contention, that membership in a Christian Church ought to mean a changed character. It is significant that over against them, as their chief opponent, stands Cyprian, in whose hands the Lord's Supper first becomes a priestly sacrifice, the imitation of that which was offered on Calvary. A little later on, in the early years of the fourth century, the Puritan protest of the Novatianists was continued by the Donatists of Africa. Against the doctrine that ultimately prevailed, they contended that the continuity of the Christian Church lies in holy persons, rather than in holy institutions. For a century, they may be called the Church of Africa, until Augustine, with imperial resources behind him to enforce his opinions, suppressed the schism. His victory meant the victory of that doctrine of the sacraments which characterises the Western Church. The holiness of the Church is held to lie in them, and in their efficacy; outside the Catholic, *i.e.*, universal Church, there is no salvation. It is true that Augustine recognised the validity of "heretical" baptism; but then its virtue was only realised when the baptised person passed into the one true Church. Henceforth the Augustinian doctrine of the sacraments prevailed, until the Reformation, though already there lay in the larger thought of Augustine himself principles from which that Reformation would spring. For he taught that the true congregation of the saints is a smaller group within the visible Church, and is ultimately decided by divine predestination—a doctrine really irreconcilable with that of sacramental efficacy.

But even as early as the twelfth century we have evidence of anti-sacramentarian testimony, not in one place only, but in many.* In the Netherlands and in Brittany, in Cologne and the Rhine districts, in France and in Italy, there arose men who traced the corruption of the Church to the falsity of its fundamental principle of the sacraments. In some cases, at least, as will be seen in the next section, this was accompanied by a return to Believers' Baptism, and there are indications, even where our information is too scanty for certainty, that its abandonment was blamed as one source of the existent evils. Thus, the Archbishop of Rouen writes of certain heretics about the middle of the twelfth century, that their teaching declares the sacraments to avail only for those who know, not for those who are ignorant of what is being done. "They condemn", he says, "the baptism of little children and infants, and say:—in the Gospel it is read, He who believes and is baptised will be saved, but little children do not believe, therefore baptism does not avail little children."† We may be sure that an under-current of such thought and conviction was flowing in the Church itself from this time onwards until its emergence in the Reformation, even though the evidence at our disposal does not allow us to trace any earlier forms of it in the Western Church. This, of course, is very different from suggesting that such convictions had yet given rise to Baptist Churches. The movement as a whole is more properly described on its negative side, as anti-sacramentarianism.

The more positive preparation for the Reformation may be seen in the revival of evangelical religion exhibited by various movements in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. If we seek for the common feature which unites the Waldensians, the Lollards, and the Hussites, we may, perhaps, best find it in their Scripturalism, including both their appeal to the authority of the Bible,

* For fuller details see Newman, *History of Anti-Pedobaptism*, chapter iii.

† Gieseler, *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii., p. 389.

and their efforts to promote its circulation. In this way they made possible that exaltation of the authority of the Scriptures which was the most effective weapon of the Reformers against the usurped authority of the Church. Waldo and his followers remained within the sphere of Catholic thought and piety, as John Wesley did within that of Anglicanism. It was the study of Scripture which, in 1173, won Waldo to the ideal of Apostolic evangelisation in poverty, and made him, in this respect, a forerunner of Francis of Assisi. Waldo was not concerned to attack the doctrines of the Church, but to assert the right and the duty of laymen to evangelise. It was a reformation of Christian life, rather than of Christian thought, at which he aimed, though the opposition of the ecclesiastical authorities naturally forced his followers into a different position. The success of the Scriptural appeal may be measured by the fact that within a quarter of a century of Waldo's conversion to Scriptural poverty and piety, a Papal letter was necessary discouraging the use of the Bible by the laity (1199)* Wiclif, on the other hand, started, like Luther, from the definite criticism of abuses, though, unlike him, without the positive content of evangelical doctrine. Wiclif's activity was stirred by the unpopularity of the hierarchy in the England of his day. His Augustinian views on predestination did not bring him into collision with the doctrines of the Church. Though he rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, yet he continued the Catholic emphasis on the sacraments; the central note of the Reformation—justification by faith—was absent from his teaching. Wiclif's essential contribution lay rather in the translation of the Scriptures, and in their dissemination through his "poor priests." His appeal to Scripture against Popes and Councils is unmistakable; by Scripture the institutions and doctrines of the Church are to be judged. The work of Huss in Bohemia directly continued that of Wiclif, from which it sprang, though Huss did not proceed so far as to deny the doctrine of transubstantiation. But his more advanced followers, the Taborites,

* At the Council of Toulouse (1229) laymen were forbidden to possess a Bible.

carried the appeal to Scripture almost to its fullest issues. "No mediæval party", says Professor Newman, "came nearer to the Baptist position than the Taborites in their conception of the relation of Scripture to doctrine and practice. But they failed to see the inconsistency of infant baptism with the position they had taken, and perpetuated this non-Scriptural practice."* This applies also to the two other movements here noticed. Neither Wiclif nor his followers denied infant baptism, and the Waldensians as a body seem to have maintained "the necessity of water baptism to salvation, even in the case of infants."†

Of the Reformation itself, it is not necessary to say more than will be said in regard to the Anabaptists in the following section. Here the aim has been to show that Baptists, in their return to Believers' Baptism, continue the line of vital religion, which runs more or less visibly through the centuries. The value of such a return lies in the degree to which it gives fuller expression and clearer testimony to vital Christian truth. We have already seen that the principles here illustrated rationally follow from the acceptance of Believers' Baptism. That these principles are of supreme importance, at least for all those who value the Reformation itself, is beyond question. When they are seen on the larger arena of history, even though mingled with alien principles, their importance is confirmed. In view of current misunderstandings, it cannot be too often asserted that Baptists value Believers' Baptism, not because of mere conservatism, or of superstitious trust in the rite itself, but because of their belief that it most effectively maintains these essential principles of New Testament religion.

IV.—THE RETURN TO BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

We have so far seen that, though the only baptism known to the New Testament is that of believers, this was

* *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

† *Ib.*, p. 42.

gradually abandoned by the Catholic Church in favour of the baptism of infants. We have found that the acceptance of Believers' Baptism implies conversion by conviction, belief in the spiritual authority of the Scriptures and of Christ, and the spirituality of the Church. We have also found these principles asserted from time to time in the history of the Church between the sub-Apostolic age and the Reformation, apart from Believers' Baptism. We have now to consider the chief instances of their occurrence in explicit connection with Believers' Baptism until the rise of Baptist Churches in the seventeenth century. Even if space were unlimited, the evidence at our command would not allow more than a series of vignettes, without external continuity. Perhaps it is the more fitting that this should be the case, for the continuity of Baptist history does not depend on an apostolical succession of Baptists, but on the power of the New Testament to win new witnesses to its forgotten truths from age to age.

In the realm of the Western Church, no example of such a return to Believers' Baptism offers itself before the twelfth century. But a comparatively recent discovery has brought to notice a striking instance of such a return or survival in the Eastern Church. The Paulicians were previously known to us as a community of heretical Christians flourishing in the Eastern Empire in the eighth and following centuries, who were regarded by their opponents as Manichaean dualists. Whatever truth there may be in this accusation, as levelled against later forms of the movement, it does not seem to apply at all to the earlier, as revealed in the document called "The Key of Truth", an account of their faith and practice dating from A.D. 800.* Dr. Adeney (who devotes a chapter to the Paulicians in his recent book, "The Greek and Eastern Churches") says, on the evidence of "The Key of Truth", "Ancient Oriental Baptists, these people were in many respects Protestants before Protestantism."† This

* *The Key of Truth*, a Manual of the Paulician Church of Armenia, edited and translated by F. C. Conybeare, 1898.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 219.

verdict will be confirmed by the following extracts from "The Key of Truth", which are given at some length in view of their interest to Baptists, amongst whom they have hardly aroused the attention they seem to deserve.

The general position of the Paulicians in regard to the sacraments is thus stated by themselves :—

"There are three divine mysteries, which He proclaimed from above to His only-born Son, and to St. John the great prophet. First, repentance. Second, baptism. Third, holy communion. For these three He gave to the adult, and not to catechumens who have not repented, or are unbelieving" (pp. 116, 117).

It should be noticed that here, as elsewhere, the word "catechumen" employed by the translator has evidently lost its original meaning, and is applied even to infants. The assertion of adult, in place of infant, baptism is perfectly clear in such passages as the following :—

"For as St. John taught first repentance and faith, and after that granted baptism, and then showed them the way, the truth, and the life. so we also must follow in accordance with this truth, and not according to the deceitful arguments of the tradition of others, who baptise the unbelieving, the reasonless, and the unrepentant" (p. 74).

"Thus also the Lord, having learned from the Father, proceeded to teach us to perform holy baptism and all his other commands at an age of full growth (*or lit.* in a completed or mature season), and at no other time" (p. 75).

"Therefore, according to the word of the Lord, we must first bring them unto the faith, induce them to repent, and then give it unto them" (p. 77).

"And the door of salvation speaks concerning believers and not unbelievers. For in no wise at all do they know God, nor is their knowledge of Jesus Christ, and of the holy church of Christ, that is, of the holy Apostles. Moreover they know not joy and sorrow, their father or their mother, and are like brass that sounds or cymbals that clash." (p. 87).

The mode of baptism of the adult believer is thus described ; the administrant says :—

"My little child, thou who wishest to be released from the bonds of the devils of Satan, what fruit of absolution hast thou ? Tell it to us before the congregation. But the penitent, if he have learned and received the perfect faith, with unfeigned trust,

shall at once come on his knees into the midst of the water, and say with great love and tears [the confession of faith which is given.] And then, as he that has believed completes his holy profession of faith, the elect one [*i.e.*, the ministrant] instantly takes the water into his hands, and looking up to heaven. . . . shall directly or indirectly empty out the water over the head, saying: In the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit is baptised this man or woman—mentioning the name—by the testimony of the congregation here present." [A triple pouring follows in the names of the three Persons of the Trinity] (pp. 96f.).

But, even with such clear emphasis on Believers' Baptism, the recognition of the claim of children on the parents and the Church is not forgotten. On the eighth day after birth a species of dedication service is enjoined, with a prayer of singular beauty; the minister:—

"shall comfort the parents with great love and give to them good spiritual advice, that they shall train up their offspring in godliness, in faith, hope, love, and in all good works. it is necessary for the parents themselves ever and always to give for instruction and study to their infant offspring as it were milk; and they shall not be at all sparing" (pp. 87, 88).

The prayer runs as follows:—

"Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we beg and entreat thee, keep this catechumen from evil, and fix thy holy eye upon him, and keep him from all temptation of the world; and give him life according to thy good will, that he may pass through the season of his childhood and become acceptable to thee, to thy Son, and to thy Holy Spirit. And bring him through to reach holy baptism, and call him under the shelter of the wings of thy beloved Son" (p. 90).*

The minister himself is solemnly charged with his duty to the young of the flock:—

"Ye, the elect ones, must observe the utmost care that they receive before baptism instruction and training, both of body and soul" (p. 91).

With the condemnation of infant baptism is associated that of other practices of the day:—

"Ye are followers of your father, the evil one, who gave you his law, namely, to baptise unbelievers, to worship images, to

* The service might well become a model for a similar dedication of infants by Baptists.

make silver and gold into the form of an image. . . and to adore the same, to pry into the sins of men and women, to explore the same, and grant remission" (p. 86).

"Concerning the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not of any other holy ones, either of the dead, or of stones, or of crosses and images. In this matter some have denied the precious mediation and intercession of the beloved Son of God, and have followed after dead (things) and in especial after images, stones, crosses, waters, trees, fountains, and all other vain things; as they admit, and worship them, so they offer incense and candles, and present victims, all of which are contrary to the Godhead. All these things our Lord put under His feet when He said: 'I am the door'" (p. 115).

The discoverer and translator of this remarkable document connects the Paulicians with the primitive Church, their conservatism being due to their geographical isolation, whilst on the other hand he sees their influence in the later rise of the Anabaptists and Socinians.* The peculiar Paulician doctrine of Christ, itself a survival from earlier ideas, must not blind us to the spiritual value of their testimony. Believers' Baptism, in the case of the Paulicians, is clearly linked to the cardinal principles of conversion by conviction, the authority of the New Testament and of Christ, and the spirituality of the Church, as the passages cited have sufficiently shown.

The first example of a return to Believers' Baptism within the Western Church is that of Peter of Bruys, in the first quarter of the twelfth century. Unfortunately, we are able to see him and study his opinions through the eyes of an opponent only. It is quite clear that he repudiated the baptism of infants in favour of Believers' Baptism, for in a summary of his "heresy" we are told:—

"The first article of the heretics denies that little children below the age of intelligence can be saved by the baptism of Christ, and that the faith of another can profit those, who cannot exercise their own; since the Lord says, He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."†

* The "Racovian Catechism" of the Polish Socinians (1605) equally rejects infant baptism in favour of Believers' Baptism by immersion.

† The original is given in Gieseler's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii., p. 391.

In full harmony with this statement are some of the few words quoted from these heretics themselves :—

“ But we await a time suitable to faith, and baptise a man, after he is ready to recognise his God and to believe in Him; we do not, as you charge us, re-baptise him, because the man who has not been washed with the baptism by which sins are washed away ought never to be called baptised.”*

There are four other counts in the indictment of these “ Petrobrusians ” (as they have been called after their leader), which are of considerable interest as showing the general outlook accompanying this assertion of Believers' Baptism. They are charged with saying that sacred buildings are not essential to prayer, since God hears men praying in the tavern as well as in the Church, in the market place as well as in the temple, before the altar and before the stall. They attack the current veneration of the cross, saying that it ought to be burnt rather than worshipped. They deny the repetition of the sacrifice of Christ on the altar. They allege that sacrifices, prayers, alms, etc., for the dead are of no avail. The earnestness of their opposition to the veneration of the cross is illustrated by the fact that it eventually led to their founder's martyrdom, after twenty years of work in the south of France. He was burnt by a mob on a pile of crosses which he was engaged in destroying. But his work and testimony seem to have been continued by Henry of Lausanne. This “ pseudo-apostle ” of his, to use the enemy's title, was not like Peter of Bruys, a priest, but a monk, distinguished by his remarkable eloquence as a preacher of repentance, and a rebuker of clerical laxity. He lived until about the middle of the twelfth century.

The great Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century is properly regarded as continuing that revival of evangelical religion in the three preceding centuries which has been noticed already, and, in particular, the work of the Waldensians. As Professor Lindsay has said, in his excellent sketch of Anabaptism, “ the whole Anabaptist movement

* The original is given in Neander's *Church History*, vol. viii., p. 339.

was mediæval to the core.”* The revived evangelicalism became a nucleus for the long gathering social unrest, and sense of economic injustice. The alliance of this distinct line of mediæval influence with the purely religious, in the more extreme forms of the Anabaptist movement, led to the tragedy of its practical destruction by persecution. The very wide extent of this movement, as brought out by recent research, may best be realised from Professor Lindsay's map, which shows its presence right across Europe, from the eastern counties of England in the West to Poland in the East, and, south of this long line, from Switzerland and Northern Italy into Hungary. But this vast movement was very far from being the unity which its name might imply; it contained as rich a variety of both clean and unclean life as Noah's ark. The baptism of adults was more or less associated with the movement as a whole, and this practice was what caught the eye of the outsider, and won the nickname of Ana- (*i.e.*, re-) baptism. But we must not imagine that Believers' Baptism supplied the principles or inspired the practices which have made Anabaptism notorious, and in some countries still throw their shadow on the very name “Baptist.” As an impartial historian has said of the form which Anabaptism took in Münster, for example, “the term by which it is known represents a mere accident of the movement as being its essence.”†

We might represent the earlier history of the movement diagrammatically by an almost isosceles triangle, with its base line drawn from Münster in the North to Zwickau in the East, and its apex resting on Zurich in the South. We could then say that it is only in the religious activities which centred in the apex of the triangle at Zurich that ‘Anabaptism’ deserves its name. The movement that emanated from Zwickau at one end of the base (1520) and had Münzer and Storch as its representative leaders, was as much socialistic as religious, and Münzer identified himself with the Peasant's Revolt which ended so disastrously in 1525.

* *A History of the Reformation*, vol. ii., p. 441.

† A. F. Pollard, in *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. ii., p. 222.

Similarly, at the other end of the base, we have the attempt to establish a "kingdom of God" at Münster, on fanatical and insurrectionary lines, which ended not less disastrously in 1535. In both cases we have to do with perilous and un-evangelical tendencies, which have nothing to do with the rite which was superadded to them. In fact Münzer himself was not a "re-baptiser" at all, but continued to practise infant baptism.* It was George Blaurock, a monk of Chur, who in Zurich first revived Believers' Baptism, at the end of 1524†; it is for the Swiss Anabaptism, which arose independently of Münzer, and opposed his violence, that the title given is no misnomer, and is linked to the principles naturally implied in Believers' Baptism.

The step taken by Blaurock was the outcome of a discussion of the value of infant baptism which had gone on for the greater part of a year, amongst some of Zwingli's friends. It was initiated by Reublin's denunciation of infant baptism as "the greatest abomination of the devil and of the Roman papacy." Such language may seem extravagant to us, but it was at least not more extravagant than the measures adopted by the authorities to suppress it, such as the drowning of Manz, and the scourging of Blaurock through the streets in 1527. We must remember, in regard to the baptism both of infants and of believers, that the meaning of a rite is given not so much by its theoretical definition as by the whole body of usage, the whole spiritual outlook which may naturally be linked with it, or deduced from it. These men who returned to Believers' Baptism were seeking to return to the simplicity and purity of the primitive New Testament Church. "The real Church, which might be small or great, was for them an association of believing people; and the great ecclesiastical institutions into which unconscious infants were admitted by a ceremony called baptism

* Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

† This baptism was administered with a "dipper," *i.e.*, by affusion, and affusion seems to have been the prevalent form of the rite amongst Anabaptists, though immersion was practised in some cases (*e.g.*, that of Uolimann in 1525). Hubmaier, for example, is said to have baptised more than three hundred believers from a milk-pail. Affusion was practised by the Mennonites.

long before they could have or exercise faith, represented to them an idea subversive of true Christianity."*

It was a misfortune, not only for themselves, but surely for the whole Church, that those of Zwingli's friends who returned to Believers' Baptism, as both the proper consequence, and the natural expression of their convictions, were not able to carry the great Reformer with them. For not only were they at one with him in regard to the Lord's Supper—the point that separated him from Luther—but Zwingli himself at one time looked on infant baptism with a very doubtful eye. These men, after all, were simply carrying out Zwingli's principles to their full issues. Whether we think of the Scriptural appeal of the Reformers, or of the religious ideal of a direct and individual approach of man to God, the Swiss Anabaptists were in the direct line of Reformation faith. Had they but taught the Reformers that principle of the liberty of conscience for which Hubmaier, one of their best representatives, so earnestly pleaded,† how much less sorrowful and humiliating the history of Protestantism would have been! Had they but made those apostles of New Testament faith realise the perils of a practice which contradicts it, how different might have been the position of Protestantism at the present time, in offering its convictions to a world that is largely heedless of them! There can be no form of infant baptism, *taken seriously*, which does not tend to weaken the sense of direct moral responsibility, which is the very heart of personality; for if we baptise infants, we assert by an action louder than words that entrance into the Church of Christ turns on something else than personal faith. The failure of the Anabaptists to convince their fellow-Protestants, in spite of the logic of their argument, and its wide-spread acceptance, was doubtless in large measure due to the unhappy association of the Anabaptist position with the Peasants' Revolt on the one hand, and the "kingdom" of Münster on the other. The universal condemnation of such excesses did more than nullify the

* Lindsay, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

† A summary of his argument will be found in Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-98.

power of the appeal to Scripture and to reason. It led to a persecution of Anabaptism so severe that the movement was paralysed, just as the pervasive influence of early Christianity would have been paralysed by systematic persecution, had Paul's letter to Philemon been a summoning of slaves to armed revolt. The great work of Menno Simons (1492-1559) was to unite and organise the Anabaptism that survived this persecution. It became the supreme aim of his life to develop that ideal of a Church of believers which is the legitimate and necessary consequence of Believers' Baptism. The chief troubles he had to encounter were those that came from enforcing discipline; this is only to say that every great principle brings its own peculiar perils when it is pushed to extremes, and when men forget to see life steadily, and see it whole. The Mennonite Church, which flourished particularly in the Netherlands, has an important historical place, through its influence on the Baptist Churches of England and America.

The Baptist Churches which arose in England in the seventeenth century can be traced along two distinct lines—the "General" and the "Particular"; the distinction is that between the Arminian and the Calvinistic systems of doctrine, especially as to the scope of the Atonement, and has nothing to do, as is sometimes imagined, with the very different question as to "Close" or "Open" Communion. The earliest example of a General Baptist Church is that founded by Smyth in Amsterdam in 1609, a portion of it being brought by Helwys to London in 1612; the existence of a Particular Baptist Church cannot be proved before some date between 1633 and 1638.* In the case of the former, the influence of Continental Anabaptism is commonly recognised. "The General Baptists are an English out-

* Burrage (*Early English Dissenters*, i. 223) shows that an (unnamed) Englishman had baptised himself, and then others, in Amsterdam before 1600. The most convenient discussion of these facts in brief form is that of Shakespeare's *Baptist and Congregational Pioneers*; for a fuller account of the origins of the first General Baptist Church see Burgess, *Smith, the Se-Baptist, Thomas Helwys, and the First Baptist Church in England*; the documents relating to the first Particular Baptist Church are given in full, and annotated by Whitley, in the *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, vol. i., No. 4 (January, 1910).

growth of the Continental Anabaptists, acting upon the Lollards. In some districts the Anabaptist element was very strong, especially the Eastern coast of Essex, and Kent, to which immigration was very easy. In other districts the Lollard element was predominant, as in Bucks. and Berks. . . . their common aim was at a holy life, and this caused the two streams to blend."* There are instances of the persecution of some of these Anabaptist immigrants from 1535 onwards. The impression made by Anabaptist teaching is shown by references to some of their convictions in the Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church (XXXVII., XXXVIII., XXXIX.). But the relation between the Anabaptists of the Continent and the English General Baptists is even closer than this preparation of the soil for the seed sown by Helwys. His friend and leader, John Smyth, an English Separatist,† after migrating to Amsterdam to secure religious liberty, baptised himself there in 1609 by affusion, and it is natural to suppose that this was partly due to the surrounding Mennonite influence. Prior to this New Testament basis of Church fellowship, Smyth's community, like that of other Separatist Churches of the time,‡ had been gathered on the Old Testament basis of a "covenant"; the covenant in the case of Smyth's community seems to have run thus: "We covenant with God and with one another to walk in all His ways made known or to be made known unto us according to our best endeavours whatsoever it shall cost us." From this covenant sprang the authority of the Church; in Smyth's own words: "the power of binding and loosing is given to the body of the Church, even to two or three faithful people joined together in covenant."§ It is instructive to notice that Smyth comes to regard Believers' Baptism as the New Testament substitute for such a covenant;

* Whitley, *Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches*, pp. ix., xii. Burrage, however, thinks "that Anabaptism had practically no influence on separatism in England before 1612" (*op. cit.*, i. 68).

† *i.e.*, one who had withdrawn from the State Church, in order to uphold a self-governing community of the regenerate, in opposition to the Anglican unit of the parish.

‡ Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 85; cf. p. 145.

§ Quoted by Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

by this act Christians are bound together into Church consciousness and fellowship. This principle is reflected in the earliest Baptist Confession of Faith, drawn up by Smyth in 1610 :—

“ The Church of Christ is a company of the faithful, baptised after confession of faith and of sins, which is endowed with the power of Christ. . . . Baptism is the external sign of the remission of sins, of dying, and of being made alive, and accordingly does not belong to infants.”

This was the denominational principle brought back to England by Helwys, which was the characteristic feature of the first Baptist Church on English soil. It was reached rationally and Scripturally as the consequence of Separatist convictions, and Baptists hold it still to be the best safeguard of those convictions. With it, as an outcome of its spiritual individualism, is bound up the principle of religious liberty. It was natural therefore that the first English assertion of this should have come from the first Baptist Church in England. In 1615, John Murton, who had returned with Helwys, published a book maintaining the principle “ that no man ought to be persecuted for his religion.”* This liberty of conscience in religion is still expressed by Believers' Baptism, and is kept from becoming licence by the loyalty to Christ which that principle demands.

The evolution of Particular Baptists, in the earliest case which we can trace, presents an interesting repetition of this movement from Congregational Separatism onwards to its full expression in Believers' Baptism. A Church of Congregational Separatists had been founded in London in 1616, sometimes now called the “ Jacob-Lathorp-Jessey ” Church, from the succession of its pastors. According to the records of this Church,† a secession led by a certain Mr. Dupper took place in 1630, which rejected baptism by the parish

* Leonard Busher's work, “ Religion's Peace, or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience,” is a year earlier, but he may have been a Dutch Anabaptist, in view of Whitley's argument in the *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, vol. i., No. 2 (April, 1909), pp. 107-113. Burrage contests this (*op. cit.*, i. p. 278), but points out that the tract was written in Holland (*ib.* i., p. 276).

† Given in the *Transactions*, *l.c.*

clergy, to whom some members still resorted.* In 1633, other members were granted dismissal on similar grounds, but there is a reference to "Mr. Eaton with some others receiving a further baptism."† In 1638, there was the definite rejection of infant baptism on the part of another group, which is said to be "of the same judgment with Sam. Eaton."‡ Finally, in 1642, the mode of baptism by affusion hitherto practised, was replaced by immersion. Richard Blunt was sent to make enquiries in Holland, where immersion had been revived by the Collegiants (at Rhynsburg) since 1619. On his return, he baptised Blacklock, who in turn baptised Blunt; together they baptised the others.§ From this group, it seems that the mode of immersion spread to the General Baptists, as well as to other Particular Baptists, so that it soon became the only form practised in Baptist Churches. The first (Particular) Baptist Confession to prescribe the mode of immersion is that of 1644:—

"The way and manner of the dispensing of this Ordinance the Scripture holds out to be dipping or plunging the whole body under water; it being a sign, must answer the thing signified, which are these: first, the washing the whole soul in the blood of Christ; secondly, that interest the Saints have in the death, burial, and resurrection; thirdly, together with a confirmation of our faith, that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and riseth again, so certainly shall the bodies of the Saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ."||

With the rise and history of Baptist Churches in the north of England other parts of this volume will deal. The present outline of the ancestry of their convictions in the centuries past should hardly close without some indication of the possibilities and prospects of Baptist principles, as they show themselves to the writer of these pages. It need not be said that such an outlook is simply a modest exercise

* *Ib.*, pp. 219, 225.

† *Ib.*, pp. 220, 230.

‡ *Ib.*, pp. 231, 221.

§ *Ib.*, pp. 232-234; cf. Burrage, *op cit.*, i., p. 334.

|| McGlothlin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, p. 185. A reference to a case of immersion in 1635, alleged by Burrage (*op. cit.*, i., p. 379), is not convincing. Leonard Busher's reference to immersion in 1614 does not prove the actual practice (*op. cit.*, i., p. 277).

of that liberty of individual judgment which Baptists have always claimed. There seems to be a great future for the Baptist Churches, if three conditions suggested by present day needs are fulfilled. Those conditions are (1) catholicity through conviction ; (2) the recovery of the New Testament emphasis on the Spirit of God ; (3) the *deeper* recognition of individual liberty of conscience and judgment.

It is often said to-day that the older denominational barriers are breaking down, and, if not wholly removed, are yet largely disregarded. So far as this means the removal of narrowness of outlook, and bitterness of judgment, it is surely a sign of Christian progress. But so far as it springs from an unconfessed indifference to the principles which gave birth to the several denominations, it is simply a feature in the decay of genuine religious vitality. Men may fraternise because they have lost interest in the convictions that once separated them, as well as because they really love each other more. The only catholicity that is worth having is that which comes through conviction, not because conviction is lacking. It is sometimes suggested by the omniscient journalist that Baptists will amalgamate with Congregationalists and drop their own distinctive testimony. If that were conceivable, it would simply mean that a new Baptist testimony would arise from other lips and lives to replace that which had condemned itself. Yet such testimony does not mean, at any rate ought not to mean, the loss of that larger corporate consciousness which belongs of right to all who are members of the Church of Christ. That larger consciousness can be attained by all who feel their convictions deeply enough to enter through them, as it were, into the common home of all spiritual truth, the common experience of all hearts God has touched. Baptists need more of this larger consciousness ; they need to extend that historic sense they have been trained to feel along one line of conviction until they realise it along other lines of spiritual truth. The way to reach this "catholicity of conviction" would be through a more systematic teaching of Baptist principles, not in the spirit of a narrow denominationalism, but in order

to reach through them the great spiritual truths shared with other Christian Churches.

In the second place, we need to recover more of that characteristic quality of the New Testament, which is specially linked to Believers' Baptism—the emphasis on the Spirit of God. It is this, more than any other single truth, which gives to the pages of the New Testament their expansive and vital atmosphere, the sense of great things to be and to do, and great powers with which to attain them. Its absence has more to do with our failures than we are ready to admit, for we may preach the New Testament Gospel without the energies of that Spirit which can make it the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. The recovery of this emphasis on the great things of the spiritual world, so much greater than our highest attempts to utter them, the witness to a baptism of the Spirit which exhilarates, expands, purifies the whole personality, intellectual and emotional and volitional—how much this would do to meet the growingly insistent needs of the world about us! Thought has changed and is changing; interests have shifted; some of the old appeals have lost their force, and only prejudice the eternal truths they seek to serve. The future, not of the Baptist Churches only, but of Protestantism as a whole, is at stake. Unless the Protestant Churches respond to the new demands the world is making upon them, they will surely meet with the fate of the Catholic Church, and pass into the background, whilst the Spirit of the ever-living God creates for Himself new organisms as His agents. The revival of religion will come, as all great and permanent revivals have come, in living relation to the whole national life, and will be felt by all the Churches that have not raised their barriers against its current. We need here the willingness to be led, and the patience that can learn to wait for the leading; but what is this but to say that we need a fuller, deeper, and more constant emphasis on the “spirituality” of the Gospel? To this Baptists are pledged by Believers' Baptism itself, for that baptism, in its New Testament context, is always a baptism of the Spirit.

Thirdly, there is need for a deeper recognition of the principle of individual liberty amongst Baptists themselves. We stand for three great truths as a consequence of Believers' Baptism, the necessity of conversion, the inspiration of Scripture, and the spirituality of the Church. But we must beware lest we thrust into the foreground any particular theory of each of these truths, as though the theory were itself the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Conversion is a spiritual necessity, but no catalogue of conversions can ever exhaust the ways by which the Spirit of God may lead a man into light. We need a wider, larger view of what conversion really and essentially is, in order to counteract the narrowness that would limit it to one particular type. Again, the inspiration of Scripture does not *necessarily* mean its verbal inspiration, as some Baptists seem to think. Whatever conclusion we reach as to the theory of inspiration, it is necessary to recognise that the same truth may be expressed in other ways, even if not, as we think, so adequately. This applies to all schools and types of thought. Further, the spirituality of the Church does not necessarily commit us to one particular form of polity and organisation; there are many ways in which baptised believers may organise their corporate life and service. Perhaps there is nothing that so hinders the efficacy of Baptist testimony to-day as the neglect of these warnings to respect the liberty of the individual conscience, in these three important applications. For that liberty is dishonoured by words and by judgments as well as by acts, and narrowness in these realms of personal judgment may alienate men from the truth as we conceive it, not less surely than did the more flagrant excesses of Anabaptism. Believers' Baptism means an individual approach to God, which no man can make for another, and every man must make in his own way. Let us grant, as well as claim, the fullest liberty.

Given these conditions, there is the clear promise of a growing success. There is a strong simplicity in the Baptist appeal, when once it is separated from the

excrescences and accretions which have sometimes disfigured it, that makes it powerful to convince in many ways. Believers' Baptism is Scripturally sound, psychologically true, intellectually free, symbolically rich in meaning. Its definite expression of a personal decision is attractive most of all to the young life that burns with loyalty to its own dimly seen ideals, and only needs guidance to find them realised in Christ. It is not fettered by a creed outworn, a historic document that should be left to the student and historian ; it makes a confession of faith that admits of new interpretation in each generation, without abandonment of the unchanging relationship of loyalty to Christ. It respects men's reason by its condemnation of sacramentarianism ; yet it provides a connecting link, a point of contact with the spiritual forces of New Testament Christianity, which is enough for the religious needs of life. Believers' Baptism, as the distinctive testimony of a Christian Church, is an asset so great that it can hardly be exaggerated, when once we have taught men to see the permanent spiritual principles which it effectively expresses. If these principles are faithfully set forth, and adorned by the life they should inspire, they will conquer modern democracy for Christ not less effectually than when they brought Roman imperialism to His feet in the early centuries.



**YORKSHIRE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE
17th AND 18th CENTURIES.**

BY

Rev. W. E. BLOMFIELD, B.A., B.D.

The following are the chief authorities which have been consulted :—

The Minute Books of the Churches of Rawdon and Bridlington,
kindly lent by Revs. A. H. West, B.A., B.D., and W. Slater.

Circular Letters of the Yorkshire Baptist Association.

History of the Baptists in Barnoldswick, by E. R. Lewis.

History of the Northern Baptist Churches, by David Douglas.

History of Cloughfold Baptist Church, by A. J. Parry.

History of the Baptist Church at Gildersome, by W. Radford
Bilbrough.

History of the English General Baptists, by Adam Taylor.

History of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Bacup, by Frederick
Overend.

John Smith the Se-Baptist, Thomas Helwys and the First Baptist
Church in England, by Walter H. Burgess.

History of the Heptonstall Slack Baptist Church, by E. G. Thomas.

History of the Baptist Church at Salendine Nook, by Dr. J. Stock.

Life of the Rev. John Hirst, of Bacup, by James Hargreaves.

Life of Dr. John Fawcett.

History of the Baptist Church in Hebden Bridge.

I have been also indebted to Rev. Dr. W. T. Whitley, of Preston,
for an outline Sketch of Baptist Churches in Yorkshire and Lancashire
(in MS. only) and for many suggestions, criticisms, and corrections.

W. E. B.

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Some introductory words must be written about the origins of English Baptist Churches. We shall deal first with the General or Arminian Baptists, and then with the Particular or Calvinistic Baptists. This is the true historical order.

Under Henry VIII. England broke with the Pope, although otherwise it remained Roman Catholic; under Edward VI. a Reformation, largely the work of politicians, was imposed by a resolute minority upon the nation; under Mary, England very naturally reverted to its old faith. Powerful forces, however, were at work which made change certain. The revival of learning and the invention of printing had produced a real national awakening. To these we must add the publication of the Greek Testament of Erasmus, followed by Tyndale's English New Testament, and by the advent of Continental Reformers to the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, whose labours resulted in a race of uncompromising English Protestants. Further, the horror produced by the Marian persecutions created a healthy hatred of Romanism, and turned the nation more decidedly to the Reformed faith. So when Elizabeth came to the throne, she found bishops and people more protestant than she liked. They wanted a radical Reformation, and, but for her, they would have had it. The result was of the nature

of a compromise, and the settlement of 1559 had in it the unrest and disruptions of the century to come. The immediate consequence was the *Puritan* movement. The Puritans were not Anti-state Churchmen, nor Independents, nor, at first, Presbyterians. They were not advocates of freedom to worship God. They had no objection whatever to the Government's enforcement of a specific faith and worship, only it must be *their* faith and worship. "That pious straitened preachers, in terror of offending God by idolatry, might not be cast out of their parishes for genuflexions, white surplices, and such like, but allowed some Christian liberty in mere external things—these were the claims of the Puritans" (Introduction to Carlyle's "Oliver Cromwell.") Against them an act of uniformity was passed, and numbers of them were deprived of their livings.

Some now went a step further. The English Church was hopelessly corrupt. What then? Separate from it. Let Christian people work out the Reformation, without waiting for any. So, in the later years of Elizabeth, we find congregations of Separatists in Norwich under Robert Browne, in London under Francis Johnson, a Yorkshireman, in Scrooby under John Robinson, and in Gainsborough under John Smyth. The Government determined to suppress these sectaries. The London leaders, Barrowe and Greenwood, were hanged, and great numbers of Englishmen fled to Holland.

In Amsterdam three Separatist Societies were formed. One of these was the home of the "Pilgrim Fathers." Our immediate interest centres in John Smyth and his company, for here we are at the source of Baptist Church life. In 1609, Smyth and many of his followers renounced *infant* baptism as unscriptural. Smyth baptised himself by affusion, and then baptised his friends, the most notable being Thomas Helwys. Thus the first English Baptist Church was formed in Amsterdam. It was "English" in that it consisted of Englishmen; it was "Baptist" in as far as it accepted believers only as the subjects of baptism. But it was not a Church proclaiming or practising immersion.

Thomas Helwys returned to England in 1611 and commenced Baptist work in London. Before leaving, the first Baptist Confession of faith was printed and published. It declares "That every Church is to receive in all their members by baptism upon the confession of their faith. . . . Baptism therefore in no wise appertaineth to infants." The Confession is Arminian in regard to doctrine, and its adherents became known as General Baptists because they believed in the Atonement as providing redemption for all, and not merely for a fraction of mankind. The General Baptists are of no importance for Yorkshire till Dan Taylor's time. Still, they were present and active earlier. The minutes of the Assembly in 1692 record that Brethren Reeves and Pardoe are authorised to "go into Yorkshire to preach the gospel, and plant Churches, and to set those in order that are there." A John Cox seems to have laboured ten years in this way and to have been suspended for Judaism. By this is probably meant Jewish views of the seventh day as the Sabbath. There were General Baptists in Sowerby, of whom perhaps the father of Archbishop Tillotson was one. And there were Baptists in Sheffield in 1700, who sought the help of the Lincolnshire Association.

Much more important for Yorkshire Baptists is the story of the origin of Particular or Calvinistic Baptist Churches. Here is the story in bare outline. There was founded in London in 1616 a Congregational Church. It is known as the Jacob-Lathorp-Jessey Church, being so called from the names of its first three ministers. They were all ex-clergymen. Henry Jacob was minister from 1616-24. He was at first more of a Puritan than a Separatist, though he was brought to Separatist views in Holland under the influence of John Robinson. Lathorp was minister from 1626-34. During his pastorate there was a secession, by some who had become convinced that the Parish Churches were not true Churches at all, and who therefore resented the intercourse held by their own Church with the Parish Churches. This conviction was not a little sharpened by the rigour of Laud's administration of the London

Diocese. In 1633 another company, holding a similar view, was granted a friendly dismissal. These formed a separate Church, of which Mr. John Spilsbury became minister. Henry Jessey became minister of the mother Church in 1637, and remained so till his death in 1663. He was a Yorkshireman, and had been deprived of his living of Aughton for Nonconformity. No sooner had he become the minister of this Separatist Church than a number of people, renouncing infant baptism, attached themselves to Mr. Spilsbury's Church. This was in 1638. The final stage was reached in 1642, when forty-one of Mr. Jessey's followers became believers in baptism by "dipping ye body." So then we have three stages in the evolution: (1) In 1633 baptism by the parish clergyman is repudiated; (2) In 1638 infant baptism is rejected; (3) In 1642 immersion is accepted as the only valid form of the ordinance. Amongst the seceders on the question of infant baptism were Hanserd Knollys and William Kiffin, who became pastors of the Baptist Churches in Coleman Street and Devonshire Square respectively. Jessey himself had become convinced of the true *mode* of baptism before he was clear about its proper *subjects*. For a time he immersed infants, but in 1645 he became wholly Baptist and was immersed by Knollys. He then immersed many of his own people, and the famous Jacob-Lathorp-Jessey Church became Baptist. Both the Church and the pastor are exceedingly attractive to the historian. Amongst the members at different periods were Praise-God Barbon, John Canne, Samuel Eaton, (sent to Newgate by Bishop Laud, where he died) Bridget Cromwell, (daughter of the great Protector) Thomas Hardcastle, (ex-vicar of Bramham, often imprisoned for Nonconformity, and afterwards Baptist minister of Broadmead Bristol) and several others, who were punished by the Court of High Commission. Henry Jessey became one of Cromwell's clerical "Triers," and like Bunyan he was an advocate of open communion. Hence, when in 1644 their first Confession of Faith was published by the Particular Baptists of London, Jessey, being regarded as unorthodox, was not invited to sign it. He was a man of unbounded

charity to the poor and suffering, regardless of their creed. The original languages of scripture were as familiar to him as his mother tongue, and by his visits to Wales, to assist in the organisation of the first Independent Church there, and afterwards in the formation of the first Welsh Baptist Church, he is linked with men like William Wroth, Walter Cradock, John Myles, and Vavasour Powell, the pioneers of that Free Church life which has rooted itself so deeply in the Principality.

At this period there were no Baptist Churches in the North of England. We have now to tell the story of the origin and growth of the societies formed in Yorkshire. But it is an almost herculean task to realise in any adequate manner the Yorkshire of the period culminating in the Revolution of 1688. England was without railways, steamboats, and tramways, without telephone and telegraph, without daily post and daily newspaper, without public libraries and common schools, without police system and standing army (beyond about 9000 men), without sanitation, electricity, gas, or any method of street illumination, and without anything like public roads as we know them. Under favourable circumstances a journey from Leeds to London took four days and it often took six. Then there was the constant peril of highwaymen. Macaulay tells of a traveller between London and Leeds encountering "such a series of perils and disasters as might suffice for a journey to the Arctic regions or the African wilds."

National trade and commerce were in their childhood. The total revenue from customs and excise was less than £2,000,000 against £73,000,000 to-day. The total exports of the whole country exceeded only by a little Bradford's present annual exports to America. Nearly four-fifths of the people were engaged in agricultural pursuits. Of five and a half millions of people one million were paupers. Arable and pasture land formed half the area of the Kingdom. The rest was mainly moor, forest, and fen. Cotton and woollen manufactures were in their infancy. About 700,000 tons of coal were brought to the surface annually, against a present

yearly output of 265,000,000 tons. The tonnage of three of our modern Dreadnoughts would far exceed that of the entire Royal Navy of those days.

Think also of the difference in the population then and now. It is not merely a question of numbers, but of the shifting of emphasis. To-day, out of England's population of thirty-four millions, over twelve millions, or considerably more than a third, live in the seven northern counties. The England of 1688 had a population of five and a half millions, of which less than eight hundred thousand inhabited these same counties, *i.e.*, only one seventh of the whole was resident in the ecclesiastical province of York. The population of Yorkshire was little above that of Bradford to-day. The mass of the people were scattered in small villages and hamlets. There were no large towns. York and Hull had each about 10,000 people, Leeds had 7000, Bradford 6000, Sheffield 3000, Huddersfield under 2000, Halifax 1300.

And just as in civilisation, culture, and general importance the North was far below the South, so it was in regard to religion. Long after the South was Protestant, the North still adhered to the old ways. When Grindal was translated from London to York in 1570 he came into a new world. Strype, in his life of the Archbishop, tells us that he had to issue injunctions against various mediæval customs, such as the ringing of handbells at burials to drive away evil spirits, the sales of the pedlar's wares in the Church porch on the Sabbath, breathing over the sacramental bread and wine, &c. Of preaching there was comparatively little, for the good reason that the clergy were unable to preach. To this conservatism and ignorance may be ascribed in part the late date at which our first Baptist Churches were founded. Further we must recognise the fact that the Stuart legislation sought to suppress every species of Nonconformity. The following is a mere summary : (1) In 1661 the Corporation Act passed by which no Nonconformist could hold any municipal office ; (2) In 1662 the Act of Uniformity silenced every Nonconformist minister. This Act, however, had very little influence on

Baptists, for there were few Baptists in Established Church pulpits and none in the North. (3) In 1664 the Conventicles Act forbade Nonconformists attending a Conventicle, or assembling together, to a number of more than five persons in addition to the members of a family, for any religious purpose, not in conformity with the Church of England. Punishment for the first offence was £5 and three months imprisonment. Double punishment was attached to a second offence, and transportation was the penalty for the third offence, after conviction before a single Justice of the Peace. This Act was an enormous barrier to the advance of Nonconformity. (4) In 1665 the Five Mile Act made it illegal for any ejected minister or teacher to come within five miles of any city, or corporate town, or parliamentary borough, or within five miles of any parish or place, where he had preached or taught, under penalty of £40 for each offence; (5) In 1670 the Conventicles Act was strengthened by a large increase in the penalties, and a series of contemptible provisions for the encouragement of informers, and for the coercion of magistrates in the work of punishing offenders; (6) In 1673 the Test Act required, under severe penalties, that everyone in the civil and military employment of the State should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, subscribe a declaration against Transubstantiation, and receive the Sacrament according to Anglican rites.

In 1689 the Toleration Act allowed large exemptions from the penalties of these persecuting laws, but none of the laws were repealed. The Act left the Unitarians and the Roman Catholics out in the cold. It freed Nonconformists from the necessity of attending the parish churches. It legalised attendance at Conventicles, which were duly certified before the bishops or magistrates. It allowed liberty of prophesying to the Nonconformist minister, who was prepared to prove his orthodoxy by subscribing the main doctrinal parts of the thirty-nine articles. More than that cannot be said. The Act was based on the principle of granting as little liberty as possible to the Nonconformists.

It is well for young people in our Churches to realise what it meant to be a Nonconformist in these days, and what heroic courage and faith were necessary to make a man a missionary advocate of such a despised and persecuted cause. Nonconformist Churches were born, grew up and flourished in spite of every device to destroy them. Even down to 1800, every Dissenter was excluded from all civil and ecclesiastical employment of honour and profit. No Dissenter could hold any position of command in the army or navy, nor enter Parliament, nor sit upon the bench, nor graduate at the Universities, nor be admitted to a degree in medicine, nor collect the revenue. They could be married only in the Anglican Church. They could get their children's births registered, only by having them baptised in the Anglican Church. They could secure grammar school education for their sons, only as they gave up the boys to be drilled in the catechism and creed of the Anglican Church. They were compelled to pay Church rates, to serve as Churchwardens if called upon, or to find substitutes at their own expense. At the close of the eighteenth century three successive attempts were made to secure the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and all of them were frustrated. They could not even command the assent of the Commons.

Such is the condition of things in which the Yorkshire Churches, of which I have to write, had their origin. Doubtless there were Baptists in the North at this period and much earlier. We have evidence that in 1647 there were "Anabaptist" preachers in York. Cromwell's army contained many Baptists, and one or two Northern Baptist Societies owed their inception to the zeal of his Ironsides. But there is little evidence of organised Baptist life in Yorkshire. There was in 1655 a Society of Baptists at Horton, near Bradford, whose leaders David Lumbey and John Clayton were in correspondence with Cromwell. But of its origin, size, and history we have no particulars. Up to the close of the seventeenth century we have nothing but a stray gleam here and there of a Baptist Church.

The history of our Yorkshire Churches during the seven-

teenth and eighteenth centuries may be reviewed under the following heads :—

- I. Churches originating from the Baptist Churches of Hexham or Newcastle, or bound up with the early Northumbrian Association, in which the Hexham and Newcastle Churches were leaders.
- II. Churches originating from the Church of Christ in Rossendale, which was the outcome of the evangelistic labours of two Yorkshiremen—William Mitchel and David Crosley.
- III. Churches originating from the great evangelical Revival of Wesley and Whitfield. These Churches are identified with the names of two Yorkshiremen—John Fawcett and Dan Taylor.

I.—CHURCHES ORIGINATING FROM HEXHAM OR NEWCASTLE, OR IDENTIFIED WITH THE OLD NORTHUMBRIAN ASSOCIATION.

The first Baptist community in Yorkshire, whose origin is known to us, was founded in **Stokesley** in 1653. Stokesley is in the north-east of the County, and on the borders of the Vale of Cleveland. In 1651 Thomas Tillam, a member of the Church of Hanserd Knollys in London, had come to Hexham in a two-fold capacity, (1) as Lecturer at the Abbey Church on behalf of the Society of Mercers in London; (2) as messenger from the Baptist Church in Coleman Street to the Baptists scattered throughout the District. His name is inscribed on a tablet in the Abbey Church as one of its Lecturers. Here Tillam formed a Baptist Society. Local archæologists think that its first meeting place was the vestibule of the Chapter House. In the records of the Hexham Church, for 1653, we find the following: "The fifth month, the third day, we prepared for the great work at Stokesley, seven members engaging in the journey, where

Mr. William Kaye, the minister, (*i.e.*, parish clergyman), and nineteen with him were baptised by Thomas Tillam; a work of wonder, and calling for our high praises. In our journey going and returning, eight persons were baptised and are since added to the Church of Hexham." Thus, through Hexham, the first bit of definite Baptist work in Yorkshire—the first administration of the ordinance of Believers' Baptism known to us—is linked with the Particular Baptist Church in London whose origin has already been traced. The Church at Stokesley probably never had a separate existence, being only a branch of Hexham.

We have no further knowledge of Yorkshire Baptist Churches till 1690 or more probably 1692. By the latter date Northern Particular Baptists had formed an Association, called the Northumbrian or Northern Association. A meeting of the Association was held in that year. Six Churches were represented, *viz.*: Newcastle, Bitchburn, (a branch of the Hexham Church in Durham) Egremont and Broughton, (from Cumberland) Wolverstone, *i.e.*, Ulverston, (this was almost certainly Torver in Lancashire, afterwards known as Hawkshead Hill, a child of the Hexham Church) and **Pontefract**. Alas! all authentic facts about this Church at Pontefract have perished. Oliver Cromwell was here in 1648, and the castle underwent a siege of several months. It may be that the Church was originated by some of his soldiers. More probably it was the result of the evangelistic labours of Richard Pits, of Newcastle, who was preaching in these parts in 1677. In Hunter's "Life of Oliver Heywood," (p. 280), there is a reference to his meeting with "Richard Pits and Isaac Taylor, Anabaptists," who had come to confer about the admission of some friend of Heywood's to their fellowship. This meeting took place in the vicinity of York. And it is probable that we should date the Baptist Church in Pontefract from about 1677, or some years earlier, and ascribe its origin to Richard Pits of Newcastle. This is, after all, only the likeliest supposition. Knowledge of the origin and history of the Pontefract Church we have none.

Bridlington also was connected with the Northumbrian Association and comes next in order. Here the story is unequivocal. The following is from the ancient Church-book, which has been well preserved. "The 16th September, 1698. The gracious God having to the praise of His free grace called a people out of the world unto Himself, in and about Bridlington, they were formed into a Church state the day and year above, by declaring themselves willing to resign up themselves to the Will, Power, and Authority of Christ. . . . The 18th of September, 1698, the Church above did with one consent call forth for their Teacher ROBERT PRUDOM, to preach the Gospel and administer all ordinances in order to a regular ordination, and also John Oxtoby to officiate in the office of Deacon in order to ordination if God so guide. Before us whose names are underwritten John Ward, Henry Blacket, Richard Pitts, (*sic*), Henry Wolfe." The first two were leaders in the Hexham Church (Bitchburn), Pitts was from Newcastle, Wolfe from Pontefract. He was probably Teacher there. This is the only gleam left of the Pontefract Church. The traditional account of the origin of the Bridlington Church is fairly attested, and may be set down here. A farmer in Scotland, having serious doubts as to the scripturalness of infant baptism, visited London, was convinced of the truth of Baptist views, and was baptised on a confession of his faith in Christ. On his return to Scotland by sea, a storm drove the vessel into Bridlington Bay, where he put on shore for a day or two. Here, meeting with a Mr. Robert Prudom, and conversing on the subject of baptism, the Scotchman won a convert. Prudom was baptised by Benjamin Keach in Southwark, and then began the work at Bridlington. Tradition is proverbially unreliable, but the story is given by Rev. Isaac Mann, M.A., in the "Baptist Magazine" for 1821. Mr. Mann had fair opportunities of knowing the facts. He was a native of the town, and a member of the Church, having been baptised in 1802. In his early days he would unquestionably be intimate with old members, who had held intercourse with men and women conversant with

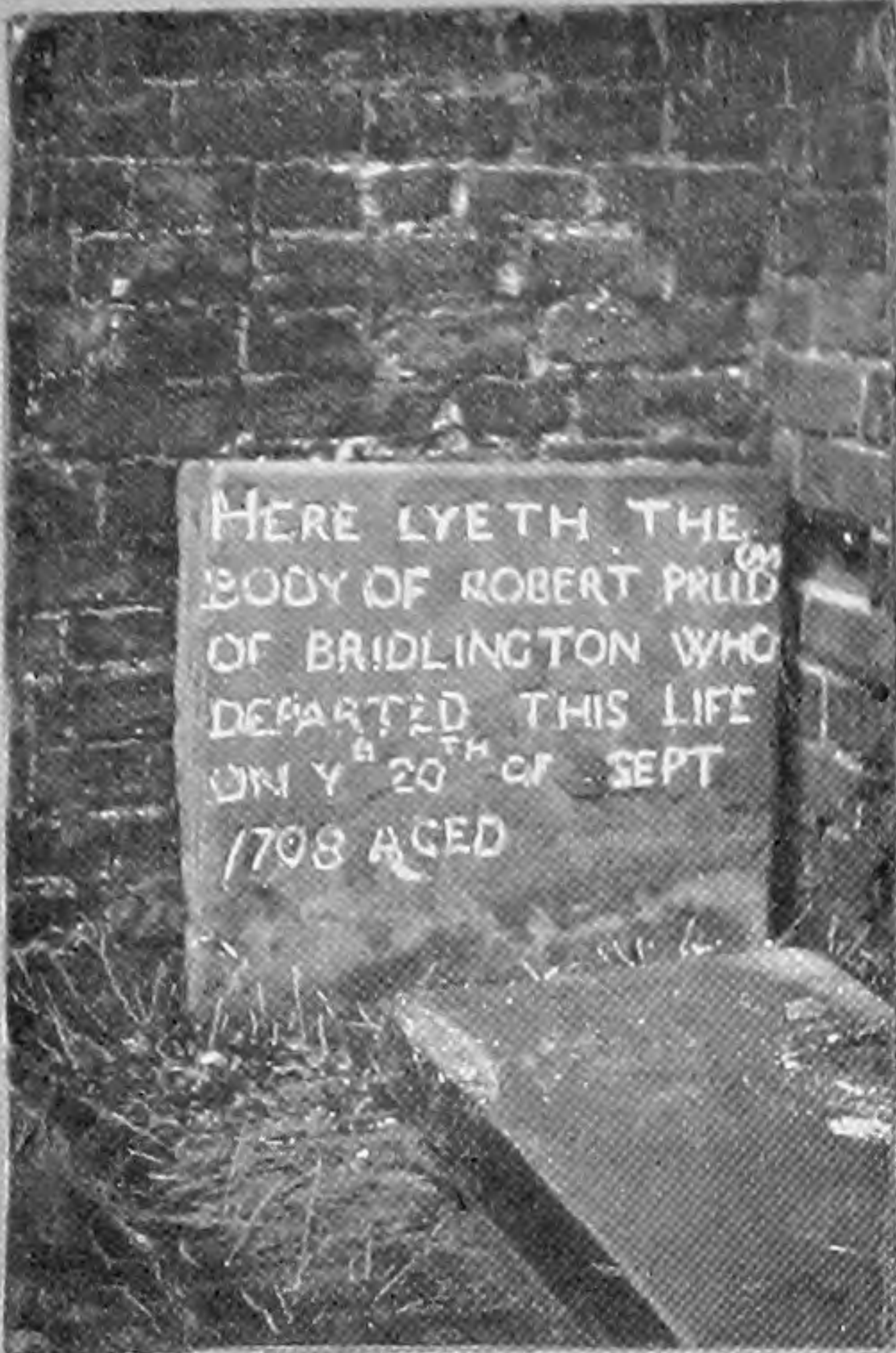
the story of the origin of the work in Bridlington. Amongst the regulations of the newly-formed Church we find the following: (1) "That the last Thursday in every month should be solemnly and seriously observed in all such duties as the Lord shall enable us to perform, the meeting to begin between nine and ten o'clock, and upon special occasions to be turned into a fasting day"; (2) "That the members shall give unto the Deacon, as the Lord shall open their hearts, by him to be distributed to the poor and other uses that the Church calls for." The Church now joined the Northumbrian Association and remained in membership with it for many years, meetings being held at Bridlington in 1712, 1723, 1728, and 1732. Robert Prudom's pastorate continued till his death in 1708. His meeting house was hardly larger than a small sitting-room. It still stands, and attached thereto is a little burial ground, in which the pastor and some of his flock were laid to rest. An interregnum of nearly five years followed when GEORGE BRAITHWAITE undertook the leadership in 1713. He belonged to an Episcopalian family of Hawkshead, and was intended for the Anglican ministry. He was educated at the famous grammar school, where later the poet Wordsworth was a pupil. Thence he went to Oxford University and graduated. After this he went to London, and there he became a Baptist. Having been baptised he returned to his native place, and erected a meeting house, largely at his own expense. From Hawkshead he came to Bridlington. His ministry of twenty years there was exceedingly fruitful. The work extended on all sides. He baptised converts from Benton, North Burton, Driffield, Flamborough, Hull, and Scarborough. A new meeting house became necessary, and this at length was enlarged, and then remained the home of the Church for one hundred and fifty years. Over sixty persons were baptised by Mr. Braithwaite. Some of his people had to travel many miles on foot, in order to enjoy the privileges of Church fellowship. Hence, on December 2nd, 1725, it was agreed "that a meeting be held every Friday at six o'clock in ye evening to be carryd on by Prayer and Exposition. That

so many of ye brethren as can be conveniently got together hear and receive the account of their experience, who may at any time come from places at a distance to profess for Baptism and Communion with ye Church, and have not convenience to tarry here from ye Church meeting to the Lord's Day." In 1733 Braithwaite, who had become well known in Baptist circles, removed to Devonshire Square, London. His removal was hastened by the publication of his book entitled "The Nation's Reproach and the Churches' Grief." This was an outspoken and uncompromising protest against intemperance, with exceedingly pointed reference to the drinking customs of the Bridlingtonians. The minister was regarded as an enemy, because he had told them the truth. We must not class Mr. Braithwaite with total abstainers, but he deserves to be held in honour as an early pioneer of temperance reform. After a brief and eventless ministry by WILLIAM WELLS of Tottlebank, RICHARD MACHIN was introduced to Bridlington by Braithwaite in 1737. Here is a picture of the ordination of four deacons, George Nessfield, Robert Sedgefield, Marmaduke Slumber, and Michael Cannome, on Sunday, June 5th, 1737, Mr. Machin the new pastor, Geo. Braithwaite the ex-pastor, John Sedgefield of Tottlebank, and Alvery Jackson of Barnoldswick officiating. "Mr. John Sedgefield spent sometime from Acts 6th, to display the office and duty of a deacon; after which the said Mr. John Sedgefield, with the imposition of the right hand of every pastor present on the head of Bro. George Nessfield, prayd over him—then in like manner Mr. George Braithwaite, Bro. Robert Sedgefield, which was succeeded by Mr. Alvery Jackson's praying over Bro. Marmaduke Slumber, and the whole concluded by Mr. Richard Machin's praying over Bro. Michael Cannome—the hands of the pastors being on the heads of ye Deacons during the time each was prayd over." Mr. Machin's pastorate was terminated by death in 1743. The next twenty-four years were a broken and very trying period. JOHN MITCHELL, (or Mitchel?), a native of Rawdon, was minister in 1746, but soon retired to his home to die of consumption. Then,

during four years, John Oulton, afterwards minister of the Rawdon Church, supplied the pulpit. In 1754 THOMAS WILBRAHAM, also associated with the Rawdon Church, became a regular supply, and in 1761 he was ordained pastor. He was blind, but a very acceptable preacher. After a brief period he embraced Sandemanian tenets, gave up the ministry, and became a schoolmaster. Another interval followed, and then JOSEPH GAWKRODGER became minister in 1767. He was the son of an Irish Episcopal clergyman, had been baptised at Rawdon, and was called out by that Church to preach the Gospel. He had just terminated a pastorate of nine years in Shipley, where he planted the first Baptist Church. Considerable prosperity was enjoyed during his ministry. Ninety-seven were baptised. Discipline was strictly maintained. A revised declaration of faith was drawn up. The time was one when Baptist Churches were multiplying in the district. John Wesley also visited Bridlington in 1779, and a society of Methodists was formed. A local historian says, that to Mr. Gawkrodger's diligent oversight large credit must be given for the survival of the Church. He resigned his charge in 1794, and was succeeded by ROBERT HARNESS, whose long ministry covered nearly half of the nineteenth century.

Bridlington has been a mother of Churches. Of these we name the following in order of seniority :—

(1) **Hull.** Reference has been made to converts from Hull baptised by George Braithwaite. These were formed into a separate Church in 1736. Their first place of meeting was in an old tower called King Henry VIII.'s Tower, situate in Manor Alley. The first minister, THOMAS GIBSON, did not live to see his ordination day, for in making a voyage to London he and his wife were drowned in 1737. THOMAS PALMER succeeded in 1740. He published a little volume on Baptism in 1750, and in 1752 returned to Broughton Church in Cumberland, whence he had come to Hull. JONATHAN BROWN came from Rawdon in 1752, but soon left owing to some difference between him and his father-in-law, a wealthy member of the Church. In 1755 THOMAS

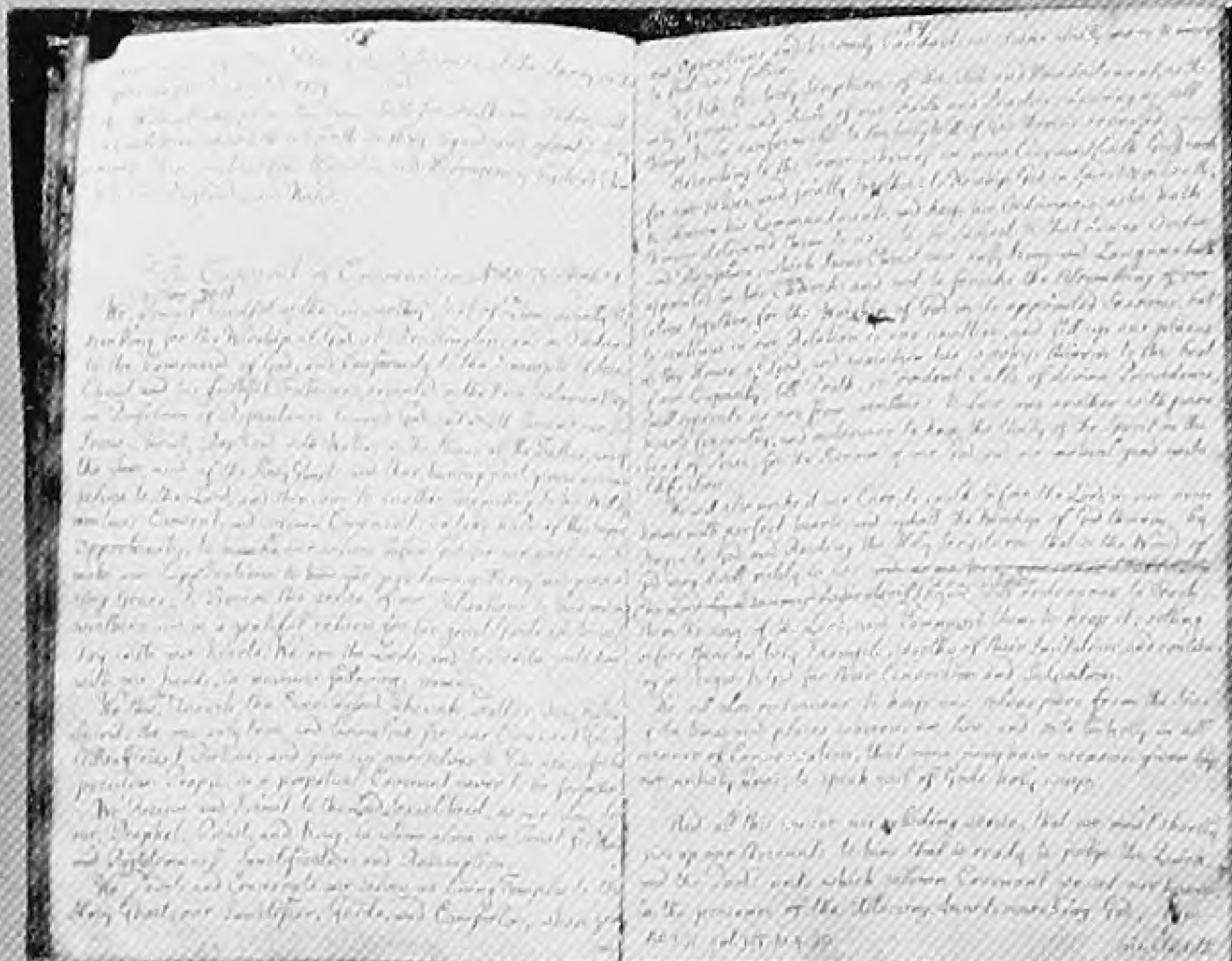


PRUDOM'S GRAVE

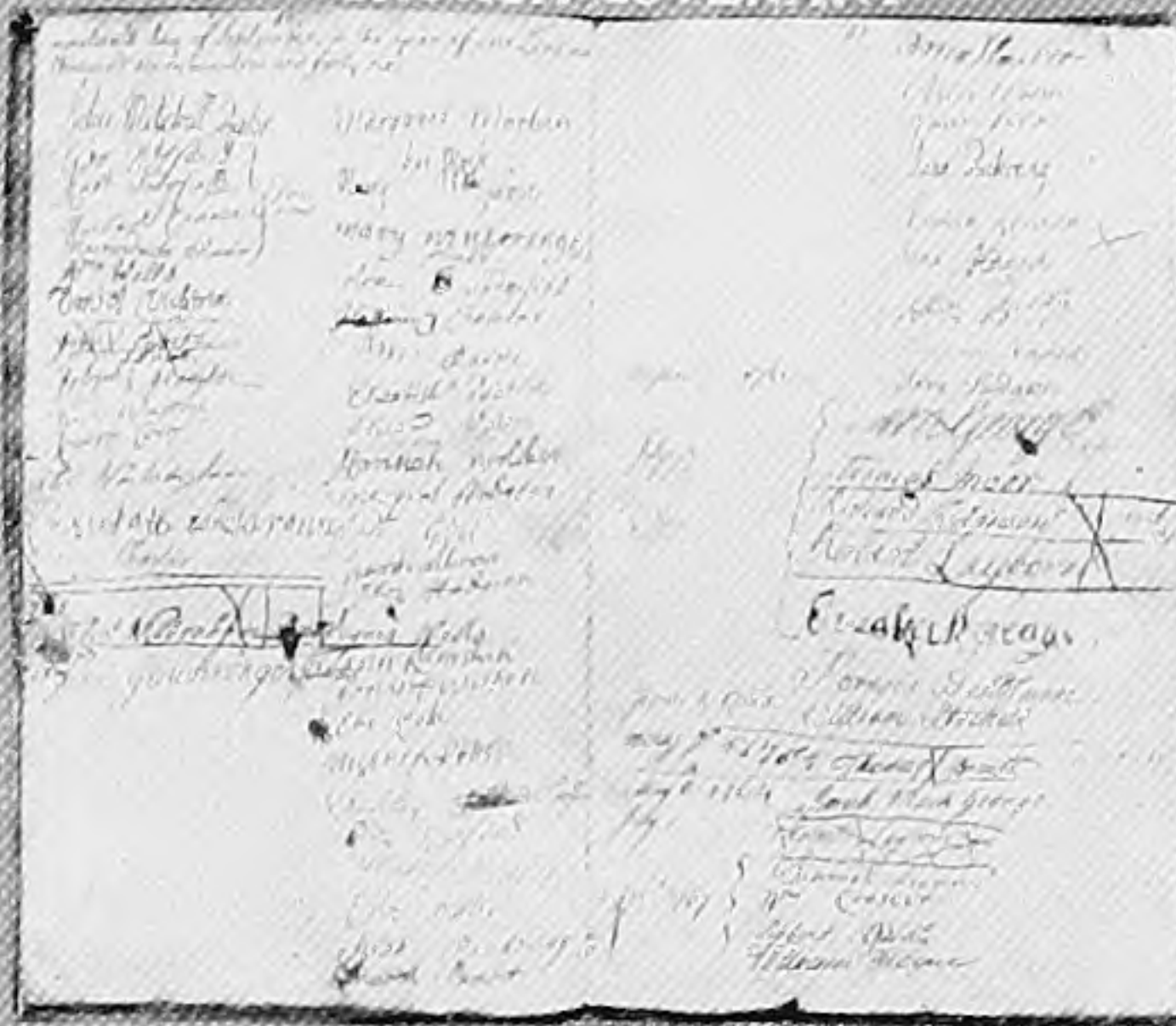


SECOND CHAPEL

BRIDLINGTON CHURCH
FOUNDED SEP 16TH 1698.



CHURCH COVENANT



CHURCH ROLL



FIRST PLACE OF MEETING.



FIRST CHAPEL.



NEW CHAPEL.



NEW CHAPEL-INTERIOR.

BIRCHCLIFFE

HALIFAX DISTRICT.

WEBB of Bristol became minister, and remained only two years. During his ministry a new meeting house was opened in Salthouse Lane. WILLIAM THOMPSON came from Butterwick in 1758, and remained till 1762 when he removed to Boston. This period was a stormy one, and the Church was in a very unhealthy condition. Confusion and disorder prevailed. Unseemly wrangles over the points of difference between Arminians and Calvinists took the place of united service for the good of mankind. The moral tone of the Church was low. One minister was dismissed for misconduct. JOSEPH TWINING ministered from 1762-65, ROBERT RUTHERFORD from 1765-1770. When he left there was a secession, and a new meeting place was erected in Dagger Lane for the malcontents. The Hull people of this date must have been a wild folk. John Wesley tells on his first visit there in 1752 that "many behaved as if possessed by Moloch." The windows of his lodging place were smashed, and till midnight he and his host were saluted with oaths curses stones and brickbats. A better time was in store for the Church, when JOHN BEATSON of Sutton was called to the pastorate in 1771. His labours were highly successful. The congregation and Church grew steadily. The strife of the people was allayed. The chapel had to be enlarged to accommodate the numbers who wished to hear Mr. Beatson. He had been brought up in the Anglican Church, but the study of the New Testament convinced him of the truth of the Baptist position. Dr. Fawcett says "He was a close thinker; his sermons were well digested and his printed works are highly esteemed." In 1773 Mr. Beatson published "The Divine Character of Christ considered." In 1774 "The Divine Satisfaction of Christ considered." He also published a sermon on "The Slave Trade," and an essay on "The Divine right of a Christian to freedom of enquiry and practice in religious matters." Mr. Beatson was clearly a man of much intellectual force, and disposed to grapple with the great problems of Theology. He resigned his pastorate in 1794, and died four years later at the early age of fifty-five. There was a division of opinion as to his successor.

William Pendered officiated for a time and was appreciated by many, but there was a split resulting in Pendered's secession with a number of his followers. For the new Church now formed George Street Chapel was built. It was opened for public worship by Robert Hall in 1796, and here on October 20th of the same year, William Pendered baptised William Ward, one of the immortal trio of Baptist missionaries, who laboured in Serampore and inaugurated the era of modern missionary enterprise. The story of the early Baptist Church in Hull is melancholy reading, but from out the gloom this particular incident shines upon us like a star. John Hindle followed John Beatson in Salt-house Lane in 1794, and he was succeeded in 1799 by Mordaunt Cracherode, an Independent minister who had been baptised by Dr. John Rippon in London. Pendered was followed by James Lyons of Plymouth, in the ministry at George Street Chapel.

(2) **Bishop Burton Church** was founded in 1764. There is no direct evidence that it was an offshoot from Bridlington, but the supposition that it was due to the influence of Bridlington is exceedingly probable. It is in the Bridlington sphere. The churches in the vicinity own their existence to the Bridlington Church. And we know also that Mr. Braithwaite preached in North Burton. At its formation the Church numbered fifteen members, and for six years the little company were fortunate in having as their minister a gifted brother, Richard Hopper, resident in the village. By his influence and owing to his successful labours, the meeting house now in use was erected. With the larger prospect thus opened, and at the recommendation of Mr. Hopper, the Church sought Mr. David Kinghorn, assistant pastor of the Church at Tuthill Stairs Newcastle, for their minister. Mr. Kinghorn was ordained in 1770, Mr. Hopper and Mr. Gawkrodger of Bridlington taking part in the service. His ministry was a long and useful one, reaching to the end of the century. Amongst those baptised by him was his son Joseph, afterwards minister in Norwich for forty years, and

the famous protagonist of Robert Hall in the communion controversy.

(3) **Scarborough.** Sir J. Lawson, an Admiral in Cromwell's Navy, resided here for many years. He was a Baptist, but there is no record of any Church being formed till 1771. William Hague was a Wesleyan resident in Scarborough. He became convinced as to baptism and was baptised by Mr. Gawkrodger at Bridlington. Other baptisms followed and a handful of people took a room in Quay Street for worship. They were then formed into a separate Church with WILLIAM HAGUE as their pastor. A meeting house was erected in 1776 and enlarged three times. Mr. Hague's successful ministry continued till 1816.

(4) **Driffield.** In 1786 certain members of the Bridlington Church removed to Driffield. At this time Mr. William Wrightson was accustomed to journey from Hull to Cranswick, a village three miles from Driffield, for the purpose of preaching. Mr. Wrightson was invited to preach at Driffield too. Services were held in the open air. Then part of an old brewery was used. A Church was formed in 1787, and a meeting house was erected in 1788, when Mr. WRIGHTSON became minister. After his resignation in 1795, the Church was served for many years by local supplies.

Beverley. A Church of Scotch Baptists was formed here in 1791. The first entry in the minute book runs: "This Church was originally a branch of the Church in Hull." This also was probably a Scotch Baptist Church, but of it nothing is known. The Beverley Church still lives and meets in Wilbert Lane. It has never belonged to the Yorkshire Association, and must not be confounded with the Church meeting in Lord Roberts Road, which was formed much later.

The remaining Churches, belonging to our first main group, owe their existence to the ancient Hexham Church. They are (1) **Woodhall and Midlam.** The Church dates from 1772, and was due to the removal of a family connected with

The Baptists of Yorkshire

Mr. David Fernie's Church in Hamsterley (a branch of the Hexham Church). Coming to reside in Woodhall, Mr. Fernie visited them and formed a society of fourteen persons resident in Woodhall and Midlam. (Charles Kingsley was Canon of Midlam, or, as it is spelt in his biography, Middleham). Apparently there was never any settled minister, and in later years the remnant of the little flock united with the Church at Bedale.

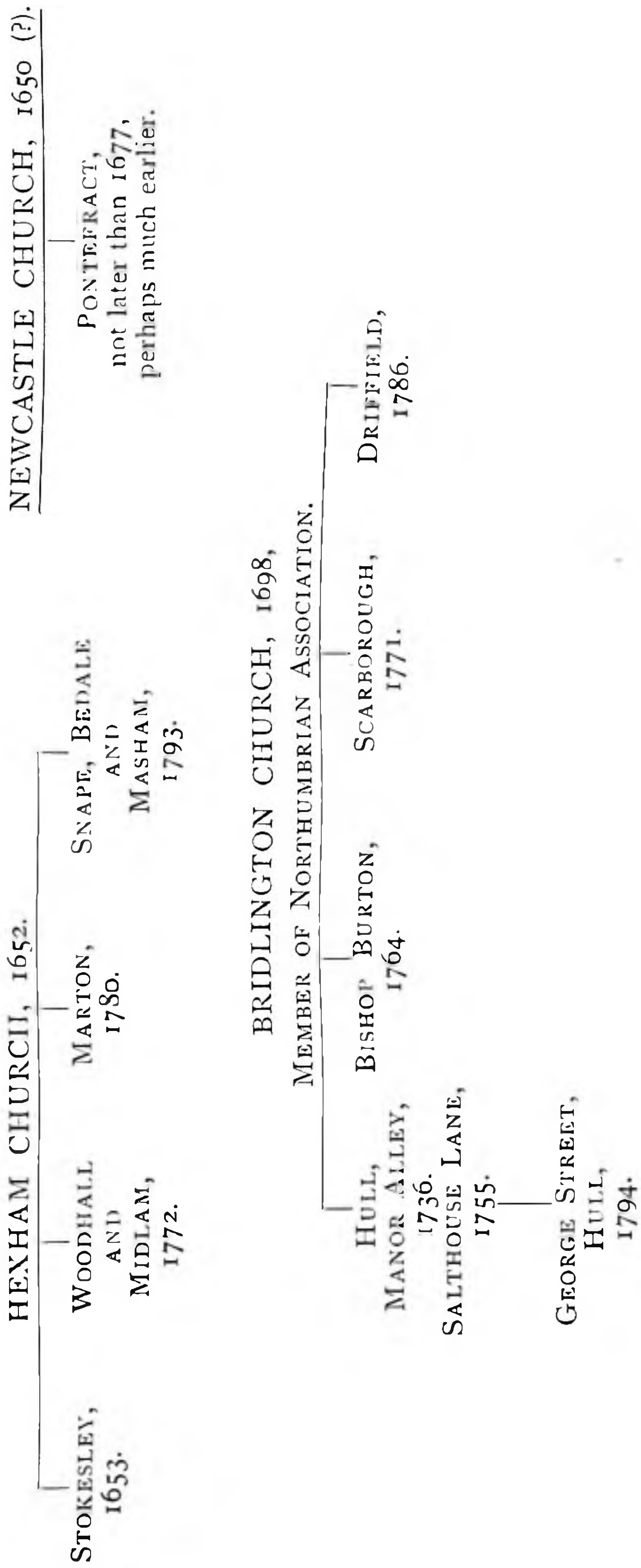
(2) **Snape, Bedale, and Masham.** In 1792 Charles Whitfield, minister of Hamsterley, was preaching at Woodhall. William Terry, a watchmaker of Bedale, a hearer of John Wesley, was present and became a convert to the principle of Believers' Baptism. He and other of his friends were baptised at Hamsterley, and William Terry was requested by the Church to preach amongst his neighbours in Bedale. The result of this was a further visit from Mr. Whitfield in 1793, when he preached in a barn at Snape, and baptised three persons in a rivulet near the village. A Church was formed, William Terry was chosen pastor and ministered continuously till his death in 1819, preaching once every Sunday in each of the three places, Masham, Bedale, and Snape. At this time there were no Church buildings. Services were held in private houses. Later, the society at Snape was absorbed in the Churches of Bedale and Masham.

(3) **Marton.** This Church also was due to David Fernie's work. He came to Stockton-on-Tees and began to preach in his son's house. This was in 1780. He was asked to preach in Marton (Captain Cook's birthplace). Here he was very successful, and a small building was erected. Up till 1790, Fernie preached here twice on Sundays, and once in Stockton. Valentine Short succeeded. He seems to have concentrated his labours on the rising populous town, visiting Marton only once a month. A little later he resigned the care of Marton to an Independent minister, by the name of Norris, who was sent here. The Baptists of Marton united with the Church in Stockton.

Summing up our study of this group, we have the work at Stokesley, Snape, Bedale, and Masham, Woodhall and Midlam, and Marton, due to the ancient Hexham Church ; the work at Pontefract probably due to the Newcastle Church ; whilst the Church at Bridlington, an early and prominent member of the Northumbrian Association, was the mother of all the rest, certainly of the Churches in Hull, Scarborough, and Driffeld, and perhaps of the Church in Bishop Burton. The Scotch Baptist Church in Beverley, originating from a similar community in Hull, stands by itself.



EARLY YORKSHIRE CHURCHES, DUE TO THE CHURCHES OF HEXHAM OR
 NEWCASTLE, OR IDENTIFIED WITH THE NORTHUMBRIAN ASSOCIATION.



II.—CHURCHES ORIGINATING FROM THE CHURCH IN ROSSENDALE.

Lancashire and Yorkshire suffered severely under the persecuting Acts of the Stuarts, and furnished about 250 clergymen, who for conscience surrendered their livings. There were accordingly considerable numbers of Protestant Dissenters in the two counties. Some of these constituted the early membership of the Rossendale Church. But at the beginning it is a misnomer to speak of a Church at all. We must rather think of a loosely-organised circuit, somewhat after the fashion of the Methodists—a number of preaching stations, over which two evangelists exercised a general superintendence. Pastors there were none, officers there were none, and there was no provision for the regular administration of the Sacraments. There were simply groups of Protestant Dissenters, with no pronounced ecclesiastical leanings. Probably they were nearer to Presbyterianism than aught else, for the religious atmosphere was Presbyterian. How this Rossendale circuit became a Church, how it constructed a constitution of its own, how it gradually approximated to the Congregational type, how it was led to adopt Baptist views, and finally how it broke up and gave place to separate Churches is the subject of enquiry. It is full of interest for Yorkshire Baptists, for here we are at the sources of our Church life of to-day.

The story is bound up with two remarkable personalities, that of WILLIAM MITCHEL and that of DAVID CROSLEY “cousins by nature, brothers by grace, and fellow labourers in the Lord’s vineyard.” They were born at Heptonstall, near Hebden Bridge, and were christened in Heptonstall Church, as the parish registers testify, Mitchel in 1662, and Crosley in 1669. We know nothing of Mitchel’s home life. He tells us that when he was eighteen years old, “some sharp convictions for sin, wickedness, and gross profaneness, began at times to rest on me, and to flash in my conscience like a fire, which spoiled my pleasure in sin many times, under the weight

of which for most of a year I walked, before I attained to anything of reformation. . . . Then after seeing my sin and the danger my soul was in, I attained to some reformation of life, as hearing, reading, praying, circumspect walking, and the like ; after which I became a strict hearer and follower of the Presbyterians, was built more up in a legal reformation, without Christ and the regenerating work of grace in the heart. . . . Then came the dispensation and hand of God upon me, which discovered to me the iniquity of my holy things. Sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful ; then I abhorred myself and all my own works, righteousness and ways. And, when I was brought to despair of all things else, God in due time revealed Christ and the riches of His free grace to me . . . wrath, death, and horror were passed away, and all things became new in my soul." From this time Mitchel was possessed with a strong desire to proclaim the riches of God's love to his fellow men, but he made objections and excuses. He feared exposure to dangers, (doubtless the persecuting laws) and so for a year he betook himself to the world, to make cloth get gain and become rich. He compares himself to Jonah fleeing from the presence of the Lord, and like Jonah he was brought to see his folly and repent. " After which I was made more willing, notwithstanding my own heart's weakness, and unfitness in the eye of reason, and the opposition that appeared from earth and hell, to go forth and preach the Gospel." From this time, 1682, Mitchel never looked back. Crosley, seven years younger than his cousin, was carefully brought up by an aunt, (probably a Mrs. Mitchel, of Barnoldswick) and was converted when a boy of twelve. He used to read printed sermons aloud to his aunt, and he clearly indicated the bent of his mind by composing sermons of his own, and then, reading them as the production of some well known author, he would seek her judgment on them. So when Mitchel had chosen his career, Crosley was feeling strong attractions towards the same work. In 1684 or 1685 Mitchel began the life of an itinerant evangelist. Crosley attended his cousin as a hearer, and Mitchel's preaching

is thus characterised : " His chief design was to set forth the exceeding rich and free grace of the gospel, which toward him had been so exceeding abundant. This he did with that peculiar fervour, simplicity, and application, as presently brought crowds of people from divers parts to hear him. Many at first only designed to gratify their curiosity, but those who had patience to hear him usually met with such scripture evidence in his doctrine, and with such plain marks of the genuine simplicity of his pretensions, that they were led to confess that the Lord was with him of a truth. These things were a special means to prevent the effects which might otherwise have proceeded from his unpolished manner and harsh delivery." (Preface to "Jachin and Boaz.") These journeys and the earnest addresses then delivered by Mitchel "spurred and pricked" Crosley towards the work of preaching. But the time was not yet. About the end of 1685 Mitchel was apprehended under the Conventicle Act, and imprisoned at Goodshaw for three months. In the following year he was apprehended near Bradford, and was for six months in York Castle. In 1687 King James found it convenient to curry favour with Nonconformists. Hence an Indulgence was proclaimed, to which Mitchel owed his liberation.

We may fix 1687 or 1688 as the date when Mitchel and Crosley began their joint labours of evangelisation in Lancashire and Yorkshire. The time was favourable to their enterprise. The Revolution had brought Nonconformists relief, and all through the land they took full advantage of their freedom. Between 1688 and 1700 two thousand four hundred and eighteen dissenting places of worship were licensed. Yorkshire was not behind; John Moore, a convert of Mitchel's, had houses of his registered for worship in Rawdon (1689), in Guiseley (1695), and in Horsforth (1697). The house of Thomas Beeston at Esholt was registered in 1690; the house of Thomas Feather of Nortis in Haworth in 1693. As early as 1691 Mitchel can speak of having "above twenty licensed places," and of having continued his ministry "in a matter of forty miles

compass to the good and conversion of many." And from the correspondence recently published by Rev. F. Overend of Bacup, we find that Mitchel and Crosley had licensed houses at Heaton, Windhill (near Bradford), Kildwick, Bowling, Hunslet Hall, Burley, Horton, Greenwoodlee (probably the barn attached to the house), Gildersome, Stanbury, Goodshaw, Hepton Bridge, Priestrupt, Lindley, Cowling Hill, Horsforth, Guiseley, Bacup, Barnoldswick, and Cringles. Crosley writes and says "I have lodged in two hundred houses on behalf of my unworthy services in the gospel."

In 1690 Crosley went on a preaching tour to the Midlands and the South. During this journey he made his first acquaintance with Baptists. He writes: "We came the first Sabbath to Derby, where we would have joined with the Presbytery, for there was no sort of meeting else; but the Lord suffered us not. . . . Coming on the next Sunday to Lichfield . . . we found something of God in a sort of poor despised people, called Particular Baptists." From Lichfield he travelled to Worcester where again he fell in with Baptists, and continued there nine days preaching the gospel with great acceptance. So deep was the impression made on Crosley's mind, that he writes to his friends in the North, "I will not say I have found men better grounded in the principles of religion than some of you, neither that I have heard purer doctrine taught than is taught amongst you in none of these societies; but I have found better orders, more godly sincerity, Saints' community, and Christian love than with most of you by a good deal; we are much a-wanting."

In 1690 he came to London. Again he speaks of Baptists, and says that he finds most of truth with the Independents and with them, or here and there with the Quakers. He returned to Lancashire during the summer, and on his way back preached to the Bedford congregation, of which the renowned John Bunyan had been minister.

In 1691 he was again in London, and on July 28th preached in Mr. Pomfret's meeting house, (Presbyterian)

Gravel Lane, Spitalfields, and this sermon made him famous. He was the guest of John Strudwick, of Snow Hill, Holborn, in whose house Bunyan had died three years previously. The sermon (on "Samson") was suggested by tapestry in Strudwick's dining-room. On that tapestry were wrought the figures of Samson and the lion. In accordance with the spiritualising methods of the age, Crosley saw in this a type of Christ fighting with the great adversary of man. Such was the effect of the sermon that its publication was requested before the preacher left the pulpit. A gentleman arose and proposed to have the discourse printed at his own expense. This was agreed to, and a thousand copies were sold in six months. Crosley's sermon in the Bedford meeting house, and his visit to Strudwick's home, are the only traces of any connection with Bunyan. The stories about their friendship, of Crosley's journeys to propagate Bunyan's principles, and of Bunyan's acceptance of Crosley as a candidate for the ministry are pure myth. Crosley was only nineteen years of age when Bunyan died; there is not a shred of evidence that he was ever in the South till after Bunyan's death; and though he was impressed by the Baptists, he was as yet not only unbaptised, but his associations were more Presbyterian than aught else.

Meanwhile Mitchel was pursuing his evangelistic work with unremitting ardour. In July, 1691, he writes to the friends in York, who had visited him in his imprisonment, and speaks of the progress of his work. He refers to his converts and the widespread nature of his ministry, and closes by saying, "What God's mercies have been to me since my imprisonment and to others through me, are so many and numberless that neither tongue nor pen can give an account thereof. We have the most communion with the Independents, Baptist and Congregational."

The year 1692 was of great importance in the history of the movement in the North. It witnessed the erection of the first building for worship in Bacup. The expense was defrayed by voluntary contributions of friends of the two Evangelists, Conformists and Nonconformists. According to

the Trust Deed the building was erected (1) for a school house ; (2) for the use and behoof of Protestant Dissenters for ever in manner and form following, and first to the use and behoof of William Mitchel and David Crosley, for and during their natural lives . . . to have free liberty before any other minister or ministers, to exercise, pray, teach, and preach the true word of God and doctrine of Christ, in the aforesaid school house, as often as they shall have occasion to do the same." This meeting house now became the centre of operations, here the Rossendale Church was organised with its specific polity and officers, and to this place and its leaders the little companies scattered over East Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire looked for guidance. And by degrees the Church became distinctively Baptist.

Crosley was somewhat of a rolling stone. We have seen that he was in London in 1690 and in 1691. He was in Bacup in April, 1692, and signed the above deed as a witness. But soon after he travelled South again, and was baptised at Bromsgrove, in August, by John Eckells, the minister of the Baptist Church there. He was formally enrolled as a member, and is described as "David Crosley of Barnoldswick, of Craven, in the County of York." A month later he was sent forth by the Church, with a kind of roving commission, and his name remained on the Bromsgrove roll for nearly six years, during which time he received two contributions of money towards his work. What led to his baptism is quite undiscoverable. One would like to say that it was due to careful mature deliberation, but it must be confessed that we have to do with a very erratic individual. For, just before his baptism, he had made application to the Presbyterians for ordination to the ministry. According to the testimony of Thomas Jollie, the Presbytery, sitting at Rathmell in Yorkshire, at the close of 1692, was considering Crosley's application, when it was discovered that, in addition to his presumption in preaching, "he had fallen into further irregularity in being rebaptised"—inexpressibly shocking to the orthodox Presbyterian mind. So the matter dropped.

Crosley remained in the South for some time. He was there at the close of 1693, and there is no evidence that he had ever returned after his baptism. The news of his union with the Church at Bromsgrove reached the North, and awakened much discussion. In Letter X. in Mr. Overend's book (a letter from Mitchel to Crosley dated January, 1694) we read, "Many are much dissatisfied with your long absence, and much talk and many stories and great rumours there are. One says you will come no more, another says thou hast got a great place at London, another says thou art proud and mindest high things, another says thou are dipt. . . Most say they know not what. Old William at Greenwoodlee says if thou have found out some better way than we know of, he thinks it's thy duty to tell us." The same letter reveals the loneliness of Mitchel, his disappointments and sorrows in his work, and his sense of the necessity of stricter order and discipline. He turns to Crosley for counsel; "I desire thou would write what thou thinkest most convenient for us to do about the Lord's Supper, whether thou think it commodious for us to meddle with it before you come or no, or till there be officers chosen. I desire this the rather, because some have been speaking to me of it, as if they looked we should have had it again by this time." It is clear from this that at the beginning of 1694 we have no Church, no regular administration of any ordinances, and no officers. To this letter Crosley replied at once, saying (1) that his engagements do not enable him to fix any date for his return to Yorkshire; (2) That the principle of Believers' Baptism gains ground in the South. He adds, "I see not how it could be otherwise, if persons do but begin to enquire into it, and consult the scripture and not custom. I do heartily desire that both you and others would seriously ponder this matter." (3) He thinks there is no hurry necessary in regard to the choice of officers; "The first ordinary officers in the first Church under the gospel were Deacons. The next were Ruling Elders, with whom the Pastor or Bishop was contemporary, being an Elder more solemnly set apart as chief leader, to go before

and feed the whole ; as also to govern, but yet not otherwise than in conjunction with the whole." This is Presbyterianism, in substance and in terminology. So that if we were to label Crosley at this time we should describe him as a Presbyterian Baptist.

In 1694 he returned and settled for a year in Barnoldswick. Here, in April, he bought a house with garden, a croft, and a barn. The indenture confirming the purchase describes Crosley as "Clerk,"—a somewhat presumptuous claim. The house he converted into a place of worship. This is the second erected meeting house associated with the Rossendale movement. In May 1695 Crosley received an invitation from the Church at Tottlebank in Lancashire, to the office of Teaching Elder, and in February 1696 he entered upon his ministry there, which extended over nine years. Here surely is the *ne plus ultra* of ecclesiastical confusion! In 1692 and till 1698 he was a registered member of the Bromsgrove Baptist Church. In 1692 he is a leader in the Rossendale Society, neither Baptist nor Congregational but Connexional. His application for Presbyterian ordination belongs to this year. In 1694 he is practically pastor at Barnoldswick and styles himself "Clerk"; finally, in 1696, the Baptist member and minister of a Connexional Church becomes Teaching Elder of a Church neither Baptist nor Presbyterian, but nearer to Independency than aught else.

From the beginning of 1696 we can speak of the CHURCH of Rossendale. It is not Baptist yet, but we can speak definitely of a CHURCH. That has been proved by the publication of a letter of January 1st, 1696, addressed "To the beloved Brethren in Yorkshire, from the Elders, Deacons, and Brethren of the Church of Christ in Rossendale." It is signed by William Mitchel and others.

This evidence throws light on a knotty problem. In the Barnoldswick records there are minutes of a meeting, attended by Barnoldswick and Rossendale representatives, and held in September of a year unnamed. The business transacted was in brief as follows: (1) David Crosley's threatened removal to Tottlebank was greatly deprecated,

and a letter was drafted and sent to Tottlebank setting forth the disadvantages of his leaving the Barnoldswick district; (2) Certain brethren (names are given) were advised to be set apart as Elders and Deacons in the Church, in and about Rossendale; (3) Certain principles of Church order were laid down, e.g., a Church has a right to control her gifted brethren, and to retain them in her own service though others may want them; a Church has no right to send ministers away with a roving commission; Pastors and Elders have no rights in other congregations. These minutes are signed by William Mitchel, David Crosley, and others. We may safely regard this Mitchel, whose name stands at the head, as none other than the author of the whole enterprise. If so, then this meeting must have taken place before 1705 when Mitchel died (February 18th). It is *prima facie* probable that the meeting was held in 1695, because that is the only time, as far as we know, when Crosley was meditating removal to Tottlebank. Two arguments, however, have been urged on the other side. First, the entry in the minute book follows a series of entries dated 1697, 1698, 1700, 1701, 1705, 1711. This of course distinctly favours a date subsequent to 1711. Second, 1695 has appeared too early for so pronounced a polity as is here revealed. Mitchel's letter of Jan. 1st, 1696, entirely removes the second difficulty. The former difficulty remains, but in view of the strong evidence for 1695, and the insuperable objections to a date after 1711 (when Mitchel was dead), we must assume that the minute has been wrongly placed in a book, which shews other signs of disorder. The letter of January 1st 1696 accedes to the request of the Yorkshire brethren, to be allowed to accept candidates for membership, who, by reason of distance, cannot travel to Bacup to be joined to the Church. So then whereas in January 1694 we have no Church of Rossendale, by September 1695 the Church with definite officers is in existence, and by January 1696 we find tendencies towards decentralisation. The Church was also moving in the direction of the Baptists. Letters of Mitchel, dated 1696 and 1697, shew that he had become thoroughly

convinced of the truth of their views, and had been baptised. He gives cogent reasons for his faith, and his attack on the Pædobaptist position is exceedingly vigorous. After Mitchel's death, Crosley paid high tribute to his zeal for Baptist principles. "When it pleased God to give light unto many in the order and discipline instituted by Christ in His Churches, never did any person with more readiness conform himself, nor with more diligence endeavour to bring others to the divine platform, than he. He laboured in birth with you for the second time" (Preface to Jachin and Boaz). But the Church was not Baptist for some years to come. Mitchel had to contend against some, who deemed the ordinance a novelty. Further, the most liberal views were cherished by Baptists themselves as to terms of communion. In 1700, John Moore, a convert of Mitchel's, sought for his dismissal from Rossendale to Northampton, where he had accepted the pastorate of the Church, now worshipping in College Street. The Northampton Church was not then Baptist, and Moore, though a baptised believer himself, felt no difficulty in becoming minister of a church, which was perfectly open on the question of membership. This breadth of view was by no means uncommon. Stricter practice was coming, but it was at present foreign to many Baptists everywhere.

The next few years shew decided advance towards Baptist congregationalism. In 1700, a company of believers, living at Rodhill End and Stoneslack, quite near Mitchel's birthplace, was affiliated with the Church in Rossendale. In 1703 the sum of £40 was given to certain trustees "to be laid out, employed, and disposed of to the best advantage, and one fourth part of the profits to be given to William Mitchel of Bradford, during his life, and the three remaining parts thereof, and the said fourth part, after the decease of the said William Mitchel, unto the use and towards the maintenance of such person and persons, as, for the time being, and from time to time, for ever should be ministers, pastors, and teachers of the society or congregation of Dissenting Protestants at Cloughfold and Bacup." In the same year, 1703, a meeting house, exclusively for divine

worship, was erected at Rodhill End, "for the use of Protestant Dissenters known by the name of Baptists or Independents." In 1705 a building in Cloughfold was bequeathed to the Rossendale Church, "for the use and benefit of all such Protestant Dissenters, called Anabaptists or Independents, within the Forest of Rossendale, as shall there from time to time assemble for religious worship, when the same shall be made fit for a meeting house." In 1707 land was granted to a number of people at Gildersome, where there was a branch of the Rossendale confederacy, for the erection of a meeting house "for the assembling together of Dissenting Protestants for the worship of Almighty God." In 1711 premises were bought at Stoneslack, and a chapel was erected. In 1712 the Rawdon meeting house was built. The deed declares that the meeting house is for the use of "Protestant Dissenters from the Church of England, yet professing a Christian and sincere belief of the doctrinal part of the thirty-nine articles, and usually known by the denomination and under the distinction of the Congregational persuasion."

These facts prove the growing influence of the Rossendale Church. Its various local branches began to possess property of their own. This in itself would tend to decentralisation. And now the references to "Baptists," "Anabaptists," "Independents," "the Congregational persuasion," reveal a decisive trend towards Independent baptised communities such as we know to-day.

The pressure of events completed the break up of the confederacy. (1) The year 1705 saw the death of Mitchel, and the removal of Crosley from Tottlebank (which had become a Baptist Church during his pastorate) to London, where he became minister of the Church, over which Hanserd Knollys had so long presided. When the two commanding personalities were gone, local separate Churches were inevitable. No one left in the Church was big enough to exercise the superintendency, which had been freely allowed to them. (2) In 1707 Crosley published Mitchel's book "Jachin & Boaz." The author endeavours to shew that the two pillars supporting the Church are doctrine and discipline. The book

is described as Mitchel's legacy to the faithful, more especially to his friends in the North of England. The doctrine set forth is unquestionably Calvinistic, and the Church polity commended is as certainly that of the Independents. The circulation of this book amongst Mitchel's converts must have furthered the adoption of Independency. (3) In 1710 Crosley returned from London and settled at Gildersome. He was under a heavy cloud. He had been charged with grave immorality, and the charge was well founded. There is abundant evidence that his presence in the old scenes caused grave anxiety, and accelerated the partition of the Rossendale Church. Note these facts. He returned in 1710. (1) In 1711, we have in the Barnoldswick records "An account of the first sitting down together, with the interesting and several proceedings of the Church of Christ meeting at Barnoldswick." The story continues "Our first sitting down together in a church relation was in the month of September, at which time the elders and brethren did call forth and qualify our brother Daniel Slater to take the pastoral charge and care over us." (2) In 1715, we have "An account of the first gathering and sitting down of the Church now meeting and assembling at Rawdon and Heaton," and the ordination of John Wilson as their minister. (3) In the same year the Gildersome Baptists decided that their "Church relation to them in Lancashire should be removed," that "wee in Yorkshire should be orderly dismissed from them, and sett down as a perticular congregated Church." The Gildersome Baptists were united with the Rawdon Church, and only became entirely separate in 1749. It is significant that, when the usual questions were addressed to the minister and people as to their relations and duties, Nathaniel Booth, a Gildersome leader, was elected by his fellow members to answer for all the rest. This happened when Crosley was resident in Gildersome. (4) In 1717, the members of the Rossendale Church at Rodhill End and Stoneslack secured their dismissal, and became a separate Church with Thomas Greenwood as their pastor. Within a few years from this the dissolution of the great Church was

complete. The Church was probably Baptist by 1710, and the partition came very soon after.

As we look back on the whole story, the outstanding fact is that, humanly speaking, the Rossendale Church was the work of Mitchel and Crosley. There is no name of any importance to set side by side with theirs. And it is equally clear that the honours lie with Mitchel. He has a record absolutely unstained. The impression, left by a perusal of his letters, is that he was a singularly pure-hearted man, devoid of littleness and self-seeking, humble and affectionate, yet fired with a noble scorn when accused of motives wholly alien to his Christian character, a man in very truth consecrated to Christ, whose ardent spirit burned too intensely for his weak bodily frame. How sure a man must be of himself when he can write thus; "What but entire love and a longing desire after the good of their souls could have induced me to have exposed myself as I have, in spending my time, wasting my health and strength, neglecting and slighting my family, and exposing myself to many reproaches, whereas could I have withdrawn from them, and embraced the calls and desires of others, with whose faith and practice my soul well agrees, I might have been looked upon, and I and mine carefully and honourably provided for, and I freed from these cares and troubles that have and are like to lie upon me; so that surely my people and children for whom I have travailed in birth and pain, these many years, to see Christ brought forth in them, cannot think anything but pure love hath engaged me to what I have done upon their accounts and for them. As for honour and vainglory, I have neither sought it nor had it; as for gifts of money they have been small, not that I speak in respect of want or from a covetous desire of gifts." Further, Mitchel possessed the virtue of steadfast concentration, but Crosley was singularly lacking in this respect. Whilst Crosley was starrng about the country, visiting London, Worcester, Lichfield, Derby, Bedford, and other places, Mitchel remained at home diligently and unweariedly cultivating his own field. Whilst Crosley had three

pastorates in eighteen years, Mitchel, though solicited by other districts, remained immovable. There is no evidence that he ever left the Rossendale circuit between 1685 and 1705. For these societies gathered and tended by him he lived, and in their service he died, prematurely old and worn out. There is no man amongst early Northern Baptists whose memory is more deserving of immortality. He may be fitly termed our patron Saint.

Crosley lived nearly forty years after his cousin's death. Details of these years are very meagre and much of the period is a blank. What we have to relate is sad enough. In 1719 he was charged by his brethren in Yorkshire with scandalous sins. He was advised to set apart seven days of prayer, and he was ordered to confine his ministry to his own people, or to be silent. In 1720, what was tantamount to a sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him. The same meeting of the Associated Churches of Bacup (termed Rossendale in the minutes) Liverpool, Rawdon, Rodhill End, Sutton, and Barnoldswick, debated this question, " Shall we endeavour to supply the people at Gildersome, now left without public means, through Mr. Crosley's absence " ? It is evident who Crosley's " own people " were. All certainty about his next movements is impossible. Probably he went to London. In 1720, a poem of his, entitled " Adam where art thou ? " was published there. In it he speaks of his relapse and his recovery. Some say that he was minister in Bacup from about 1724 till his death in 1744. But the data for exact statement are not in our possession. The utmost we can affirm is that for the larger part of this period he resided near Bacup, and preached there and in the immediate district. In 1724 he was still regarded as disorderly, and none of the London ministers would endorse an application to the Particular Baptist Fund on his behalf. (See Ivimey, History of the Baptists 3, 363). In 1736 Crosley applied for help from the Particular Baptist Fund, of which George Braithwaite was secretary. It was therefore Braithwaite's duty to ascertain the facts concerning the applicant, and we may be sure that he would be willing to render any service possible to Crosley, who had baptised him in Cripplegate

London. Accordingly he wrote to John Marshall of Rawdon. Marshall's reply stated that some time after Crosley's **last* return from London, he had "prevailed upon Thomas Greenwood to admit him to membership in the Heptonstall Church," further, that "a person in Lancashire, who was much taken with Crosley's doctrine, had erected a new meeting house for him between Bacup and Barnoldswick, and had given as gratuity one fourth of his own estate." Marshall goes on to say that Crosley has got his Church made up of some few of his old hearers, and the rest from Mr. Ashworth's Church and Mr. Jackson's in Barnoldswick. "Also he would endeavour to intrude himself on us at Rawdon, but was so notoriously scandalous, our Church had no mind to be concerned with him. Mr. Greenwood and he have forsaken our Association, and joined with them at Liverpool, Warrington, and Manchester." This letter proves (1) that Crosley's apostacy from ordinary moral standards was radical and long continued; (2) that notwithstanding his unquestionably immoral life he was making persistent bids for influence and leadership; (3) that he, who had been in earlier years a masterbuilder in the Church, was now a source of the gravest trouble. Probably also we may add that the transfer of Heptonstall from the Yorkshire Association to that of Lancashire was due to his instigation. So much ought to be said. Recognising his great powers as a preacher, gratefully remembering his manifold services to Lancashire and Yorkshire, and claiming for him the honour of being the first advocate of Baptist principles in Yorkshire, we must not conceal the fact that during a large part of his later life Crosley was in general disrepute. At length, however, he attained to godly repentance, and before night came the curtain of clouds was rolled aside and the sun shone out in serenity. In his immediate circle he was reinstated in the regard of Christian men. His last years were spent at Tatop Farm near Goodshaw, and here he supplemented his labours by teaching. John

* This suggests that after excommunication he had gone thither.

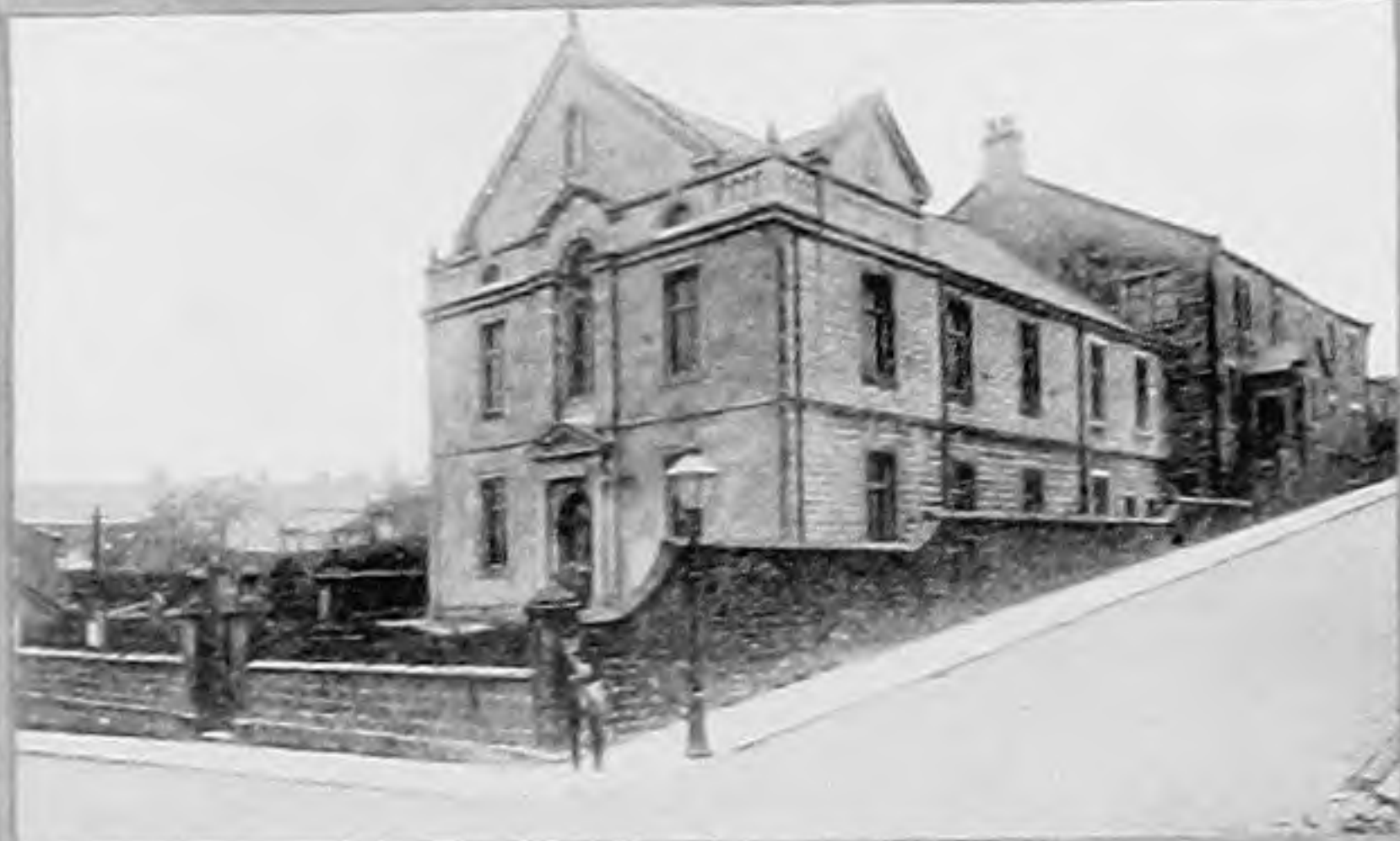
Butterworth, a native of the district, and afterwards the well-known minister of Cow Lane Chapel, Coventry, writes of him, "He was one of the most popular Calvinistic preachers in the country. He taught me to read, and put me in the Accidence at seven years of age. He was the largest man in our county, weighing twenty stones. He died when I was about sixteen." Crosley published other works beside those already mentioned. In 1736 he reprinted a plain and familiar dialogue, written by an aged disciple N.T. and entitled, "The old man's legacy to his daughters." To this dialogue, dealing with questions of religious faith, he added a chapter of his own inscribed "Plain honest directions and Christian counsels." He deals largely with the subject of reading. The books he recommends incidentally give us some insight into his own intellectual tastes. He urges the study of Joseph Alleine and Richard Baxter on "Conversion," the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England, Bunyan's "Law and Grace," Rutherford's Letters, the works of Thomas Goodwin, Flavel's "Touchstone of Sincerity," and Bishop Beveridge's "Private Thoughts on Religion." In 1742 he published "The Triumph of Sovereign Grace," a funeral sermon preached for Laurence Britliffe, who was executed for murder at Lancaster, and whom Crosley attended in his last days. In 1744 he reprinted his early sermon on "Samson" with others, and for this volume George Whitfield, the great Evangelist, wrote a most appreciative preface. But the two men were never personally acquainted. The following words, from Crosley's earliest published letter to Mitchel, may help us to understand with more sympathy this complex character. "O my dear brother! I am sore straitened in myself . . . so fiercely doth my soul's adversary against me, that I am overwhelmed . . . the strong man is not yet bound, the old man not crucified . . . The Scripture saith, 'If ye live in the Spirit, ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh,' which too often I find myself subject to do . . . unless it please the Lord to ransom me from this thralldom, I am lost for ever." Clearly this man knew the plague of his own heart, and these words vividly reveal to us the nature which he had to resist.



BARN & COTTAGE.



OLD CHAPEL.



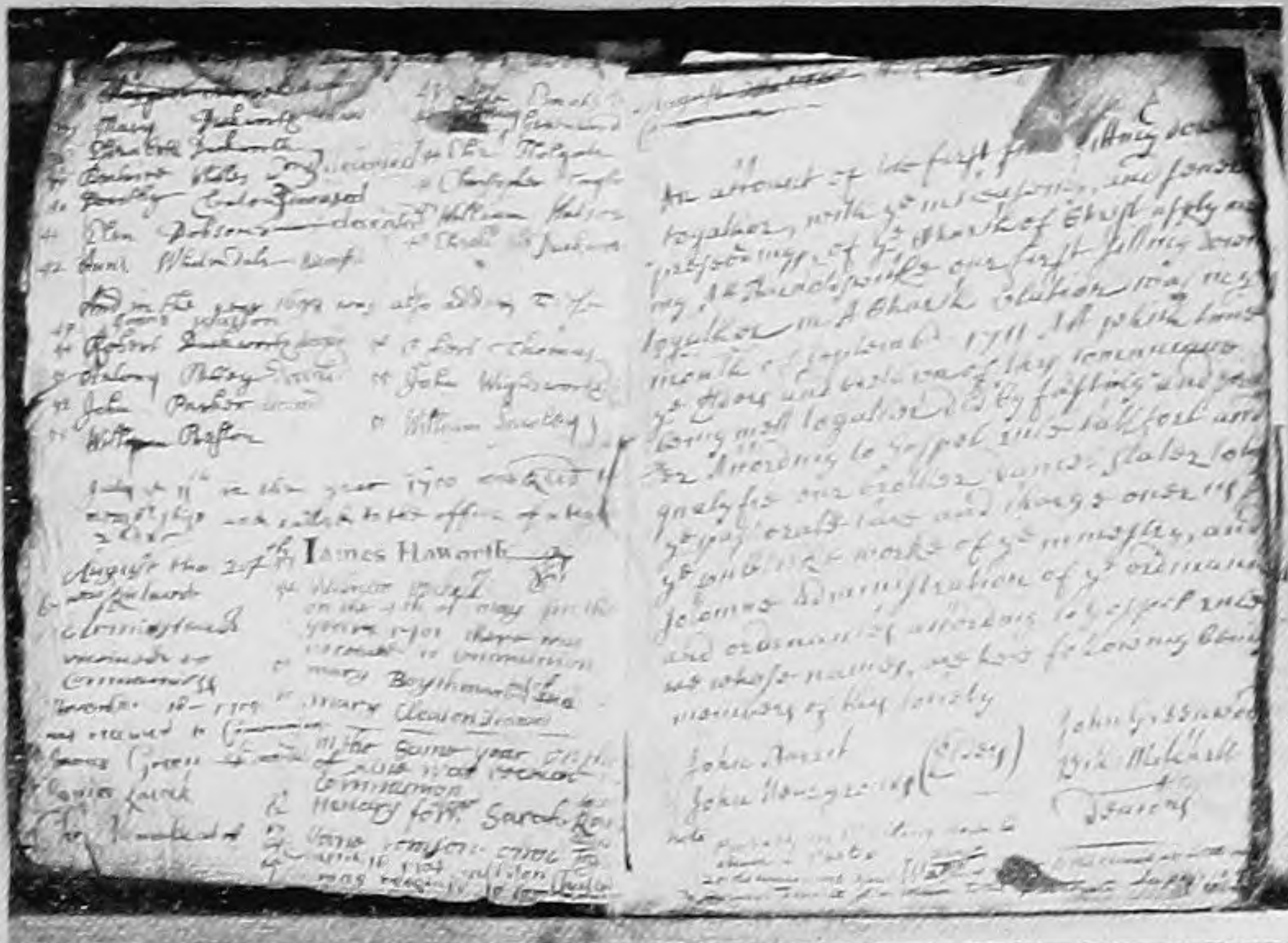
BETHESDA CHAPEL.



NEW CHAPEL.

BARNOLDSWICK

GROUP.



1ST PAGE OF CHURCH BOOK.

We have now to follow the history of the branches of the Rossendale Church in Yorkshire.

1. **Barnoldswick** is the oldest. The first records are lost, and knowledge only begins with Crosley's purchase of property in 1694. He laboured in Barnoldswick for over a year, and we may assume that under his ministry Baptist views made headway. The church register dates from 1697, when there were forty-eight members. It is impossible to decide whether the Church was now Baptist, but probably it was. In 1700 JAMES HAWORTH became Teaching Elder, and was the first to bear that title here. In 1703 Crosley, now at Tottlebank, sold his property to trustees for £14. Haworth is named as "minister," and the deed stipulates that the meeting house shall not be diverted from its present use without Crosley's consent. In 1711 John Wilson preached here with such acceptance, that the Church asked Tottlebank to grant him to them as their pastor. This was declined, and DANIEL SLATER, a member at Barnoldswick, was called to the office of minister. He soon resigned on the ground of the remoteness of his residence. Then for years the Church remained without a leader, and was greatly diminished. In 1716 ALVERY JACKSON a member of the Rawdon Church, came to preach, and the outcome was a very successful ministry of forty-five years. He added largely to the Church and maintained a strict discipline. He introduced the practice of congregational singing, which was regarded with great disfavour in many quarters. In 1744 the Church set forth a declaration of its faith and drew up its covenant. The covenant needs no remark, for it is a well-known feature in Yorkshire Churches. The declaration must be noted, for it is substantially identical with declarations emitted from Rawdon, Gildersome, Salendine Nook and other Churches. It asserts agreement with the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church (except the 34th, 35th, 36th, and parts of the 20th and 27th), general agreement with the Confession of the Church of Scotland, closer agreement with the Savoy Declaration of the Congregational Churches of 1658, and entire agreement with the Particular Baptist Confession of 1689 (Calvinistic). It is clear that these early

Baptists endeavoured to exhibit the large area of faith, common to them and the other Protestant Churches. Mr. Jackson's labours greatly furthered the Baptist cause in the North. In 1752 he published a pamphlet on "Saving Faith." This was aimed at the Hyper-Calvinists, who had taken up the monstrous view that repentance and faith were not the duty of all men to whom the Gospel was published. Their contention was that only the regenerate had power to do any spiritual act. Wesley not unfairly epitomised such theology in the terse statement "The elect shall be saved do what they will, the reprobate shall be damned do what they can." Alvery Jackson died at the end of 1763, and is described in Rippon's Annual Register as "a judicious, steady, and eminent minister of Jesus Christ."

JOHN PARKER, a convert of Grimshaw of Haworth, baptised by Jackson, and already a teaching elder at Barnoldswick, now became minister. Mainly through his labours a Church had been formed at Bolland, sometimes called Gisburn Forest (1755). He exercised his ministry for twenty-five years, though it was interrupted at intervals by great physical sufferings. With generous regard for the Church, he gave up for some years all dependence upon their pecuniary assistance. He resigned in 1790, and became pastor at Wainsgate, in the hope that change of scene might prolong his usefulness. Here he died in 1793. John Fawcett, his biographer, writes, "When under a favourable gale, who could hear him without astonishment? It was a feast divine to sit under the sound of his voice at such seasons." NATHAN SMITH succeeded to the Barnoldswick pastorate. In addition to his pastoral labours, he was weaver, malt merchant and schoolmaster. How he managed it all is a problem. But he did, and during his tenure of office a new building was necessary, which was opened in 1797.

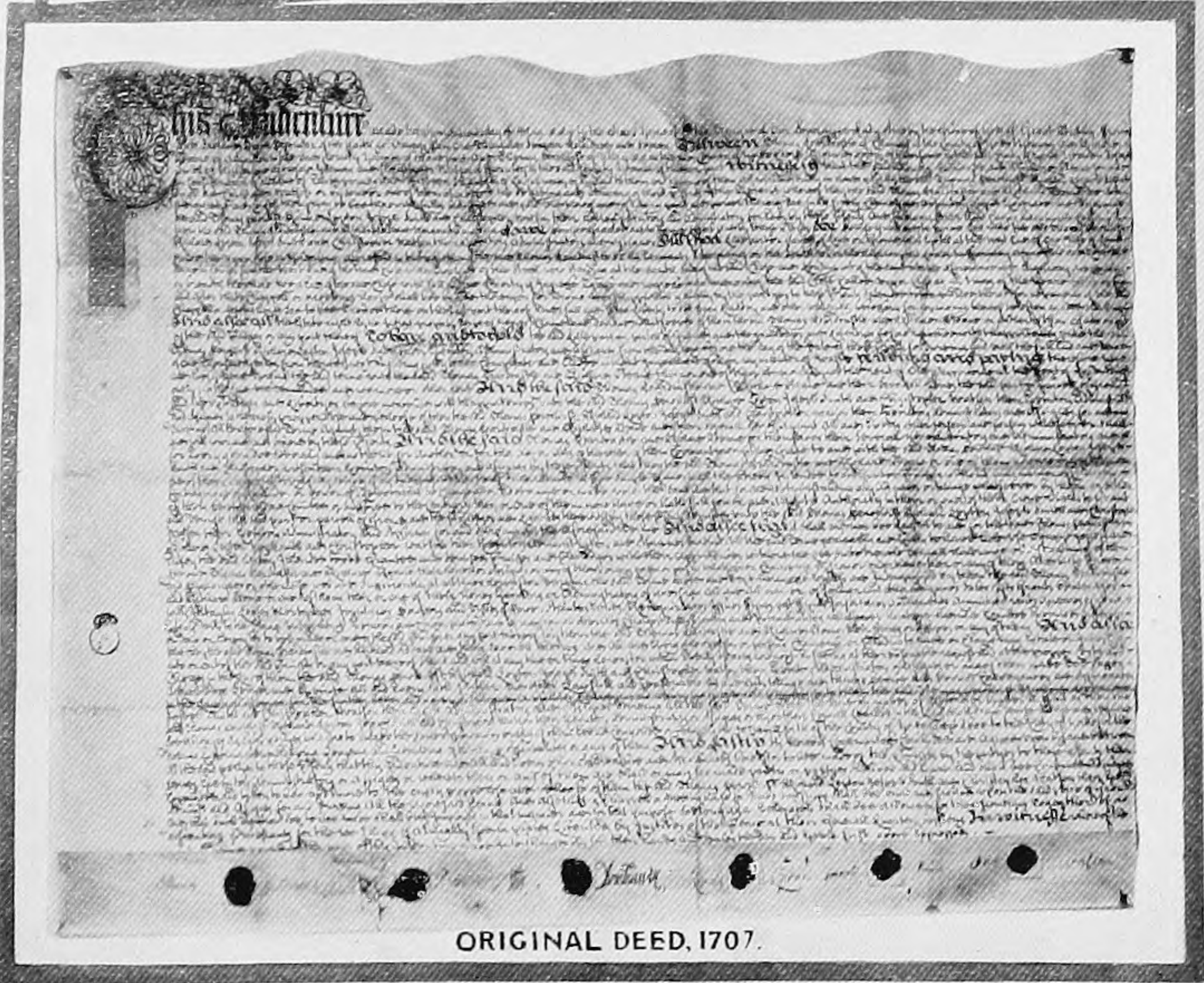
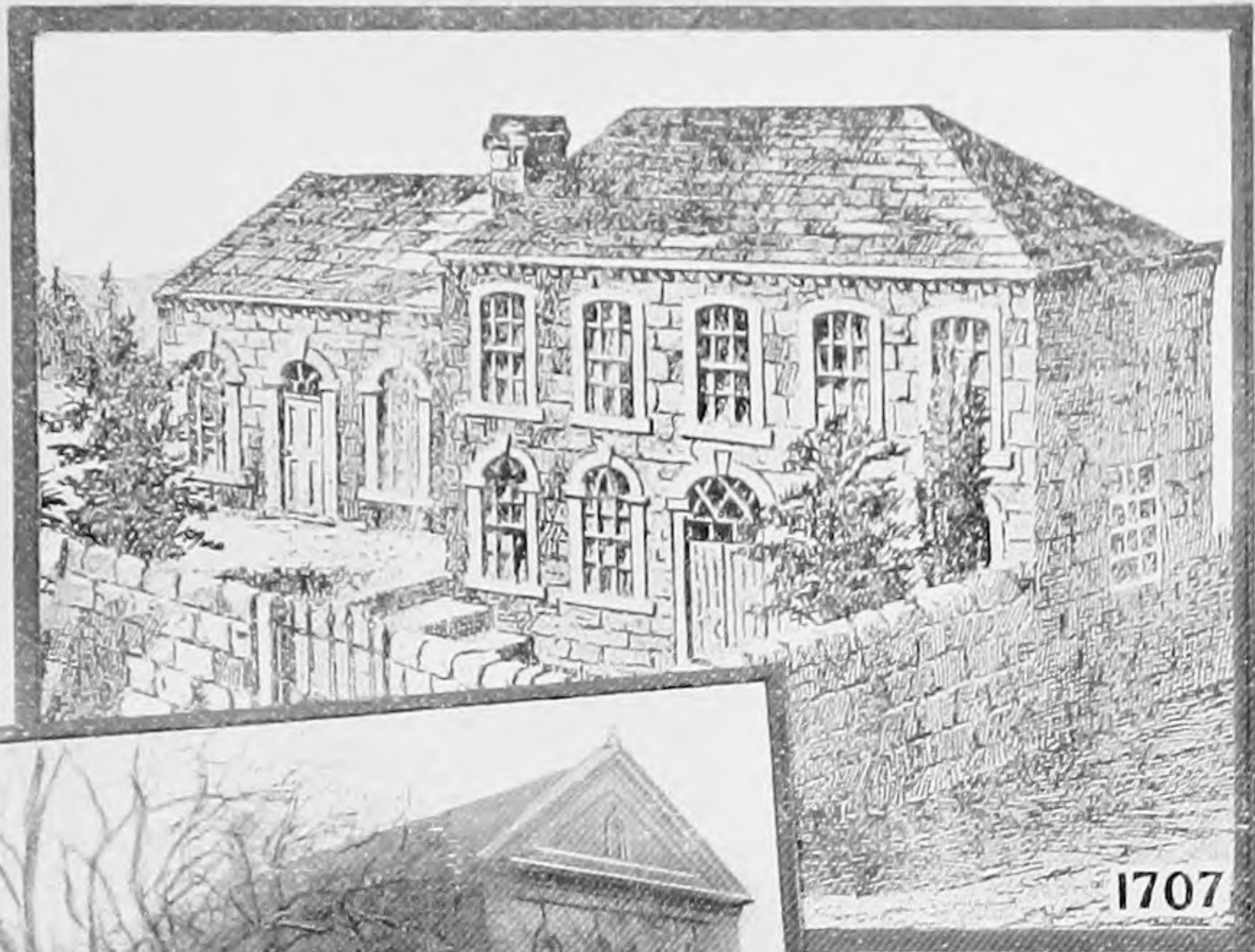
Rodhill End and Stoneslack come next, dating from 1700. They were dismissed from Rossendale in 1717, when THOMAS GREENWOOD became pastor. He died in 1742, and was succeeded by RICHARD THOMAS, (mentioned in terms of high appreciation in Dr. Fawcett's Life, p. 186), who laboured

in this remote corner for thirty years. Then, beyond the fact of a brief ministry at Rodhill End by JOHN DRACUP, of Steep Lane, we know nothing. The Church became extinct. But it died in giving birth to many Churches, and in their vigorous life it still survives. Of these Churches **Salendine Nook** is by far the most important. In 1731 members of the mother Church, residing in Huddersfield, were visited by HENRY CLAYTON, a fellow member, who preached to them. In 1738 a meeting house was erected. In 1743 the Church was formed by orderly dismissal from Rodhill End. Henry Clayton was elected minister, and remained with his flock till his death in 1776. The original company had grown to sixty-one. JOSHUA WOOD, who had been twelve years minister of the Halifax Church, (Pellon Lane) and had assisted Mr. Clayton during the last four years of his life, now became pastor. He was a man of considerable attainments, for Dr. Stock relates how, when a minister of the Established Church wrote to him in Latin, assailing him as an intruder into holy orders, Mr. Wood replied to him in scholarly Greek. The arrogant priest was silenced. Wood died in 1794, the Church having more than doubled its membership under his presidency. ROBERT HYDE followed, and his labours continued far into the nineteenth century. The Church at Salendine Nook has been distinguished for its unflinching advocacy of the Baptist cause, adhering tenaciously to the view that Baptism is a prerequisite to membership. For over a hundred years converts were baptised in the open air, and the original baptistery at the Pot Ovens is still to be seen. Another special feature in this Church is its insistence on discipline. Doubtless some of it was very narrow, but we should do well to cherish a like regard for the purity of the Bride of Christ. The old Church book tells of exclusion of members for "covetousness," "imprudent management of temporal concerns," "running into debt without any prospect of paying," "boisterous, overbearing, surly, obstinate behaviour," "giving way to the courtship of a profane man and notorious sinner." We have travelled far from all this in our modern worship of statistics. Our fathers

believed that it is quality rather than quantity that counts for most. Above all Salendine Nook has been a home missionary Church. It is to-day the mother of fourteen churches in the district, three of which, Pole Moor, Blackley, and Lockwood, date from the close of the eighteenth century. Some owe their existence to the munificence of individual laymen of Salendine Nook. And all this is the harvest of the seed sown in the little Church of Rodhill End and Stoneslack.

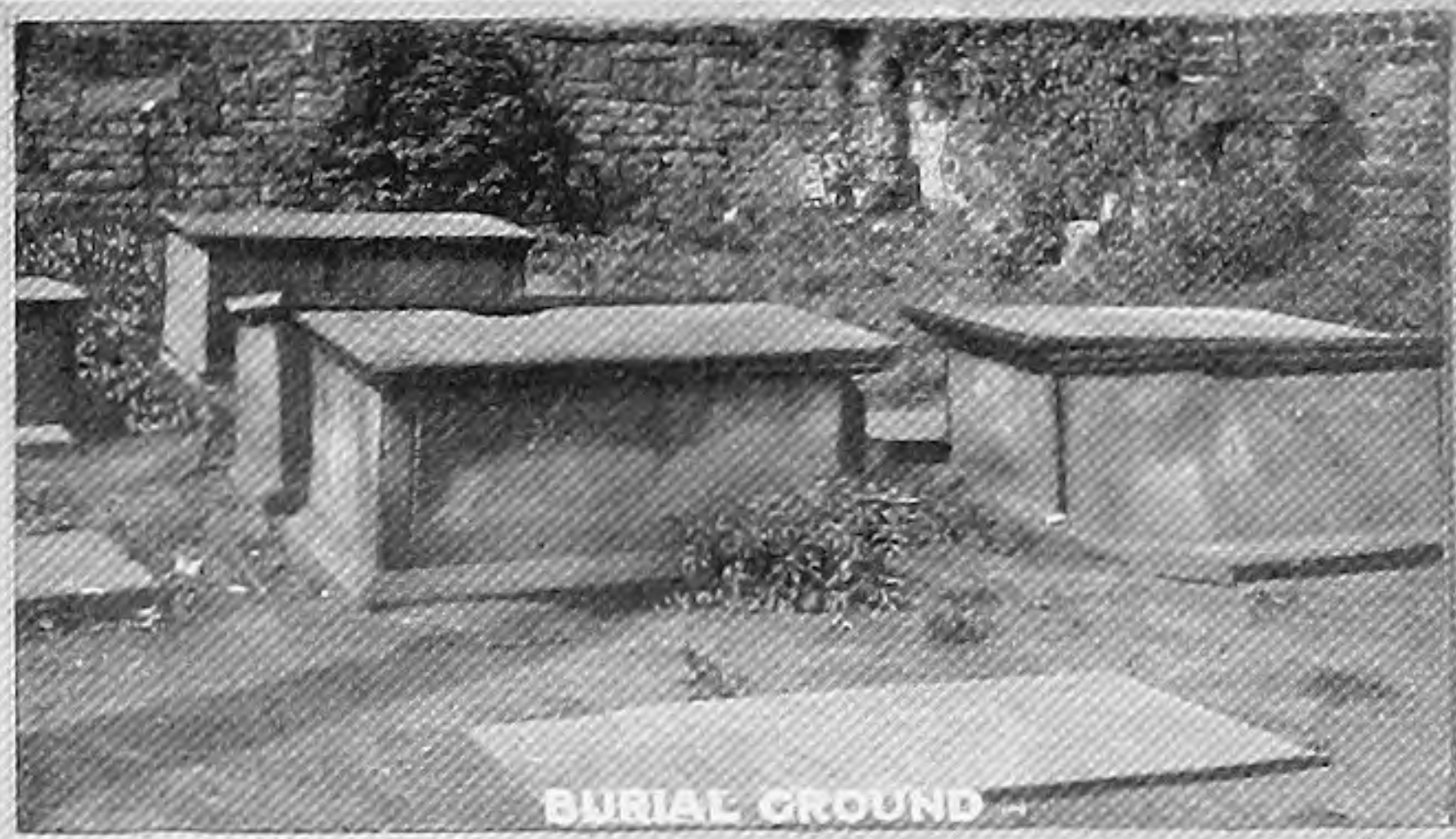
Gildersome, so called from the Gelders, a company of Dutch Protestants, who were driven from Holland by persecuting laws, and found refuge here, was a place visited by Mitchel soon after his release from York Castle. After Mitchel's death, or even before, Thomas Dewhirst, a member of the Rossendale Church, preached in Gildersome, and owing to his ministry, in the year 1707, the first meeting house was erected on land purchased of Thomas Hardcastle. Gildersome was dismissed from Rossendale in 1715, but was united with Rawdon, and did not become separate till 1749. John Wilson of Rawdon preached here frequently, and at one time fortnightly. On his death, Gildersome called to the pastorate JOHN TOMMAS, a native of Barnoldswick and a convert of Alvery Jackson's. In 1754 he left to become minister of the Church in the Pithay, Bristol, where he laboured to the close of his life. After this, and almost to the close of the century, the pastorate was held by THOMAS ASHWORTH, and then by JAMES ASHWORTH, members of the Ashworth family of Bacup. The membership at the close of the century was only forty-seven. In 1777 a new Church was founded at Bramley, mainly through the efforts of Joseph Askwith, a member of the Gildersome Society.

Rawdon was likely to prove congenial soil for the labours of the Rossendale Evangelists. Robert Moore of Guiseley had borne his witness a century before, Samuel Coates, an ejected clergyman of 1662, had lived in the village, and Oliver Heywood had preached here very often. In 1697 a meeting house had been built by the Quakers, and in 1712 the members of the Rossendale Church followed suit. Prior to this, in the dark days of persecution, they had worshipped under the



ORIGINAL DEED, 1707.

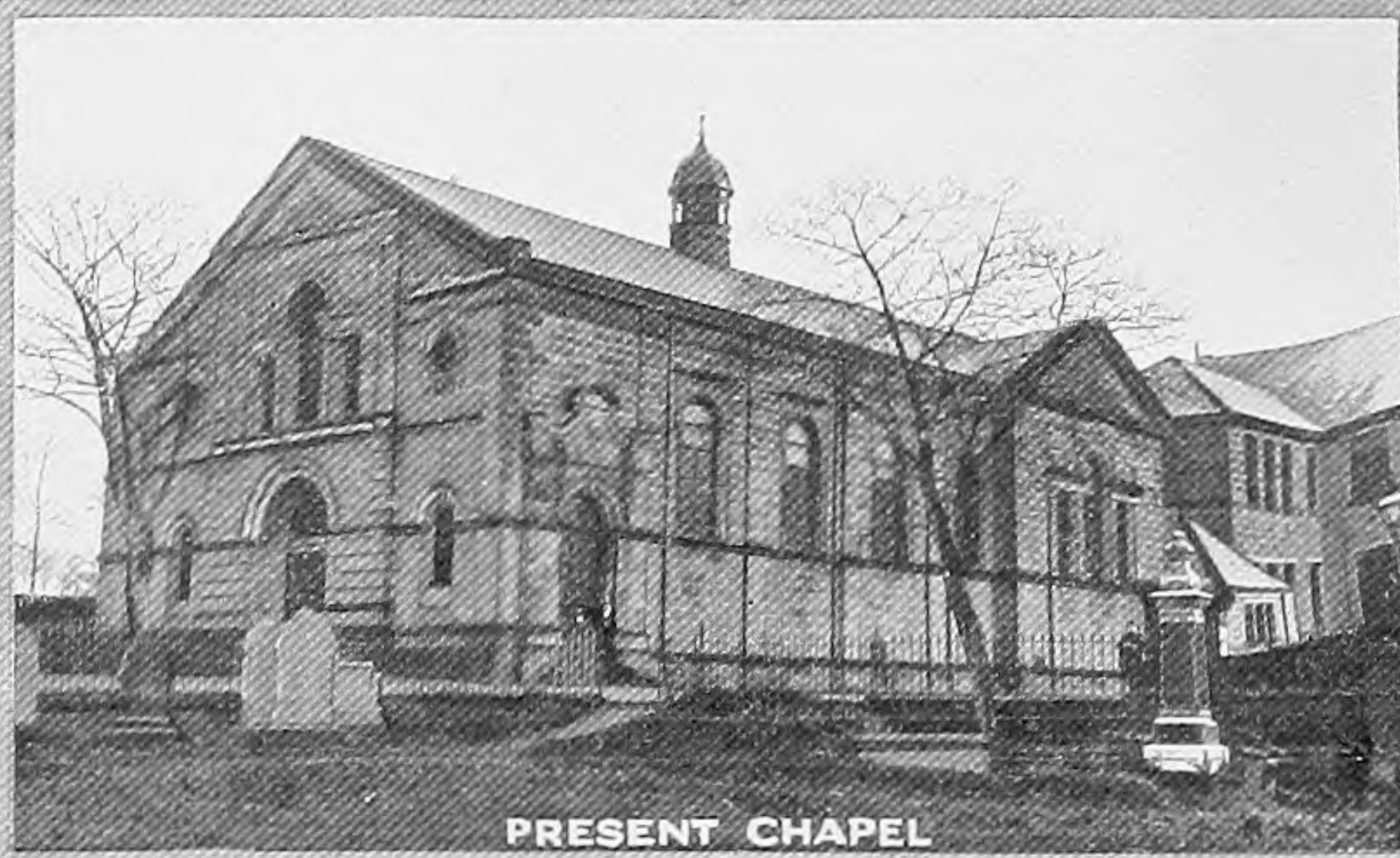
GILDERSOME



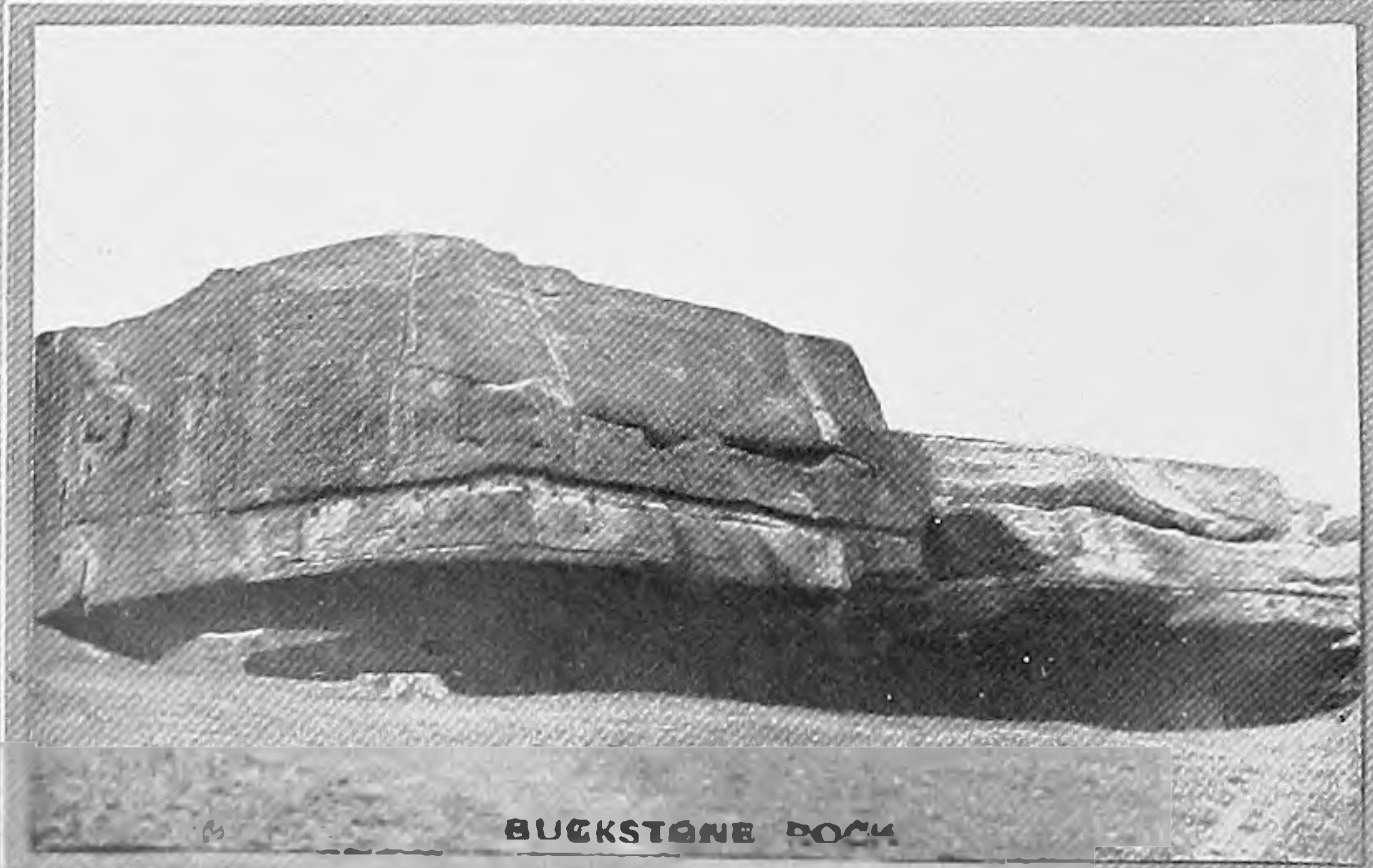
BURIAL GROUND



OLD CHAPEL



PRESENT CHAPEL



BUCKSTONE ROCK

RAWDON

Buckstone Rock (Slater's History of Guiseley, p. 249). The earliest records of the Church have been so well preserved that we will quote directly. The first entry speaks of the "late William Mitchel, whose labours were blessed with such agreeable success, that many, the first fruits of us, were turned from darkness to light . . . Here we stayed for some time, not being joined to any particular Church, nor having submitted to the public ordinances of the Gospel, for which reason we have been reproachfully called Antinomians . . . but when the Lord had further opened our eyes, we cordially embraced and submitted to His mind in the matter of positive worship, being baptised on a profession of faith." The record proceeds to speak of their union with the Church of Rossendale, and of Mitchel's residence near Rawdon (probably at Heaton) in the closing years of his life. "His decease was a smarting stroke to us, for in him we lost a minister orthodox in his principles, pious in his life, and indefatigable in his labours." Then follows an account of the decision of the Rawdon Church to become separate, a copy of the letter of dismissal granted by Rossendale, and a narrative of the call and ordination of JOHN WILSON to the pastorate (1715). An abstract is given of the principles "wee sitt down upon," such as we have noted already in speaking of Barnoldswick. With Rawdon was associated a company of believers at Heaton, who had a meeting house of their own, and a smaller company at Hartwith, near Pateley Bridge. Both these causes became extinct, though a new and vigorous Church has been established at Heaton. In 1746 John Wilson died, and, after a brief pastorate of JONATHAN BROWN, who removed to Hull, JOHN OULTON, M.A., son of Oulton of Liverpool, became minister and remained for nearly half a century, (1754—1804). He had received his training in the Bristol Academy under Dr. Foskett. In 1765 the meeting house was removed from the Crag Wood, and erected near the spot where the present edifice stands. John Oulton is described as "a man greatly beloved, sound in the faith, liberal in his principles, upright in his character, and attentive to the duties of his office." He bequeathed the larger part of his library for the use of succeeding ministers.

The Rawdon Church has been a mother and a grandmother of Churches. Few village Churches in Britain can shew a finer record. (1) The Church at **Westgate Bradford**, whose first pastor, WILLIAM CRABTREE, laboured there from 1753—1803, originated from a number of people in membership with the Rawdon Church. (2) The **Bethel Church Shipley**, was due to the labours of JOSEPH GAWKRODGER of Rawdon, who visited this "little out-of-the-way place" to preach the Gospel, and became the first pastor of the Church (1758). Four brief pastorates followed his nine years' ministry, and then came JOHN BOWSER. During his thirty years' stay the chapel was enlarged, one hundred and thirty were added to the Church, and three of its members entered the Baptist ministry. The Churches at Pellon Lane Halifax, Farsley, and Leeds, may be traced to Rawdon, for they were all the outcome of the labours of William Crabtree and his people. This worthy man preached and baptised in **Halifax**, and in 1755, a Church was formed. CHARLES BAMFORD of Bacup became its first minister, and he was followed in 1760 by JOSHUA WOOD, who remained minister till 1772. During his time the first meeting house was erected in Pellon Lane. After Mr. Wood's removal WILLIAM HARTLEY, JOHN HINDLE, WILLIAM CHERRY, and JOSHUA WADE ministered in succession. The **Farsley Church** was also an offshoot from Westgate, thirty members being dismissed together with William Roe, their first pastor, to constitute the new society (1780). The **Leeds Church** originated in this way. Eleven members of the Independent Church Whitechapel Leeds (originally meeting in Call Lane Chapel 1662) became convinced of Baptism, and were united with Mr. Crabtree's Church in Bradford. In 1779 these were dismissed to form a separate body, whose first meeting place was the old Assembly Rooms, and THOMAS LANGDON became their first minister. Out of this humble beginning South Parade Church grew.

Sutton-in-Craven. Absolute proof of the origin of this Church is wanting. Continuous records begin with 1780, but the Church book says that the Church first met for worship in a barn in 1711. We may, however, safely link this place with

the Rossendale Church. For (1) Kildwick, which joins Sutton, was one of Mitchel's twenty preaching stations. (2) The earliest ministers at Sutton, THOMAS DEWHIRST, HENRY WILKINSON, and HENRY LORD, were all identified with Rossendale Church. The early story is meagre, and none too happy. In 1768 JOHN BEATSON became minister, but though during his two years' ministry the meeting house was enlarged, and many were added to the Church, the records declare that "he opened too wide the door of membership." His successor, WILLIAM ROE, seems to have been mainly occupied with discipline, and the Church passed through troublous times. Then in 1780 with JOHN WALTON began a long pastorate, and a noble story of peace, prosperity and progress, which has made Sutton famous in the annals of Baptist country Churches. One interesting feature is revealed in the minutes of an Association meeting in 1719. The representatives of the Church raised the question of open membership, and the reply of the Association evidences approximation to strict views, tempered with a struggle after toleration. "This Association is so well satisfied with the doctrine of Believers' Baptism, that they dare not, for the awe of God upon their consciences, do anything that may lessen its valuation, or tend to the contempt of an ordinance of Christ; and though they dare not absolutely and in every case deny the contrary, that is to admit in some special cases into communion without it; yet will this whole Association (a few excepted) always account those Churches and ministers the most agreeable and safe that use this liberty the least, and yet at the same time we are universally agreed that as much unanimity in doctrine and principle as may be, is the likeliest method for promoting peace and edification among the members of every particular Church." It is clear that Baptists had now moved a very long way towards the rigid practice of close communion, but there were evidently some left still who advocated the catholicity of John Bunyan and others.

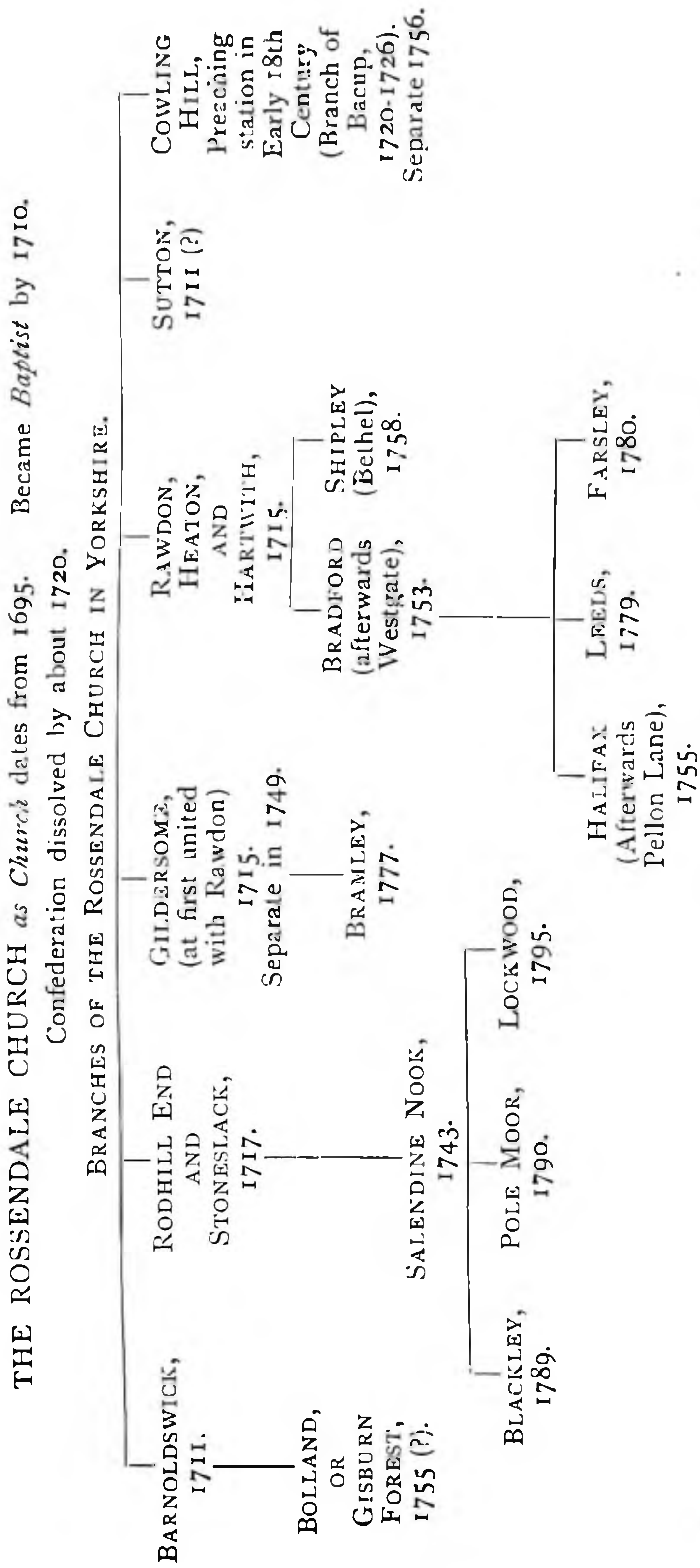
Cowling Hill. Here also Crosley and Mitchel laboured. When, about 1724, Bacup became a separate Church, Cowling

Hill was attached thereto and it was supplied for many years by preachers from Bacup, and by John Nuttall of Lumb, whose visits meant a journey of thirty miles, and whose labours were remunerated at the rate of half-a-crown a Sunday. Even in these early days the Churches were determined to save their ministers all temptations arising from the possession of excessive wealth. In 1756, Cowling Hill became a separate Church, and from then for a period of seventy years was served by four pastors, STEPHEN WILKINSON (1756-60), COLBECK SUGDEN (1761-72), BRIAN COWGILL (1780-86), and JAMES SHUTTLEWORTH (1788-1826). All these men were first members of the Church they were called to serve in the pastoral office.

Such then is the story of the Rossendale Church. It furnishes one of the numerous illustrations, strewn along the course of Church History, of the influence of lay preaching in the development of the Church. Crosley and Mitchel were two simple uncultured laymen, and Mitchel could not read till he had attained to manhood. Yet, surveying the great results of their labours, we may well exclaim "What hath God wrought!"



YORKSHIRE BAPTIST CHURCHES ORIGINATING FROM THE ROSSENDALE CHURCH, WITH THEIR DESCENDANTS TO THE END OF THE 18th CENTURY.



* The dates for Barnoldswick, Rodhill End, Gildersome, Rawdon, and Sutton, are the dates when we may speak with confidence of *separate Baptist Churches*. There was a Church in Barnoldswick as early as 1694, and perhaps earlier, and it may have been Baptist by 1696.

III.—CHURCHES ORIGINATING FROM THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL.

These Churches centre in Hebden Bridge, and are bound up with the names of JOHN FAWCETT and DAN TAYLOR. Fawcett's churches were Calvinistic or Particular, Taylor's Arminian or General. Hebden Bridge is the Mecca of Yorkshire Baptists. Probably no district in England has given us such a number of men, whose influence on Baptist History has been so potent and widespread. Crosley and Mitchel were born in Heptonstall hard by. Taylor and Fawcett laboured in Hebden Bridge. To Taylor must be ascribed the movement, which arrested the Socinian drift amongst General Baptists, and gave us the New Connection, whose services to the cause of Evangelical religion have been so manifold. From Fawcett's Church at Wainsgate came John Foster, the celebrated essayist, and Sutcliffe of Olney, one of the founders of the Baptist Missionary Society. From his academy at Brearley Hall came William Ward, the colleague of Marshman and Carey. From the same academy and the later academy at Ewood Hall came many worthy, though less famous, preachers and evangelists. To Fawcett we owe our Yorkshire County Association, and in his Church at Hebden Bridge the Northern Baptist Education Society was founded.

But all this work may be traced to the influence of the Evangelical Revival. Fawcett was Whitfield's son in the faith. Taylor was cradled in the Methodist Church. Richard Smith, the first pastor of Wainsgate, John Parker, one of his successors, and James Hartley, the first pastor at Haworth, were converts of Grimshaw, the friend and colleague of the great Evangelists. Finally, our Churches in Bingley and Steep Lane have their roots in Methodism. We deal with the Particular Baptist Churches first.

1. **Wainsgate** is the earliest of all these Churches. It was founded in 1750. Eight years before this Grimshaw had come to Haworth Parish Church, and had commenced his apostolic labours. It was his custom to preach in private houses

throughout the whole neighbourhood. He divided the country into districts, taking one each week. He preached not less than twelve times between Sabbath and Sabbath. He gathered over four hundred regular communicants in Haworth Church. John Newton tells us that he knew of five dissenting congregations, all of whose ministers and many of whose members were the fruit of his zealous ministry. Richard Smith was one of these ministers. After his conversion he joined the Church at Barnoldswick and became a local preacher. He was invited to Wadsworth, (the township in which Hebden Bridge is situated) the place being described as "a wild and inhospitable part of the country, where there is little of the fear and knowledge of God." Here a small meeting house was erected, and in 1750 the Wainsgate people sent "a humble request to the Church at Barnoldswick for RICHARD SMITH as a Teacher." In the list of members at the formation of the Church, the name of William Crabtree, afterwards minister in Bradford, stands third. Mr. Smith laboured here till 1763, when he died. During his last illness and after his death, supplies being difficult to obtain, John Foster the elder read the whole of Gurnal's "Christian Armour" to the congregation. In 1764 JOHN FAWCETT came to Wainsgate. Born in Bradford, he was apprenticed there to a tradesman. His hours of service were from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Yet such was his passion for reading, that out of his pocket money he purchased candles and robbed himself of hours of sleep that he might learn. The visits of Whitfield to Bradford made deep and lasting impressions on his mind. He tells of 10,000 being present at one open air service in Bradford, and twice that number at Birstal. From this time Fawcett associated more with the Methodists and likeminded folk. For two years he was a regular attendant at Grimshaw's Church on communion Sabbaths, walking the ten miles between Bradford and Haworth. The opposition raised against Wesley and Whitfield drew Fawcett finally away from the Established Church. He began to attend the ministry of William Crabtree, another convert of Grimshaw's, and in 1758 he was baptised by him in Bradford. At this time Susannah Skirrow was a member of the same Church, and in

1759, Fawcett, only nineteen years of age, married her. Her father was a Bingley Methodist who had veered round to Calvinistic views, and consequently was expelled from the Methodist Society with others of the same persuasion. The outcome of all this was that John Fawcett came to preach in Bingley, baptised Mr. Skirrow and his friends, and thus was laid the foundation of the Bingley Baptist Church. He now turned his thoughts to the Christian ministry and gave himself to the acquisition of Greek and Hebrew. He formed a firm friendship with James Hartley of Haworth, who encouraged his aspirations. In his diary of May 10th, 1764, we read, "Yesterday our goods were removed from Bradford. A number of the brethren here came with horses, and, having met us at Haworth, conveyed us the seven miles over the bleak moor to Waingate." But six months after he was overwhelmed with doubts as to his calling. He had written a letter unburdening his mind to James Hartley, when his friend knocked at his door. Hartley read the letter and replied, "These are my old complaints; as Herod said of John, 'they are risen from the dead.'" This providential visit saved Fawcett, and he came out of the Valley of Humiliation a stronger man. In these early days Fawcett formed other intimate friendships, notably with Henry Foster, an Oxford student, afterwards curate to Rev. William Romaine, and with Dan Taylor, his near neighbour. These three men, the Anglican, the Calvinist, and the Arminian Baptist, spent three or four days a week together, reading classics and divinity. Fawcett's influence steadily grew. People came from all parts to hear him. Some of his regular congregation travelled from Rochdale, 14 miles distant, to sit at his feet. His meeting house was enlarged, and his Church grew in numbers. In 1769 he baptised John Sutcliff, who was assistant to Dan Taylor in a day school, which had been established in Birchcliffe. Through Taylor's help Sutcliff had mastered the rudiments of Latin, and now he took up his abode in Waingate, that he might be near Fawcett whilst preparing for entrance to the Academy at Bristol. This association with a young candidate for the ministry was the

origin of Fawcett's later efforts on behalf of an educated ministry in the North. In 1772 he went to London to preach for Dr. Gill, and not long after he was invited to be his successor. But notwithstanding the attractions of London, and the opportunity of increasing his worldly good, (his income at Waingate was only £25 a year), he resolved to remain with his few sheep in the wilderness. The favourite hymn, "Blest be the tie that binds," had its birth at this time. In 1773 he began to receive men for training for the ministry. Abraham Greenwood, the first minister at Rochdale, John Hindle of Halifax, and George Townend of Accrington, were the first fruits of his tutorial efforts. By 1776 so much had this work extended, that he removed to Brearley Hall, which offered greater facilities and far larger accommodation. As there was no evening service at Waingate, Mr. Fawcett established a Sunday Evening Lecture in Brearley Hall. The Baptist cause was now regularly advocated here, and the result was the building of the **Hebden Bridge** Church in 1777. The present Hope Church is the outcome of this. The majority of the members at Waingate with their minister were transferred to the new interest, whilst the parent Church continued on its way under several pastorates, the most noteworthy of which was that of Fawcett's friend, John Parker. In 1786—only six years after the inauguration of the Sunday School movement by Robert Raikes—Fawcett established a Sunday School in Hebden Bridge. He and his son, and John Foster, the essayist, were amongst the first teachers. In 1787 he was one of the chief founders of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Baptist Association. A study of the records of its gatherings reveals how large a share he had in its work. In 1792 he was invited to the Presidency of the Bristol Academy, but he was too deeply rooted now to desire any change, and the call was declined. In the same year, and subsequently, he took the warmest interest in the earliest history of the Baptist Missionary Society. He corresponded with Carey and Fuller, established an auxiliary to the Society in Halifax, preached and wrote on its behalf, and the last public effort of his life, outside Hebden Bridge, was made in its interest. He died

in 1817. Dr. Fawcett (the honour was conferred upon him by an American University in 1811), was a voluminous author. His chief works were "Advice to Youth on the advantages of early piety," a volume of Hymns, an "Essay on Anger" which made a great impression on King George III., the "Life of Oliver Heywood," "The Evidences of Christianity" evoked by the writings of Tom Paine, and the last great work of his life, "A Devotional Commentary on the Bible," the MS. of which consisted of 8,578 quarto pages.

We have only to note briefly the other Churches of the Fawcett group.

Haworth was founded by JAMES HARTLEY, who laboured here from 1752 till his death in 1780. The chief subscribers to the original meeting house were William Greenwood of Oxenhope, and J. Horsfall of Manuels, both strongly represented in Yorkshire Baptist Church life to-day, and the former in the service of the Haworth Church. Hartley was on terms of warm friendship with Grimshaw and with Fawcett, who had the highest opinion of his powers as a preacher. He was a denominational celebrity and was not infrequently a preacher in London Churches. As a youth, Fawcett used to walk from Bradford to Haworth to hear him, and had many of his sermons in MS. One of them, delivered at the ordination of Joshua Wood at Halifax, Fawcett declared superior to anything of the kind he ever met with. Hartley was succeeded at Haworth by ISAAC SLEE, who had been a clergyman in the Anglican Church. A pamphlet sermon of his, now very scarce, "The keeping of the commandments of Zion's King the only evidence of love to Him," gives his main reasons for leaving the Establishment; (1) that the Church of England is established by human laws, having a human secular head; (2) is of a national form, diocesan, parochial, &c., embracing the impious and profane; (3) is unscriptural in her doctrines of the Lord's Supper and Baptism. In 1785, MILES ODDY became pastor, and during his forty-five years' pastorate the meeting house was enlarged, and the Church grew continuously in numbers and influence.

Bingley. The origin of this Church has been noted. Its early history was very chequered. The brethren did not dwell together in unity, albeit it was styled "Union Church" consisting as it did of Baptists and Independents. Its chief ministers were THOMAS BUTTERWORTH of Goodshaw, (one of five brethren all of whom were Baptist ministers, and two of them notable men in our denominational history) WILLIAM HARTLEY, and JOSEPH HARRISON, an Independent minister who laboured with considerable success for some years, though he was never ordained pastor and never administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. This seems to have been administered at intervals by James Ashworth of Gildersome, throughout Mr. Harrison's ministry. We only get a somewhat blurred picture of the first forty years of this Church, and what we know does not make pleasant reading.

Steep Lane. The original meeting house was erected by the Methodists in 1751. The first preaching was done by Methodists. JOHN DRACUP preached here for seventeen years, though not a Baptist. He then removed to Rodhill End and became a Baptist. In 1784 he was invited to return to Steep Lane. He came, declaring that he intended to live and die with the people. He laboured eleven years, converted the Church to Baptist principles, and died in 1795. WILLIAM WRATHALL of Wainsgate succeeded, but removed in 1798 to Bolton-le-Moor in Lancashire, when JOHN MOSS became the minister.

2. The other group of General Baptist Churches centres round the honoured name of DAN TAYLOR. He was born in Halifax in 1738, and at an early age he associated with the Methodists. He preached his first sermon in Hipperholme when he was twenty-three years of age. His labours were so greatly appreciated, that the local Methodist leaders pressed him to see Mr. Wesley, with a view to the ministry of that Church. But Taylor had difficulty in accepting some of Wesley's doctrinal views, and he was opposed to certain features in Methodist Church polity. Accordingly he declined the overtures made to him. A handful of people in Heptonstall had seceded from the Wesleyans on similar grounds, and these,

hearing of Taylor's action, asked him to preach for them. He settled in Wadsworth in 1762, preaching, during the summer, under a tree at a place called the Nook, and in the winter, in a house in Wadsworth Lane. Here a school was carried on during the week, in which, as we have seen, young Sutcliff became an assistant. At this time, Dan Taylor had not determined on any ecclesiastical system, but he was a seeker after truth, and his mind was troubled by the problem of Christian baptism. He and his chief adherent John Slater became convinced that Believers' Baptism by immersion was according to the mind of Christ revealed in the New Testament. They decided to obey the heavenly vision, but alas, they could find no Baptist minister in the district willing to baptise them, for whilst the neighbouring ministers were Calvinists of a rigid type, Taylor dared to preach the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all men, and to declare that Christ was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. It must be borne in mind that John Fawcett had not yet come into the district. Would he have dared to baptise the heretic? Dan Taylor learned that there were Baptists of his way of thinking in Lincolnshire. Accordingly, in the midst of winter, in 1763, he and Slater set out on foot to accomplish the journey of over one hundred miles. They travelled all one day, slept in the open during the night, and footed it bravely for another long day. They then discovered that there was a General Baptist Church in Gamston Nottinghamshire, a place through which they had passed three hours before, and that in the village to which they had come for the night there was resident a deacon of the Gamston Church. They at once sought him, but the surly fellow quickly dismissed them, and sent them to a public house. On the next day, being the Sunday, they returned to Gamston and worshipped with the General Baptists. They were hospitably entertained by the minister, and on the following Wednesday Dan Taylor was baptised in the river. They then returned to Wadsworth, when Slater and others were baptised. A Church was formed, with Dan Taylor as minister, and in the autumn of the same year he was ordained by Gilbert Boyce of Con-

ingsby. The Church at once joined the Lincolnshire Association. Such was the origin of the first General Baptist Church in Yorkshire, and in the following year a meeting house was erected on **Birchcliffe**. The Church at Birchcliffe made it an unwritten rule that "each member should endeavour to bring one under the sound of the Gospel, and should use every Scriptural method to engage him to embrace it." (History of General Baptists, 2, 77). It also introduced into Yorkshire the practice of Experience Meetings, modelled to a large extent on the Wesleyan Class Meetings.

In 1769, the Leicestershire Churches seceded from the General Baptist Association. Dan Taylor unhesitatingly threw his lot in with the seceders, and it was resolved to form a "New Connection." The reason for this step is vividly set forth in a letter of Taylor himself to Gilbert Boyce. "In the seventeenth century the General Baptists almost universally maintained that the Death of Christ for the sins of men was the only foundation of a sinner's hope. Their Churches were numerous, the zeal and piety of their ministers and people were celebrated, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in their hands. Towards the latter end of the century, the sentiments of Arius and Socinus were countenanced by some of their leaders. Others sounded the alarm, but they were calumniated as defective in charity. Many yielded so far as to trim and temporise, and treat the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel as matters of indifference. . . . The people too much lost sight of these, and their relish for them gradually dwindled. Carnality and conformity to the world prevailed in the Churches . . . and so one after another came to nothing, and a great number of meeting houses were lost, or converted to other uses in almost every part of the nation. In a word they degraded Jesus Christ, and He degraded them." As a protest against such pernicious tenets the "New Connection of General Baptists," or as they were sometimes termed "Free Grace General Baptists," was formed. Their first General Assembly was held in 1770, when six Articles of Faith were agreed upon and signed by the dissentients. These Articles may be described Evangelical as regards the Person and Work

of Christ, and Arminian in regard to the extent of the Atonement. It is also worthy of remark that the New Connection Baptists were quite at one with the Particular Baptists, in maintaining "that no one ought to be received into the Church without submission to the ordinance of believers' immersion." Taylor was the life and soul of the New Connection by virtue of his character, administrative skill and herculean labours. "He travelled twenty-five thousand miles preaching the Gospel, mostly on foot, the rest on horseback; nine sermons a week were his usual allowance and sometimes he preached more." (Vedder, Short History of the Baptists, p. 173). At Birchcliffe he at once started a weekly class for men who wished to learn how to preach. This may be fitly termed the rudimentary form of the General Baptist College. His first students were Richard Folds, Jeremy Ingham, and John Taylor, his own brother. Thus Hebden Bridge was the cradle of the Midland College as well as of Rawdon College. We can well understand that this eager desire for labourers in the ministry of the Gospel was a very strong tie between Fawcett and Taylor, uniting them in that close friendship which lasted through life. In 1771 Dan Taylor visited **Queenshead**, now known as Queensbury, three miles from Halifax, and about eleven miles from Hebden Bridge. He was invited to preach, and one of his hearers, John Bairstow, was so impressed that he walked to Birchcliffe to hear Mr. Taylor again. This led to his baptism and to the opening of his house for preaching services. A little later, part of the Queenshead Inn was fitted up as a place of worship, and Sunday services were conducted by John Taylor, with a monthly visit from his elder brother Dan. In 1773 a meeting house was erected, a Church was formed by the dismissal of seventeen members from Birchcliffe, and JOHN TAYLOR became its first pastor. The succeeding years were marked by rapid growth, so that by the end of 1776 upwards of one hundred persons had been received into fellowship. The meeting house had to be enlarged in 1799, and John Taylor continued his honourable ministry up to his death in 1818. Contemporaneous with the founding of a Church at Queenshead, **Shore**, a village about six miles

from Hebden Bridge, was visited by Dan Taylor and his assistants. Here in 1777 a meeting house was built, and JOHN STANSFIELD, a member at Birchcliffe, became minister. The little band of believers gathered here was united to the Church at Birchcliffe, till in 1795 a separate Church was founded, and JOHN SPENCER was called to the pastorate, which he held till long after the beginning of the nineteenth century. Tribute should be paid to the large-heartedness of the parent Church at Birchcliffe. Their minister could never have achieved his great aims had his people been animated by the spirit of a selfish Independency. But they looked not only on their own things; their eyes swept a far larger horizon. Few modern Churches would tolerate what Birchcliffe endured, not always, it must be confessed, without subterranean grumbles. Such was Taylor's burning zeal for Evangelism, that his absences from his own pulpit must have been distressingly frequent. About 1775 **Halifax** was occupied. In 1782, a Church was formed by the dismissal of thirty members from Queenshead. The strategic importance of Halifax was unquestionable, for it was by far the most populous town in the district; accordingly it was urged that Taylor, as the most distinguished advocate of the General Baptist faith, should leave Birchcliffe and settle there. An experiment was tried. It was agreed that John Sutcliffe (to be carefully distinguished from Sutcliff of Olney) a member of Mr. Taylor's Church, should superintend the work at Birchcliffe, whilst the pastor should remove to Halifax for a period of six months. Further steps were to be determined by the result of the experiment. In 1783 the Association, meeting in Nottingham, decided, "that it would be more for the advantage of the cause of Christ for brother Taylor to continue at Halifax." It was a sore trouble to Birchcliffe, but they loyally submitted. "We did all that we could do, with a good conscience, to prevent it; but all in vain." (Minute of the Church). They were rewarded for their self-sacrifice. They did not appreciably suffer. The cause advanced steadily under Sutcliffe's leadership, so much so that a number swarmed, and founded a new Church in Burnley. Mr. Taylor's labours in Halifax were abundantly

prosperous, but his people were destined to drink of the cup Birchcliffe had partaken of, and after two years their minister left for London. The proceedings in the Association, when Taylor's removal was debated, make impressive reading. How broad and statesmanlike was the survey of these early Baptists! Prior to all discussion they read the depositions from London and Halifax. They then compared London and Halifax, to discover in which place were the most apparent opportunities of doing good. Next they inquired whether better instruments might be had for Halifax or London, and which place would the more easily obtain a suitable pastor. Finally, a vote was taken on the question "Does it appear, on the whole, likely to be for the glory of God and the good of mankind, that brother D. Taylor remove to London?" The ayes had it, and Dan Taylor's ministry in Yorkshire terminated. WILLIAM BURGESS succeeded to the vacant pastorate, and he was followed in 1791 by JOSEPH ELLIS. Meanwhile Mr. Sutcliffe's ministry was acceptable, and the old meeting house at Birchcliffe was enlarged in 1793 to accommodate the growing congregation. But soon after this his health declined, and in 1799 the Church was again destitute of a pastor. This misfortune and the removal of the indefatigable founder to London caused a general decline in the prosperity of the Connection in Yorkshire. In 1786 there were four Churches with two hundred and thirty-five members, but in 1800, though there were six nominal societies, the membership did not reach two hundred.

Mention must be made of a few Churches, which had died out before the close of the period. About 1788 a second Baptist Church was formed in Leeds, and a meeting house called "Ebenezer" was erected. William Price, a student from Bristol Academy became minister. At his death the cause dwindled, and in 1798 it was extinct. The Methodists purchased the Chapel. In 1786 a few Christian people in Sheffield became convinced of the truth of Believers' Baptism. A Nottingham minister came over to baptise them. They were formed into a Church. There never was a settled pastor, and in 1793 the little company united

with the Church in Masborough. In 1789 the Masborough Church had been formed with Benjamin Dickinson, formerly of Halifax, as minister. John Turton and James Hudson followed. When, in 1836, the Rotherham people erected a fine meeting house the elder Church became absorbed in the younger. In 1789, the General Baptists, *i.e.*, the New Connection, had founded a small Church in Longwood, five miles from Halifax. The work was superintended by a most devoted layman, who lavished time, service, and money, on the cause. The story of John Booth's disinterested labours is the story of a very noble failure. For fifteen years he walked to Longwood, preached twice, and walked back to Halifax at night, without any remuneration whatever. The people were not responsive, some of the members of the Church were a disgrace to their profession, ministers and the Association too advised him to desist. Nevertheless, undaunted he pressed on, till advancing years and severe illness incapacitated him from doing any more. In 1805 the Church was extinct.

"The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
 . . . Are music sent up to God."

Long Preston ought to have a word. About 1782, William Holgate opened his house for preaching services, and maintained the preacher, John Ross, in his own home. Probably there was no separate Church. In Rippon's Register for 1798, it is stated that Thomas Newhouse, minister of Gisburn Forest, preaches once a fortnight at Long Preston.

The writer's apology for the fragmentary nature of this sketch is, in part, the necessary limits of space. Still more is it due in the case of some Churches to the utter poverty of materials. No Church to which reference has been made in this chapter has continuous records. Very few have any contemporary narrative of their origin. Some have no history of the first forty or fifty years of their existence. Others break off abruptly and leave the investigator to deal as best he may with gaps to be measured by decades. We get only gleanings here and there from external sources. For the most part Baptist Churches and their doings were beneath

the notice of other than Baptist chroniclers. Hence the extreme difficulty of getting any clear image of the faces of our vanished fathers.

In reviewing the whole, a word of Paul's comes forcibly to mind, "Ye behold your calling brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." The Churches of this early period were very small in numbers. If we take the largest of them, and come as far down as 1798, we find Salendine Nook the largest of the churches with only 130 members, Bradford with under 100, Leeds with 70, Rawdon with 50, Sutton with about the same number, Gildersome with 47, Barnoldswick with 32. Many had a membership of under a score. Then the people were uninfluential. For a large part of the period there were very few meeting houses. Worship was held in the woods, in barns, in private houses, and at first we might almost say "in caves and holes of the earth." In Bradford the sanctuary was a licensed cockpit. The people were too poor to buy benches, and worshippers carried their stools under their arms. At Queenshead, the meeting house was part of an inn, at Driffield a brewery, at Hull an old tower. Dr. Fawcett, a leader in the denomination, had £25 a year; many ministers had to eke out their livelihood by manual labours during the week. Then the ministers were generally "unlearned and ignorant men"—almost entirely so in the original sense of the words, and sometimes in a more serious sense too. They had no college education. There was but one Baptist Academy in the kingdom, and that far away. Many of the ministers had never been to school. They were emphatically self taught. Books were a luxury and largely inaccessible to men so poor. The Churches were frowned upon by all the powers and authorities, they were fettered by cruel persecuting laws, and to the end of the 18th century they received only scanty toleration. "The formation of the political institutions in the United States was not effected by giant minds or nobles after the flesh" (Bancroft). And we may say the foundations of our Yorkshire Churches were laid by humble poor uncultured

men. How abundant has been the harvest from the seed they sowed in pain and tears ! They maintained their unflinching testimony to the principles of civil and religious liberty. They asserted that a Church of Christ consists of converted men and women and of them only. They were witnesses for the Crown rights of Christ as supreme King and Ruler in His Church, and they believed that His mind and will were clearly revealed in the New Testament. And this carried with it acceptance of baptism as the outward and visible sign of a Christian's surrender to his Lord. They laboured, and we have entered into their labours. God grant that, with our happier national life, our unfettered liberty, our richer culture, our vastly superior material resources, and our great multitude of adherents, we may be as faithful in our day and generation as they were in theirs.

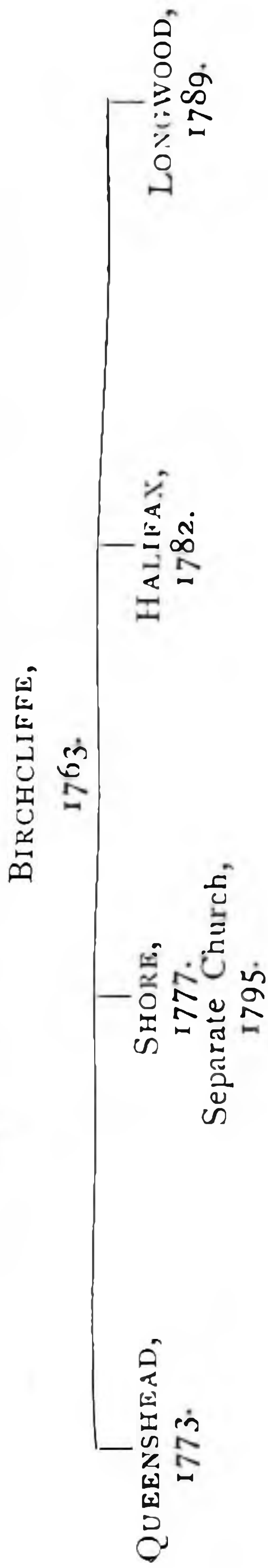


CHURCHES ORIGINATING FROM THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL.

THE FAWCETT GROUP.—PARTICULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES.



THE DAN TAYLOR GROUP.—NEW CONNECTION GENERAL BAPTISTS.



**CHURCHES OF THE BRADFORD
DISTRICT.**

BY

Rev. JOSEPH BROWN MORGAN.

THE BRADFORD DISTRICT.

The following is a copy of the application for a preaching place at Rawdon. The original is among the Session Rolls, now deposited at the West Riding County Hall, Wakefield.—[ED.] :—

“The dwellinghouse of John Moore of Rawden is intended for a publick meeting-place for Protestant dissenters, the adherers having no other design but to glorify God and edify one another, desiring ye health, peace, prosperity and safety of their Majesties King William & Queen Mary, & the good of the Kingdome, Therefore we whose names are here subscribed desire this worthy Bench to grant us a Licence, God save the King and Queen.

John Moore, Josias Marshall, Jeremiah Marshall,
John Marshall, Ezekiel Butler, John Hardacer,
Abrm Hollings.” Leeds, Jany. 16, 1689.

Registration of “House of Wm. Mitchel of Bolling (Bowling).
—Wm. Mitchel, Abraham Barraclough, George Hey,
John Smethies, Samuell Swaine, Mathew Thornton,
Abraham Dixon, Saml. Thornton, John Hutchinson, Wm.
Thornton. Leeds, July 1699.” Two of these signatures
occur at an earlier date, for we find:—“Wakefield,
Jany. 1691. Dwelling house of John Smithies of Little
Horton recorded as a place of religious meeting. Signed—
Saml. Swaine, John Smythies, John Butterfield, Robt.
Parkinson.”

CHURCHES OF THE BRADFORD DISTRICT.

BY

Rev. JOSEPH BROWN MORGAN.



There are twenty-three Churches in the Bradford District of the Yorkshire Baptist Association. Of **Rawdon and Heaton.** these, several are outside the city boundaries, but as they can all be traced back to one or two streams of spiritual influence it will be convenient to treat all the Churches in the district as belonging to one group. From early days in the history of Bradford our denomination has held a prominent and honourable position. In the Mid-Victorian era it was frequently remarked that the three "B's," Birmingham, Bristol and Bradford, were three important centres of Baptist life and influence. There is room for doubt as to when the first Baptist Church was founded in the district, Rawdon and Heaton being perhaps in competition for this honourable distinction, a Church having been founded at each place by William Mitchel and David Crosley, of Heptonstall. These two men were born respectively in 1662 and 1669. They were, according to a quaint description, "cousins in nature, brothers by grace and fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard." With fine natural gifts and rich spiritual endowments, they wielded a deep and wide-spread influence for good. In a sketch of the early Baptists, by Rev. John Haslam, D.D., it is stated that there was a registered place of worship at Heaton in 1689.* It is further stated

* There is good reason to believe that, in 1695, this congregation met at "James Garth's new building in Heaton." Recorded at Pontefract Sessions, April 1695. [Ed.]

that in 1713, the Baptists of Heaton, Rawdon, and Gildersome, were formed into a Church. The story of the Church at Gildersome will be told in dealing with the Leeds district. Of the other two, it would appear that, later in the eighteenth century, the Church at Heaton suffered eclipse, the cause not being revived till 1824; whereas the Church at Rawdon has from its beginnings in 1713, "continued unto this present." To Rawdon, therefore, belongs the distinction of being the oldest Baptist Church in the Bradford district.

The interesting story of this Church prior to the year 1800 has been referred to in an earlier part of the volume. It is, however, worth recording that an entry in the Church book, dated about 1724, by John Marshall, of Low Hall, Yeadon, tells how "the first-fruits of us" were gathered by William Mitchel, and that some time elapsed before "God further opened our eyes to the truth of Believers' Baptism," and how they were then added to "a people of the same faith and practice in Lancashire." It would appear, therefore, that these Rawdon folk were not at first a Baptist community, but became so after some years of existence. In the early nineteenth century, the Church, apparently a struggling cause, owed much to Dr. Steadman, of Bradford. Between the years 1811 and 1815 it felt the influence of the great Methodist Revival which swept over the district, and in 1818, under the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Hughes, the Sunday school in connection with the Church was started in the school-room close to the manse at Nether Yeadon, and affiliated to the Leeds Sunday School Union. Mr. Hughes is still remembered by old inhabitants of the district. He is spoken of as "a little stiff man, with knee breeches: a good man, who would give the coat off his back." Evidently somewhat careless as to personal appearance, he would sometimes appear in the pulpit with "wisps of straw and hay about him," probably due to the fact that he had been attending to the creature comforts of his cow before he ministered to the spiritual well-being of his flock. Amongst the pastors who followed were Rev. W. Liddell (1841-46), who left to become

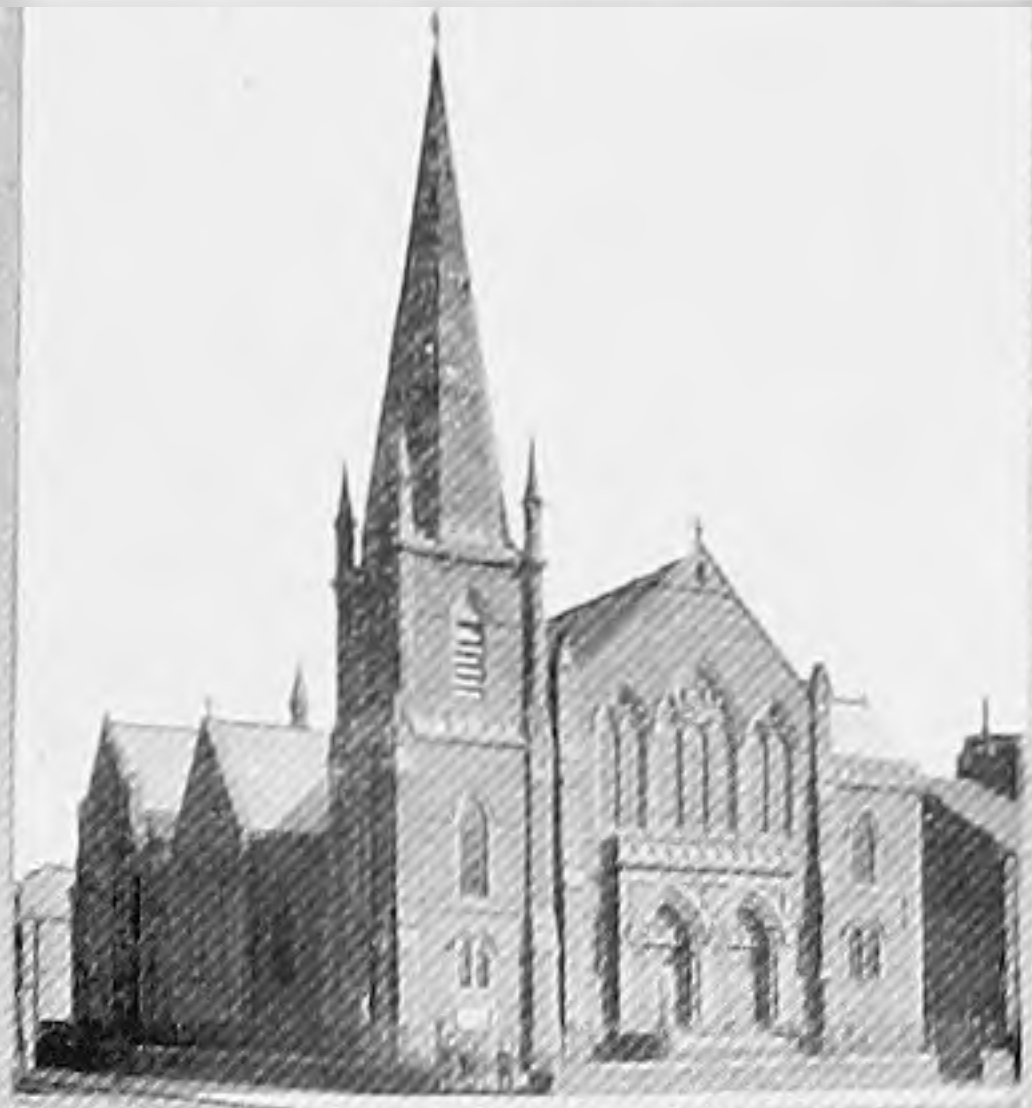
the pastor of Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool ; Rev. Robert Holmes (1847-74) who was both a versatile writer and an able and eloquent preacher ; Rev. Thomas Burdett, M.A., sometime tutor of Haverfordwest College, who died in the pulpit one Sunday morning, in 1881 ; and the Rev. A. P. Fayers, who became pastor in 1883, and for twenty-one years exercised a most gracious and helpful ministry. Rawdon Church is still prosperous and exercises an influence for good in the neighbourhood. The present chapel is the third in the history of the Church, and was erected in 1891. The present pastor, Rev. A. H. West, B.A., B.D., settled at Rawdon in 1905.

If Rawdon is the mother Church of the district, Westgate is the mother Church of the city of Bradford, and Westgate sprang from Rawdon. Certain members of the Rawdon Church were, in the year 1751, in the habit of meeting in the house of a Christian woman, named Elizabeth Lankland, of Manningham. As a result, we are told, eight persons were converted and baptised, and in 1753, one William Crabtree, who was at the time a deacon of the Church at Wainsgate, came to preach to the little community, and was asked to become its minister. On December 4th, 1753, the Church was formed, consisting of twenty-three members who signed the covenant which all who have entered the fellowship of the Church at Westgate since that day have accepted. The private room in which worship was conducted soon became too "strait" for the members attending, and "a place of dissoluteness" known as "The Cockpit" was transformed into a sanctuary. It is recorded that the Church was too poor to seat the new sanctuary, so they carried the stools on which they sat with them to the house of God. In 1755, the first place of worship was built in Westgate, which was then regarded as "the top of the town." The new sanctuary became known as "the top of the town chapel." On March 11th, 1758, Mr. Crabtree baptised and received into fellowship John Fawcett, eminent as preacher, scholar, commentator and hymn writer, who subsequently became minister of the Church at Hebden Bridge.

Mr. Crabtree died in 1803, and was succeeded in 1805 by Rev. W. Steadman, of Plymouth Dock. Mr., afterwards Dr., Steadman, was minister at Westgate for nearly thirty-two years. During his pastorate the chapel was enlarged, and Sunday school accommodation was provided. Other Churches were formed and generously supported, and Westgate passed through a time of numerical increase and spiritual prosperity. Dr. Steadman's work in connection with the Northern Baptist Education Society, of which he was the first president, has already been dealt with in the volume, but it is worth recording here that he was appointed the first president of the Bradford Mechanics' Institute, an institution which has been of immense value in the life of the city, and which still continues its useful and vigorous career. Three years before Dr. Steadman's death in 1837, Henry Dowson, then a student at Horton College, became assistant minister at Westgate, and on Dr. Steadman's demise, was elected the pastor. Mr. Dowson, like Dr. Steadman, was thirty-two years at Westgate; three years as assistant and the remainder of the period in sole charge. The best traditions of the Church were maintained. There was both a strengthening of the stakes, and a lengthening of the cords. The Church was prosperous, and as a result of its enterprise other Churches were formed. Mr. Dowson, like his predecessor, was interested in the work of training young men for the ministry, and in 1886 he left Bradford to become the first president of the Bury Baptist College, now at Brighton Grove, Manchester. Mr. Dowson died in 1884. On the day before an accident, which eventually proved fatal, he preached at Crouch Hill, London, taking as his text the words "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." Since Mr. Dowson's day, there has been a worthy succession of ministers at Westgate, in the persons of the Rev. John Bloomfield, afterwards of Gloucester; Rev. W. H. Ibberson and Rev. James Dann, who were for a time co-pastors—Mr. Ibberson still frequently breaks the bread of life to the Westgate congregation—Rev. C. W. Skemp, who served the Church from 1881 to 1902, and during whose ministry the Church migrated



WESTGATE.



GRANGE ROAD.



HEATON.



SION JUBILEE.



HALLFIELD.

BRADFORD

DISTRICT.



GIRLINGTON.



TRINITY.



LEEDS ROAD.



ALLERTON.



RIPLEY STREET.

BRADFORD
DISTRICT.

from Westgate to Carlisle Road ; and Rev. David Lindsay, now of The Downs Chapel, Clapton, London. The Church which, since the departure of Mr. Lindsay, has been without a pastor has given a call to Rev. T. O. Ransford of London. The call has been accepted and Mr. Ransford is about to commence his ministry. With an attractive building, and fine school premises, and located in the midst of a thickly populated district, the Church at Westgate should find even greater opportunities in the future than it has had in the past.

Next in chronological order comes Bethel Church, Shipley, formed in 1758. Fifty and more years after **Bethel, Shipley.** that Shipley was described as "a little out-of-the-way place seldom heard of." It must, therefore, have been a "day of small things" indeed, when Joseph Gawkrodger, of Rawdon, first preached the Baptist faith at the Holt, Windhill.* The covenant of the Church, framed in 1769, is a quaint document, full of that theological definiteness and insistence in which early Baptists delighted. Mr. Gawkrodger, the first pastor, was succeeded in 1769 by Rev. Luke Collins, of Bacup, and Rev. George Haines, of Horsley. There have, during the century and a half of its existence, been seventeen pastors at Bethel. The shortest pastorate, continuing for six months, was that of the Rev. Robert Gate, who died during an epidemic of small-pox, having contracted the malady while ministering to other sufferers. The longest was that of the Rev. John Bowser, who ministered for thirty years, from 1782 to 1812. The first Sunday School at Shipley was formed at Bethel, in 1822, during the pastorate of Rev. Isaac Mann, M.A., who afterwards became minister of Maze Pond Church, London. In 1866, the crowded condition of Bethel necessitated the provision of further accommodation, and Rosse Street Chapel was built. It was at first intended to terminate the work at Bethel, but the affection of many for

* Windhill had been one of John Moore's preaching places, for, on October 8th, 1689, the "Barn of Widdow Hill at Windall in Calverley" was registered for worship. The applicants were "Richard Simson, Willim Garth, Joshua Sandall, Tim Collier, John Hardacer, John Moore." In the following year, they, with Josias Marshall, obtained an order for "Barn in the occupation of Thos. Beeston of Ashold (Esholt), in Otley Parish."

the old sanctuary was such that eventually the work there was continued, 200 members being dismissed to form the new Church at Rosse Street. Of former pastors who rendered good service at Bethel, the Revs. F. E. Cossey, H. C. Atkinson, E. E. Fisk, and D. N. Kentfield are still living. The Rev. E. Hardin, who removed from Wellington, Shropshire, is the present minister. During the 155 years of its existence more than 1,600 persons have been received into fellowship.

In 1772, when the Baptist Church was formed in Queensbury, then called Queenshead, there were only a few scattered houses on the wild hill side. The work was commenced by Rev. Dan Taylor, of Birchcliffe, to whose life and work reference is made elsewhere in this volume. Under his preaching, a hearer named John Bairstow, was graciously influenced, and threw open his house for religious worship. A little later a room in the inn on the hillside was hired as more convenient. In 1773, the chapel was built, and John Taylor, the brother of Dan Taylor, the apostle of the General Baptists, was appointed pastor. For forty-five years Mr. Taylor exercised a happy and fruitful ministry, during which time seven young men of the congregation went forth to become ministers of the gospel. His work, however, was not confined to his own Church. He did the work of an evangelist. As a rule he preached morning and afternoon at Queensbury, and in the evening would walk to another village, sometimes more than one, to uplift The Christ before men. So great was the esteem in which he was held that when he died, in 1818, more than 3,000 people attended his funeral sermon as a mark of respect and affection. In 1820, during the pastorate of Rev. W. Henley, the old chapel was pulled down, and a new one erected on the site. Mr. Henley was succeeded in 1829 by Rev. S. H. Hudson, who had previously laboured in Jamaica, and who, at the close of his ministry in 1840, again took up service in the foreign field, becoming a missionary to China. The Revs. R. Hardy and J. Parkinson followed, and in 1885 Rev. C. E. Carter became pastor. During Mr.

Carter's fruitful ministry of fifteen years, the new school premises were erected, and the membership of the Church reached high water mark. The Rev. Grimshaw Binns succeeded Mr. Carter in 1900, and worthily maintained the work. In 1908, Mr. Binns left to take up pastoral work in Australia, and in 1909, the present pastor, Rev. E. G. Hinton, became minister. At least four former members of Queensbury are now in the work of the ministry.

The Church at Idle was formed on April 18th, 1808. Nine persons, including William Garnett, their minister, were on that day dismissed from Zion Church, Bramley, to establish the new cause. In the letter of transfer given by the Church at Bramley, the following passage occurs: "We consider your proceedings orderly and your request justifiable. We can therefore grant you an honourable dismission from our community that you may be formed into a Church, at Idle, of the same Faith and Order with ourselves. May the Great Head of the Church favour you with His reviving presence; may He grant you uninterrupted peace and prosperity." Not many great, or wise, or mighty, belonged to the infant community at Idle. Few could read, or write their own names, and their attestation to the covenant of the Church was, appropriately enough, by means of a cross; but the doctrine they believed in was "strong meat for men," and the obligations of the Church life were stringent. No one was supposed to be absent from public worship "except for sickness, lameness, unseasonable weather, or old age." The observance of the Lord's Day was jealously guarded. "Sports or plays," unnecessary visits to friends, and harmful conversations were to be avoided. In this connection it is significant to read that Mr. Garnett himself, the first minister of the Church, was, years afterwards, excluded from fellowship for non-attendance at the means of grace. Although after two and a half years the membership of the Church was only about a dozen, the interest in the cause was such that in 1810 a new chapel was erected. Mr. Garnett remained as minister of the Church till 1820, by which time the membership had arisen to about thirty. This

seems a very small number for a chapel accommodating 400 persons, but it has to be remembered that in those days the door into the Church was narrower than it is to-day, and in all probability the adherents were several times as numerous as the members. For half a century the Church made quiet progress. During this period six ministers occupied the pastoral office, serving their generation and falling on sleep. The best work is often the quiet work.

“ What shall I do lest life in silence pass?
 And if it do, and never prompt the bray of brass,
 Why shoulds't thou rue?
 The ocean deeps are mute, the shallows roar,
 Worth is the ocean, fame is the bruit along the shore.”

In 1868, the Rev. James Horn became the minister. During his pastorate the present commodious premises were erected at a cost of nearly £4,000. He was, in order, followed by Revs. Jonas Lee, T. E. Rawlings, and E. G. Hinton. The present minister is the Rev. T. Moss.

The Church at Sandy Lane, like Queensbury, is one of the Old General Baptist Churches. It is highly probable that Rev. John Taylor, of **Allerton, Bethel** (**Sandy Lane**), Queensbury, began the work, when, on Sunday evenings, he used to visit the villages around, preaching the Gospel. The Church is certainly a daughter of Queensbury, and was formed in 1824, six years after Mr. Taylor's death. At the opening services of the chapel, the Revs. Richard Ingham, of Heptonstall Slack, S. Foster, of Farsley, J. G. Pike, of Derby, and T. Stevenson, names of eminence among General Baptists, took part. In 1835, Rev. Jonathan Ingham, of Halifax, became pastor. Whether Mr. Ingham was “passing rich” on it or not he received the stipend of £25 a year. The Church, as its records show, was extremely poor in this world's goods and burdened with an almost crushing debt. Many joined the Church during Mr. Ingham's pastorate of thirteen years, and he was a man greatly beloved, but during part of the time the Church was unable to pay the promised salary of £25,

and the pastor only received £16 per annum. He said he could "preach as well on £16 as on £25." In 1864, Rev. W. E. Winks, afterwards so well and honorably known as minister of Bethany Church, Cardiff, became pastor, and ministered for three years to largely increasing congregations. In 1873, Rev. Thomas Gill succeeded Mr. Winks. During this pastorate, fifty-three members were dismissed to form the Central Church at Allerton. Since then, Revs. W. H. Smith, W. Wynn, D. G. Miller, and J. P. Rogerson, have successively been pastors at Sandy Lane. The present chapel was erected in 1883, the foundation stone being laid by Mr. Angus Holden, then Mayor of Bradford. The pastorate is at present vacant.

The Church now worshipping in the Sion Jubilee Memorial Chapel, Harris Street, claims to be the first off-shoot of the mother Church in Westgate.

Sion. It was formed on the 27th October, 1824, and carried on the work of God in the original Sion Chapel, which stood for over half a century at the foot of Bridge Street, the site being now occupied by the L. & Y. Railway Company's Goods Station. At the opening services of the chapel, the renowned Robert Hall was one of the preachers. The first membership consisted of twenty-three persons dismissed from Westgate, with the addition of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Benjamin Godwin and Mrs. Godwin, dismissed from the Church at Great Missenden, Bucks. Mr. Godwin, who had been engaged as Classical Tutor at Horton College (now Rawdon), became its first pastor. In twenty years the Church grew to a membership of 271, and in 1871 the names on the roll numbered 737. The pastors of the Church during its sojourn in Bridge Street were, Dr. Godwin (1824-37); Rev. Thomas Steadman, son of Dr. Steadman (1837-39, when Mr. Steadman emigrated to the United States); Rev. Thomas Dallinger (1840-48); and Rev. J. P. Chown, a succession of distinguished and devoted men. In 1871, while Mr. Chown was still minister, the present sanctuary was erected at a cost of £19,000. In connection with the opening services Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached in St. George's Hall, and as the

entire cost of the new premises, both chapel and school, had been already defrayed, the collections on the day, amounting to £250, were divided between the Stockwell Orphanage and the Bradford Fever Hospital. During the Pastorate of J. P. Chown, the New Year Services at St. George's Hall, on behalf of the local charities, were inaugurated. Year after year the spacious building was crowded to listen to the Pastor of Sion's plain, homely, but always manly talk, and large sums were collected for the Hospitals. The services are still carried on. For several years the Bishop of Ripon, Dr. Boyd Carpenter, conducted them, but latterly different speakers have been invited each year, Revs. H. M. Neild, (Wesleyan Mission). Father Bernard Vaughan and Bishop Welldon being among the more recent speakers. In 1875, after a pastorate of twenty-seven years, Mr. Chown, whose name had in the meantime become a household word in Bradford and who was loved by all who knew him, removed to London. He was succeeded in turn by Revs. J. W. Ashworth, C. A. Davis, J. Gelson Gregson, G. C. Williams, C. W. Minifie, and W. Hogan. The last named has recently removed to Wellington, Somerset. During Mr. Hogan's pastorate, a secession which took place years before was happily regathered into the flock at Sion. The present membership is 542.

On August 7th, 1828, fourteen members of the Church at Queenshead (Queensbury), withdrew **Clayton.** from fellowship in order to form a new Church of the General Baptist faith and order at Clayton. On the same day, fourteen persons were baptised by Mr. H. Hollinrake, of Birchcliffe, Hebden Bridge, in the presence of more than two thousand spectators. Mr. George Andrews, senr., previously a member of the Church at Sandy Lane, Allerton, also became a member of the new cause, and on the following Lord's Day, Mr. Jonas Greenwood, who had been formerly in membership at Queenshead, was received.

The first place of worship was a small chapel situated at Deep Lane Top, now the Crown Inn. It was capable of seating about ninety persons, and was obtained on the terms

of a yearly rental of £4 15s. od. In 1830, a new chapel was erected. Three persons were baptized therein before the chapel was finished, the baptism taking place on August 8th, and the opening services on the 24th and 28th of October following. An interesting account of the opening services appeared in the General Baptist Repository for January, 1831. By this time £130 towards the cost of £530 had been raised, the opening services realising the sum of £27. The Sunday school was commenced in February, 1831, and in December of that year, Rev. John Taylor was appointed pastor with a stipend of £15 per annum. During Mr. Taylor's pastorate of five years, forty-seven persons were added to the Church by baptism. In 1843, the Rev. Jabez Tunncliffe conducted some special services at Clayton, as a result of which thirty-four persons were baptized. Twenty years later, in 1863, Mr. Tunncliffe, then at Leeds, was invited to the pastorate, but declined. In 1848, the first musical instrument, a "bass," was introduced. There are two resolutions in the Church book with reference thereto :
"1. To accept the offer of friend A. Barker, viz., of a 'Bass' ;
2. That we allow no kind of instrument but a 'bass' to be admitted into this place of worship as long as the chapel stands."

The subsequent history of the Church at Clayton, as of other places, goes to show it is not wise to attempt to impose such restrictions on posterity. Revs. Hogg, Henry Aster, Cornelius Leigh, and J. Brown, were ministers of the Church between 1848 and 1878. In 1891, during the pastorate of Rev. J. W. Hambley, the present commodious and beautiful chapel was erected at a cost of £5,201 os. od. The following year Mr. and Mrs. Asa Briggs defrayed the expense of a new organ, costing £400. In 1897, Mr. Hambley resigned the pastorate and was succeeded by Rev. James Horn. He was followed in 1904 by Rev. Anwyl Arthur, and in 1909 by the Rev. T. B. Field. It is worthy of note that Mr. George Andrew, who supplied the data on which this short account is based, faithfully served the Church as secretary for more than fifty years.

The Tetley Street Church, also of the General Baptist persuasion, is a product of missionary enterprise on the part of the Church at Grange Road (Tetley Street Memorial). It was formed in 1832 as a result of some cottage meetings which were conducted by Rev. T. H. Hudson and other Queenshead people. As the cottage where the meetings were held soon became too small for the congregations, a larger room was taken in the King's Arms Yard, Westgate. Much success attended the work there, though it recorded that the meetings were frequently disturbed by "drunken men, horses, and pigs." The need for more suitable premises became very pressing, and eventually a site was given by Mr. W. Tetley, in Tetley Street, and the old Tetley Street Chapel was erected. The Rev. R. Ingham, of Heptonstall Slack, already mentioned in these sketches, became pastor, and during his ministry the membership of the Church increased from 30 to 230. During the pastorate of Rev. H. Rose, who followed Mr. Ingham, a number of members left to form Bethel Church, Infirmary Street. Mr. Rose died at the early age of thirty-two. The pastorate with which the name of Tetley Street will ever be reverently associated was that of Rev. Benjamin Wood. A cultured, gracious man, he exercised for twenty-eight years a wonderful influence, not only in his own Church but in the city life of Bradford. He died in harness while conducting a week-night service at his Church. After one or two short ministries, the Rev. R. A. Boothman became pastor. It had now become apparent that owing to a great change in the district round Tetley Street, which was now inhabited largely by a Roman Catholic population, it was almost necessary to migrate to other quarters. During Mr. Boothman's ministry, the elegant and convenient Grange Road premises were erected, a venture the wisdom of which has been abundantly proved. After Mr. Boothman left, the Church invited Mr. J. H. Malins Johnson, of Rawdon College, to the pastorate, and it has proved a happy settlement. Both Church and school are prospering.

No new Church was formed in the Bradford District between 1832 and 1850. In the latter **Infirmary Street**, year a number of members of Tetley Street **Bethel**. left and started a new cause in a small room in Longcroft Place. The present chapel was erected in 1853, and the school premises were added a few years later. During fifty years, eight ministers have held the office of pastor and exercised faithful ministry. When, very early in the present century, an attempt was made to start a Baptist Central Mission in Bradford, in Westgate Hall—the Old Westgate Chapel—the Infirmary Street Church formed the nucleus of the enterprise, though some services were still held in the Bethel Chapel. When the new mission proved unsuccessful the former position was reverted to at Bethel. The Church is face to face with similar difficulties to those which induced the Churches at Westgate and Tetley Street, both of them in the immediate neighbourhood of Bethel, to migrate to the suburbs. Faithfully service has been rendered, but latterly it has not been found possible to support a pastor, and student pastors have supplied the pulpit. During the last two years, Mr. Leslie Chown, grandson of the Rev. J. P. Chown, has rendered efficient service in this capacity. There is a good Sunday school.

The Church at Denholme had very humble beginnings. In the middle of the nineteenth century **Denholme**. a few Baptist families settled in the neighbourhood and rented a room at Lodge Gate in which to hold their services. By soliciting gifts from door to door, they raised the sum of four shillings and ninepence, and with the gift of a few forms from the Church at Queensbury, and the loan of some Woolcombers' Stocks, they opened the place for worship. In 1851, a small school was built at a cost of £173, and the same year fifteen persons were formed into a Church. In 1862, the site for the present chapel was secured, and in 1867 it was opened for worship. New schools were built in 1883, and later still an organ was added, Mr. Carnegie defraying part of the cost. There have been two pastors : Rev. J. Taylor, 1869-1881, and Rev. J. McNeill,

1897-1900. Since 1900 the services have been conducted by supplies. In a sketch like this it is only possible to tell the outward things of Church life and work, and these are, after all, the less important things. For more than sixty years the word of God has been faithfully proclaimed, and from time to time people have been "added to the Lord" at Denholme.

Surely no Church could have had a happier origin than Trinity. In celebration of its centenary and as a memorial of the goodness and blessing of God through its history, the mother Church at Westgate built the new chapel and dismissed forty-one of its members to form the Church. At the opening services, which were held on the 14th May, 1857, the Rev. Baptist W. Noel preached morning and evening, Revs. H. Dowson and Dr. Ackworth, of Horton College, also taking part. Among others who took part in subsequent services were Revs. J. P. Chown and Hugh Stowell Brown. The cost of land, buildings, and furnishings was £4,050, of which only £300 remained as a debt after the opening services were over. Not long afterwards Rev. C. H. Spurgeon visited Bradford to help the cause at Trinity, and a sum of £188 was raised. Within a very short time the whole of the debt was cleared. The Rev. H. J. Betts, of London, became the first pastor. During his nine years' ministry, the Church increased to 313 members. In 1860, the school was enlarged at a cost of £600, and in 1863 the chapel was cleaned and renovated, an organ was obtained and new galleries were added, costing £1,300. Mr. Betts was succeeded in turn by Revs. J. S. Anderson, John Russell, and Charles Rignall. During Mr. Rignall's fruitful ministry, 245 persons were added to the Church and further alterations and improvements were made in the premises at a cost of £1,600. In 1897, the present pastor, Rev. Albert Walker, put his "hand to the plough" at Trinity, and for fifteen years has maintained a successful and happy pastorate over a united people. Many who have had prominent positions in civic and denominational life have been associated with the Church, among whom may be mentioned Mr.

Briggs Priestley, Councillor, Alderman, Mayor, and M.P. for Pudsey; Alderman W. Whitehead, J.P.; Alderman William Watson; Mr. Isaac Smith, J.P., Mayor; Alderman William Moulson, J.P., Mayor; and Mr. John Mitchell, an ex-President of the Yorkshire Baptist Association.

As already stated at the commencement of these notes, the Baptist cause at Heaton dates back at least as far as 1689, at which date there was, as stated by Rev. John Haslam, D.D., a registered place of worship there. The pastor of Heaton, Rev. R. Howarth, has in his possession the copy of a sermon preached in "the old meeting-house at Heaton" by Rev. John Moore, in 1711. In 1713, the Baptists there, jointly with those at Gildersome and Rawdon, were formed into a Church. Twice since those early days the Church apparently ceased to exist. The first time in the eighteenth century. It was resuscitated in 1828, the Rev. J. Spooner, a student at the Bradford Academy (now Rawdon College), labouring as the pastor for four years, but again in 1840 the Church "dissolved" itself and the chapel became a preaching station connected with Westgate. In 1868, a separate Church was again established, with Rev. G. Brockway as pastor. In 1877, Rev. R. Howarth, then of Manchester College, was invited to take charge, and for thirty-five years has remained a faithful pastor to a loyal people. In 1896, the present beautiful chapel was erected, and the old chapel became, and still is, the schoolroom. Since then the erection of a Manse has completed a block of buildings admirably suited to the needs of the district.

As Heaton has, during the last few years, rapidly grown in popularity as a residential suburb, the prospects of the cause there are exceedingly promising.

If the cynical adage "happy is the Church without a history" be true, Hallfield might present good claim to that Beatitude, for no events of a startling nature have marked its career. But, although the Church has floated on "waters of quietness," it may be confidently maintained that it has worthily

filled a not unimportant place in the throbbing life of the city and borne a faithful testimony to the name of Christ. Hallfield is "a daughter of Sion," and its inception must ever remain associated with the revered name of Rev. J. P. Chown. When in 1862-1863, at a cost of between £7,000 and £8,000, the commodious and beautiful premises were erected, it was hoped that Mr. Chown would become the first pastor, but that was not to be. The first minute in the Church Book, dated August 21st, 1863, reads:—"The following friends, at present members of Sion, having intimated their intention of forming a Church at Hallfield," etc. Then follows a list of seventy-six names. The same minute contains a resolution to give a call to the pastorate to the Rev. J. Makepeace, and requests Mr. Chown to convey that call. Mr. Makepeace laboured successfully for six years. He was followed successively by Revs. James Mursell, R. P. Macmaster, T. H. Martin, now Dr. Martin (the faculty of Glasgow University having recently conferred this honour), Rev. F. Makepeace, (son of the first minister), T. G. Hunter, and the present pastor, Rev. J. Brown Morgan, whose settlement almost synchronised with the beginning of the twentieth century. The difficulties at Hallfield are considerable. When the premises were erected there it was looked upon as in the far suburbs; to-day it is "a down-town Church" and removals are consequently numerous. There are, however, associated with the Church a large number of young people, and these are its hope for the future. An almost unique feature of the Church life at Hallfield is the May Morning Service, which since the settlement of the present pastor, has, early on the first Sunday morning in May, attracted each year ever increasing crowds of young men and maidens, till the building has become too small for those desiring to attend.

The Church at Allerton was originally united with Sandy Lane. In view of the rapid increase
Allerton, in the population of Allerton, it was
Central. decided, in 1869, to hold separate services nearer to the homes of many of the people, and also with a view to make suitable provision for the



CLAYTON



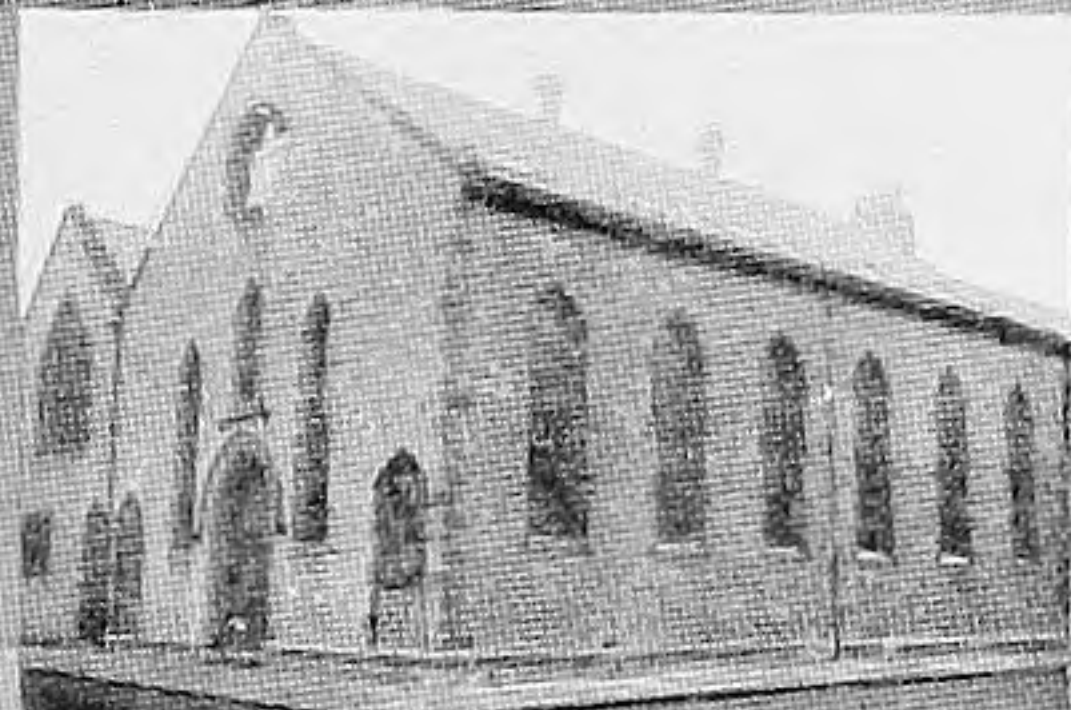
QUEENSBURY



IDLE



MARSHFIELD



INFIRMARY STREET



SANDY LANE

BRADFORD

DISTRICT



ROSSE STREET, SHIPLEY.



BETHEL, SHIPLEY.



ECCLESHILL.



CHARLESTOWN.

BRADFORD

DISTRICT.



DENHOLME.



GUISELEY.

spiritual needs of a rapidly-growing population. The services were first held in a room belonging to the Co-operative Stores. In 1871, such progress had been made that it was decided to build, and on March 30th, 1872, the foundation stone of the present chapel was laid by Mr. Alfred Illingworth. It is to the credit of a gallant little band of workers that much of the labour was voluntary. Mr. Albert White, long and honourably associated with the work at Allerton, has written, "There is scarcely a spot from the basement to the roof of the building that has not been consecrated by loving voluntary labour." In June, 1873, the Church was formed, fifty-three members being dismissed from Sandy Lane to form the new cause, the preachers at the opening services being, Revs. J. P. Chown, William Best, B.A., Hugh Stowell Brown, and Dr. John Clifford. In four years the membership had more than doubled. The Church has had four pastors, Revs. J. Bentley, A. T. Walker, E. A. Wintle, and Edgar Jackson, who settled in 1906 and has rendered the cause good service. Mr. Jackson has just resigned the pastorate in order to take charge at Enon Chapel, Burnley.

On the 18th February, 1863, a Special Church Meeting was held at Bethel Chapel, Shipley, to consider a report by the senior deacon, **Shipley,** to the effect that there were many applications for sittings and that he had "none to let," and that many who were anxious to attend worship were unable to do so for lack of accommodation. It was resolved that "a new chapel be built; that the present chapel remain unaltered, and that, whenever in the future the Church be deemed strong enough to divide, the present place be opened for a new interest if the Church should think desirable, such new interest to be called the First Baptist Church." In accordance with that resolution the present commodious Rosse Street Chapel was built, and opened on the 6th June, 1866, but the migration of the whole Church did not take place. Some of the members were loth to leave the old chapel, and remained, but 187 were

dismissed to form the new Church at Rosse Street. During the first year eighty-six other members were added to the roll. The first pastor was the Rev. Richard Green, who had previously ministered at Bethel. In 1869, Rev. William Medley, a name ever dear to all who knew him, and Mrs. Medley, on taking up work at Rawdon College, joined the Church, and were associated with it nearly forty years. From 1873 to 1908, Mr. Medley was a deacon. In 1897, Rev. C. E. Shipley settled as pastor, and remained for fourteen years, removing to Sheffield in 1911. During Mr. Shipley's pastorate, many activities were added to the Church life, and it continues to-day a busy hive of Christian industry. The Rev. H. W. Burdett, B.A., of Bristol, has just entered on his ministry at Rosse Street, with the best of prospects.

The Church at Ripley Street has passed through some chequered experiences. On the 12th **Ripley Street,** January, 1867, forty persons who had **Ebenezer.** seceded from Trinity Church met in the "Teetotal Hall," Bower Street, for worship, and it was resolved to establish a new Church. For a time the services were held in "Teetotal Hall," and afterwards, as that proved inconvenient, in the open-air in Calcutta Street. With a growing population in the neighbourhood, new members were added, and soon afterwards it was laid on the heart of a Mr. John Whitehead to erect a chapel in Ripley Street, for which payment was to be made "as the Lord prospered them." Mr. George Edmondson became pastor and laboured at Ripley Street for nearly a quarter of a century. In April, 1886, while preparations were being made for a bazaar, the chapel, which was a wooden structure, took fire and was burnt to the ground. After a short term in a hired room the present chapel was built, and opened in September, 1887. The entire cost was £2,610, a large portion of which remained for years as a crippling debt. Mr. Edmondson was succeeded by the Rev. A. C. Perriam, who took much interest in the then new P.S.A. movement, and who eventually left to take charge of work at "Towers

Hall," organised largely in the interests of the P.S.A. Rev. A. J. Harding, now of Birchcliffe, succeeded Mr. Perriam at Ripley Street, and was in time followed by Rev. G. Armitt, who has exercised a faithful ministry in a difficult sphere. A proposal to unite Ebenezer with Marshfield and move further out into the suburbs is now under consideration.

Girlington is a daughter of Westgate. In the year 1827, while Dr. Steadman was pastor, **Girlington.** the Westgate friends opened premises at Lady Royd as a Mission Church. School sessions were held morning and afternoon, and public worship for adults in the evening. Forty-five years later, in 1872, the growing needs of the district called for increased accommodation. The Westgate Church took up the work with enthusiasm, and the present chapel was erected at a cost of £9,086. In 1882, Girlington was constituted an independent Church, 272 members being transferred from Westgate for that purpose. Since then it has become one of the most important and successful Baptist causes in the city. During the forty years since 1882 there have been three pastors, the Rev. J. G. Knight, Rev. Rowland Evans, now of Leicester, and the present pastor, Rev. A. T. Hollinshead. Mr. Evans ministered to the congregation for nearly seventeen years, from 1888 to 1904. During his pastorate the present fine block of school buildings was added at a cost of £4,437. This left a debt of £9,500 on chapel and schools, but the whole of the money was raised in five years, and the Church also contributed more than £1,000 to the Twentieth Century Fund. The interest in the cause is well maintained under the pastorate of Mr. Hollinshead. For forty years the Church has stood for the liberty wherewith Christ sets men free, and situated as it is in the midst of a large and still increasing population it has almost unrivalled opportunities. Not a few well-known names in our denominational life and also in the civic life of Bradford have had place on the roll of the Girlington Church.

The work at Eccleshill dates back to the early seventies of the nineteenth century. The first **Eccleshill.** meeting place was the Mechanics' Institute, in Stone Hall Road, but in 1874, an old weaving room belonging to one of the members was set apart for worship. The first pastor was Joseph Stead, who took charge of the Churches at Eccleshill and Kirkstall. God prospered the work, and in 1884, land was purchased in Undercliffe Road, and the corner stone of the present chapel was laid by Mr. Isaac Smith, then Mayor of Bradford. The building cost about £1,100. Mr. Stead removed to Middlesbrough, in 1886, and after a short interval was succeeded by Rev. T. E. Rawlings, who became pastor of the Churches at Eccleshill and Idle. In 1896, the Leeds Road Church took charge, Rev. R. Herries and his deacons having control, with the assistance of Baptist ministers of the city as they had opportunity. From 1900 to 1907, Mr. J. H. Middlebrook, at the suggestion of the Yorkshire Association, took up the work, and was succeeded in 1910 by Rev. F. Allsop. New class-rooms and a minister's vestry have recently been added to the structure. The Church at Eccleshill is bearing faithful testimony to the Name, in an important suburb of the city.

The Guiseley Church is the outcome of work undertaken by students of Rawdon College. Services **Guiseley.*** were held in a room at the Town Hall, commencing about the year 1881. On the 21st March, 1883, fourteen persons were baptized at Rawdon Chapel by the Rev. T. G. Rooke, B.A., then Principal of the College. These brethren and sisters formed the nucleus of the future Church. The room in the Town Hall proving very inconvenient for worship, four members of the college committee met with the Guiseley friends and it was decided to build a school-chapel. By strenuous efforts the building and ground were made free from debt just before the treasurer, the Rev. T. G. Rooke, passed away. The students continued

* John Moore desires a certificate as being a Protestant dissenting minister, and desires also his house in Guiseley for meeting place." Leeds, July 1695.

to preach till 1896, when the Rev. R. Scott was called to be pastor. After ten years of service he resigned in 1906. The students again supplied the pulpit until, in September, 1911, the Rev. W. A. Livingstone, of Slaithwaite, accepted the pastorate. Guiseley is a rapidly growing residential district, and the Church is receiving fresh adherents as a result of the increasing population. Recently the premises have been repaired and redecorated, and an organ acquired. With enthusiastic workers and a faithful ministry there are bright prospects before the Church.

The history of the Baptist Community in Leeds Road goes back to the time when "New Leeds" was a village and stood about a mile distant (New Leeds) from Bradford. At that time, it is stated, "with the exception of a few cottages there was scarcely a building between Birksland Street and the Court-house." Towards the end of 1838, three men—Charles Everdale, Joseph Roberts, and S. W. Scarlett—all of them connected with Westgate Chapel, started a Sunday school in what was known as "the bad little village of New Leeds." The lower room of a cottage in Buck Row, Birksland Street, was lent, free of rent, for the work. In a short time, owing to the increasing congregations, another room had to be secured. There were other removals and enlargements as years went by until, in 1877, the mother Church at Westgate took in hand the building of the present chapel. The foundation stones were laid on the 3rd of November, 1877, by Alderman William Whitehead, who was superintendent of the Sunday school for thirty-six years, and to whom Leeds Road will ever remain indebted. The premises were opened by Rev. Henry Dowson on 27th of November, 1878, and the Church, as distinct from that at Westgate, was formed in February, 1892, three hundred and four members being transferred from Westgate for the purpose. The chapel and appointments cost about £9,000. The first pastor was Rev. William Jones, who ministered faithfully and successfully for some years previous to the ultimate separation from Westgate. In 1892, Rev. Robert Herries

became pastor. He was "a man greatly beloved." For sixteen years he carried on an earnest ministry, eventually leaving to become pastor of Queen Victoria Street Church, at Belfast. The promoters of the cause at Leeds Road, were men of wise foresight, purchasing sufficient land when the chapel was erected, for subsequent school premises. The new schools were built in 1907, at a cost of £4,600, and opened on the 7th of June, 1908. In October, 1909, the Rev. J. Rhys Davies, previously of Southport, became minister. Leeds Road has proved one of the best developments of Baptist life in Bradford.

On March 1st, 1891, thirty-seven members from the Ebenezer Church formed themselves into **Marshfield.** a new Baptist Community, meeting for worship in a small room in Ripley Street. Two years later the school-chapel at Marshfield was erected. The Rev. George Edmondson, who laboured from 1891 to 1900, was the first pastor. The Church at Marshfield, and Baptists of the district generally, are greatly indebted to Mr. Richard Rudd, who for several years occupied the position of lay pastor and rendered notable service by earnest preaching, and other ministrations. An attempt is being made at the present time to reunite the Churches at Ripley Street and Marshfield with a view to building a more commodious edifice in a better situation than either place occupies at the present time. In the interests of the denomination it is devoutly to be hoped this consummation will be attained.

Although Charlestown was not formed into a separate Church till 1890, the Baptist work has **Charlestown.** been carried on there since 1855. In that year the premises were erected for Sunday school work, under the fostering care of the Bethel Church, Shipley. When the Church was formed in 1890, the roll of sixteen members was made up by transfers both from Bethel and Rosse Street Churches. The pulpit is now supplied in the main by Rawdon students under the oversight of the Yorkshire Baptist Association. At Charlestown, as at several other places, the efflux of residents from Bradford

gives promise of a flourishing cause in time to come. It would seem, that before any great advance can be made, new and more convenient premises, in a better situation, must be erected. It can, however, be said that the outlook at Charlestown is more encouraging than it has been for years.

The foregoing notes disclose the fact that no new Baptist cause has been commenced in the
In conclusion. Bradford district for more than twenty years. At that time the population of the city was 194,495, to-day it is approximately 300,000; so that notwithstanding an enormous increase in the population, our denomination has remained stationary. It is time for the Baptists of Bradford, who have inherited a noble tradition, to bestir themselves. Happily there are signs that the necessity for greater enterprise is laid on the hearts of our people. In addition to the proposed fusion of the Churches at Marshfield and Ripley Street, with extended opportunities for service, a scheme is already outlined for the erection of new premises in the Bradford Moor district, and it is confidently hoped that all the Churches will assist in the effort.



**THE CHURCHES OF THE LEEDS
DISTRICT.**

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.

WILLIAM MITCHEL AND YORK CASTLE —1686.

Reference is made in this chapter to the imprisonments of William Mitchel in York Castle. After considerable research in the record books now deposited at the Wakefield County Hall, I found the following entries:—

“Wakefield, 13th January 1686. “Whereas Willm Mitchell stands twice indicted at these sessns for a Ryott and an unlawll Assembly and submitted to the same whereupon he was fined upon each indictmt twenty pounds which he refuseth to pay being demanded in open cort. These are therefore in his Majs name to charge and comand yu to receive into yor gaole the body of the sd Wm Mitchell and him safely keep untill he shall be from thence delivrd by due course of law. ffaile not &c. dated at the sd sessns the day and yeare abovesd.

To the gaoler of the Castle of Yorke his depty and deptyes.”

On another page is an entry of a single line, as follows:—

“Wakefield 7 Oct 1686. Ordered a warrt (*space for christian name left blank*) Mitchell a speaker in Convent.”

The hunt for Popish recusants and Protestant Dissenters seems to have been keenly pursued in Yorkshire. Among the Constable's returns (1680) Bramhope reported—“We have noe other absenters from the Church as Quaker nor any others that refuse to come to devine service or sermon. All Hues and Cryes and other warrants have bene duly executed and our stocks are in good reparaire.”

THE CHURCHES OF THE LEEDS DISTRICT.

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.



In attempting to review the Baptist interest in Yorkshire, the writer is quickly made aware that he is engaged with the greatest of the shires. Barnoldswick, our most ancient Church, lying on the Lancashire border, is separated by ninety miles from Bridlington, which lighted its lamp of faith and worship, more than two centuries ago, on the edge of the North Sea ; and the Churches of Sheffield in the south are at an equally wide distance from those of Middlesborough in the north. Yorkshire is a county of great cities and vast populations, of wide moors and far stretching wolds. Within its boundaries rise gaunt and wind-swept hills, and through the peaceful beauty of its secluded dales the mountain rivers run. It has its green pastures and still waters, but beyond them are the purple-black moors where solitude abides, and the skyline shews only the heights of land unbroken and untilled. In its thriving towns and cities industry sits enthroned. From the West Riding, where the towns, separated by the intervening hills, wake every morning to the clatter of the loom and the whirl of the countless spindles, to Hull—where “ they go down to the sea in ships ” and “ do business in great waters ”—and to Sheffield, with her mighty forges, Yorkshire takes her place in the van of human toil. Into these varied scenes the Baptist faith has made its way. Slowly moving through the years, it has found a home in all the great centres, and built its humble sanctuaries in villages not a few. That Baptist

communities existed in Yorkshire at an earlier period than that represented by our existing Churches, there is abundant proof. Thomas Edwards, in his "Gangræna" (1646), speaks of "certain Anabaptists about Sowerby near Halifax," and Francis Smith—the General Baptist printer—dedicated a book—towards the close of the Protectorate—to "my dear friends in the West Riding of Yorkshire." Robert Tillotson, a clothier of Sowerby, is said to have become a Baptist soon after the birth of his son John (1630), who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury, and this fact probably occasioned the taunt that "there were fathers of the Church who never were her sons." Appearances of the Baptist faith in and about Bradford occur at an early period. George Fox stayed at the house of a Baptist in Bradford, in 1652, and in a report made to the Archbishop of York, in 1669, we read:—"In the parish of Bradford there are many conventicles of Quakers, Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyterians. Very numerous. Middle sort of people." Among the Indulgences granted in 1672, Thomas Walker obtained liberty to preach in his own house at Horton, as an Anabaptist, Richard Coope, D.D., in his house at Tong, and Henry Sharpnell in a house unnamed at Bradford. In other parts of the county, Theophilus Browning obtained an Indulgence to preach as a Baptist in the house of Thomas Wombwell, of York, and Rowland Hancock for his own house at Shercliffe, Sheffield.

In writing a brief history of each District, we find Leeds taking the premier position, with thirty-five Churches and a membership of 4,736. We will mention first, in the order of their seniority, those Churches which lie within the present city boundary. The first to claim our attention is the Zion Church, Bramley, which was formed in 1777, with Mr. Joseph Askwith as its first pastor. When young, he had entered the Army, but after twenty years' service returned to Bramley, his native village, to reside with his father. Here he was brought to a knowledge of the truth, and, being deeply affected with the spiritual destitution of his neighbours, commenced preaching in private houses or wherever he could

be accommodated. For nine years he preached in a barn, which was hired for the purpose, where his labours were attended with considerable success. At this time Mr. Askwith was a Pædobaptist, but becoming convinced of Believers' Baptism was immersed at Gildersome. The Gildersome Church book records the event:—"Joseph Askwith was baptised January 2nd, 1777, and received to full communion the 5th inst. He preaches to a Congregation which he has gathered at Bramley, but intends remaining with us till they settle in a Church state."

In the same month Mr. Askwith baptised ten persons, and eleven more on the 24th March. They were then formed into a Church, and chose two of their number to act as Deacons. Mr. Askwith continued in the pastorate until his death in 1795. During his ministry he had admitted 120 members into Church fellowship. His successor was Mr. Rigby, who remained about three years, and was followed by Mr. Thomas Furney, who occupied the pulpit for two years. A period of destitution followed, when for want of proper pulpit supplies the congregation was almost lost.

In 1803, Mr. John Trickett, of Bacup, was invited to preach. His ministry proved acceptable, and, the cause beginning to revive, he was ordained pastor in 1804. God abundantly blessed his work, and the congregation became so large that it was decided, in 1806, to erect a new place of worship. We are told that the men of the congregation assisted in the building operations, and even the women toiled as labourers in fetching the stone. The building was opened for worship in March, 1808,* and Mr. Trickett continued his ministry with great acceptance until his death, in June, 1825. In 1818, Christopher Kitching, who had been a scholar in the school, left for missionary work in Jamaica. Mr. William Colcroft became pastor in 1826, and remained until 1837. At this period of the Church's history, the Sunday School numbered more than four hundred scholars. After an interval of two years, Mr. Colcroft was succeeded by Mr. Charles New

* The Association record says 1807.

(1840), and Mr. Rees (1841-3). In the following year Mr. J. Macpherson became pastor. During his ministry a new chapel was built, the opening services being held in June, 1846. In 1850, Mr. J. Walcot undertook the oversight of the Church, and continued until 1855. He was succeeded in 1857 by Mr. J. Compston, who left in 1861. In 1863 Mr. Abraham Ashworth accepted the invitation of the Church, and remained until 1878, when he formed the sister Church at Salem. During his pastorate (1877) an organ was placed in the chapel. In 1879, an invitation was extended to the Rev. M. G. Coker, and, at the close of his ministry, the Rev. James Wilkinson entered on the pastorate on July 3rd, 1887. Mr. Wilkinson was one of the first students of Manchester College. He served the Church faithfully for eight years. In December, 1889, the new School movement was inaugurated, and on January 16th, 1897, the premises were opened by Sir John Barran, Bart.

Zion had been without a pastor for two years, when her choice fell on Rev. J. C. Taylor, A.T.S. He commenced his ministry on April 4th, 1897. Last year the Church celebrated the Centenary of its Sunday School, and at the close of the year Mr. Taylor accepted a call to the Church at Catford Hill.

The South Parade Church may properly be described as the mother of the Baptist Churches of the **South Parade**. city. In 1743, John Wesley visited Leeds and recorded that "No man cared for the things of God." There were then about fifty Methodists, and they built St. Peter's Chapel. One of their preachers—John Edwards, a companion of Whitfield—seceded from the Methodist body and founded the first Congregational Church in Leeds. Among his people were some who occasionally walked to Bradford to hear the Rev. William Crabtree preach, and in 1760 eleven persons were baptised by William Crabtree and received into the Bradford Church. At length it was decided to begin a Baptist cause in the city, and, in 1779, a part of the Old Assembly Rooms, in Kirkgate, was opened for public worship, when Dr. Fawcett, of Hebden Bridge, preached the first sermon. In May,



NORTH STREET



HINDLEY



SOUTH PARADE, HEADINGLEY

LEEDS



BLENHEIM

DISTRICT



HAREHILLS



KIRKSTALL.



BURLEY ROAD, LEEDS.



BEESTON HILL, LEEDS.



ARMLEY.

YORK ROAD, LEEDS.



LEEDS

DISTRICT.

1779, sixteen persons were baptised in the River Aire at the Nether Mills, and formed into a Church. In June of the same year, Thomas Langdon, a student from Bristol College, being sent to preach, created such a favourable impression that it was decided to build a chapel, of which he should be the first minister. The old "Stone Chapel", St. Peter's Street, was opened in July, 1781. On June 27th, 1782, Thomas Langdon was ordained, when the Rev. Samuel Medley, of Liverpool, Dr. Caleb Evans, of Bristol, and the Rev. William Crabtree officiated. Mr. Langdon remained until his death in 1824, in the seventieth year of his age, having been minister for forty-two years. His health had been failing for some time, and, in 1823, the Rev. James Acworth, M.A., was appointed co-pastor.

It had been necessary to provide more room at the Stone Chapel, and, as the Church still increased and the neighbourhood was rapidly changing, a site was purchased in the well-to-do residential district of South Parade. The first stone of the new building was laid on Februarynd 23rd, 1825, and on October 25th, 1826, the new chapel was opened, built at a cost of £5,217, and the first sermon was preached by Dr. Marshman, of Serampore. In 1834, a branch Sunday School was opened at Hunslet. In 1835, Dr. Acworth left South Parade to become President of the Northern Baptist Education Society at Horton, Bradford, now known as Rawdon College. In 1836, John Eustace Giles became minister, and remained in Leeds until 1845, the membership increasing from 256 to 511. In 1836, the chapel was enlarged to accommodate 1,400 worshippers. In 1837, twenty-six members were dismissed to form a new cause at Hunslet, and in 1838 a branch school was opened at Woodhouse Carr. In 1843, school work was begun at York Road. In 1847, Jabez Tunncliffe founded the Band of Hope Movement, and its first meeting was held in South Parade Schoolroom. Mr. Giles was followed by the Rev. Robert Brewer, who withdrew in 1848, taking with him seventy-two members, who formed the new interest which was to become known as Blenheim Baptist Church. Mr. Brewer

was followed by Revs. A. M. Stalker, M.A. (1848-55), and Clement Bailhache (1855-9). In 1860, thirty-one members were dismissed to form the Church at York Road. The Rev. Wm. Best, B.A., was pastor from 1863 to 1876, and during his ministry Baptist work was begun at Burley Road and Beeston Hill. He was succeeded by Rev. George Hill, M.A. (1877-91), and in the first year of his ministry 173 members were dismissed to form the Burley Road Church. The Rev. C. B. Sawday held the pastorate from 1894 to 1896, during which time 165 members were dismissed to form the Church at Beeston Hill. He was followed by Rev. R. C. Lemin (1898-1910).

The men who built South Parade were men of profound piety and wide charity, and the impress of their lives still remains in the deep spiritual life which has always characterised the Church. Their wide charity is seen in the fact that every Baptist Chapel in Leeds, with one exception, owes its existence to South Parade. The great changes which had overtaken the neighbourhood led the Church at South Parade to decide upon a removal, and on Sunday, June 20th, 1909, the Rev. R. C. Lemin preached the closing sermons to large congregations, who were very deeply impressed with the solemnity of the occasion. One hundred and fifteen members were dismissed to form the new Church at Harehills Lane, and in the same year the Headingley School-chapel was opened. The buildings at Headingley were erected by the Leeds Extension Committee, but their work had been made possible only by the generous action of the South Parade Church in procuring an Act of Parliament by which the trustees were empowered, on the sale of the present site, to devote the purchase money to the erection of three chapels in different parts of the city.

South Parade has accepted the work at Headingley with all liabilities, and the Church retains the honoured name of the "SOUTH PARADE BAPTIST CHURCH, HEADINGLEY." The buildings were opened by the Dowager Lady Barran, on Thursday, June 24th, 1909, after which a sermon was preached by the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, M.A.

Mr. Lemin removed to Moseley, Birmingham, in 1910. The Rev. A. R. George, B.A., B.D., has accepted the vacant pastorate. The past of the Church has been so full of consecrated enterprise, and her present efforts at extension are marked by such unselfishness of spirit, that we may rest assured her future will be one of enlargement and divine success.

The Hunslet Tabernacle Church had its beginning in 1832, when Mr. Robert Carr commenced a preaching service in a schoolroom in Chapel Street.

Hunslet Tabernacle. After removal to a house at Balm Beck, the work continued until 1834, when Mr. Carr placed it in the hands of the Baptist Itinerant Society. In the same year, the Sunday School at South Parade commenced a branch school at Hunslet, and, school and congregation both steadily prospering, the necessity of a new chapel became a serious consideration. The inauguration of the enterprise was greatly assisted by Mr. Benjamin Goodman, who presented a site to the denomination, and contributed generously to the Building Fund. On January 6th, 1837, the chapel was opened, the total cost having been £2,255. On this occasion Dr. Acworth and Rev. John Aldis preached. In June of the same year, twenty-nine members were formed into a Church—twenty-six of whom were dismissed by transfer from South Parade—and Rev. John Yeadon became their first pastor. Under his ministry the cause prospered, although the heavy debt pressed hard upon pastor and people. Mr. Yeadon was removed by death in 1841. He was followed by Revs. J. Williams, W. Evans, J. Tunnicliffe, J. Bamber, A. Bowden, and R. Ward, but the Church appears to have made but little progress. In 1880, the Rev. A. E. Greening undertook the work, and a gracious revival was experienced. The premises were renovated and enlarged. Mr. Greening pursued his ministry for thirty years, during which period 700 members were received into the Church. In September, 1910, failing health compelled their pastor to relinquish his task. The severance of so lengthy a fellowship was keenly felt by the Church, which was united to its pastor by ties of long and unbroken affection. He was

succeeded by Rev. A. Phillips, in 1911, under whom the Hunslet Church is still devoting herself to the needs of the great working class population by which she is surrounded in this "east end" of the great city.

The North Street Church was commenced under the auspices of the General Baptist Home **North Street.** Mission, in 1841, and Rev. Jabez Tunncliffe, the founder of the Band of Hope movement, became pastor in 1842. Upon his removal, in 1846, he was succeeded by Rev. Richard Horsfield, who maintained a ministry at North Street for thirty-nine years. He was a preacher of great ability, and continued with his people to within two years of his death. He was succeeded by Rev. James Horn, who faithfully fulfilled his office for seven years, resigning in 1892. For two years the Church was without a minister, but at the end of that time Rev. F. W. Pugh, who had been co-pastor with Rev. Charles Williams, of Accrington, accepted the call, and continued until 1900. His ministry introduced a period of great success, the congregations crowding the chapel. It was during his pastorate that the Church removed to a new home. The Wintoun Street Church, being in difficulties from various causes, had become almost extinguished. At the invitation of the Association, the Church at North Street migrated to the chapel in Wintoun Street, and the remaining members of that Church were united to the North Street fellowship. The North Street chapel having been sold, the greater part of the proceeds were used for the renovation of the new premises and for the liquidation of the debt on Wintoun Street, but £500 was placed in the hands of the Association towards the erection of the new chapel at Beeston Hill. Upon the expiration of Mr. Pugh's pastorate, Rev. J. T. Schofield was invited to the ministry, resigning in 1904, to be followed by the present pastor, Rev. E. J. Crofts. During the last few years the neighbourhood of the chapel has greatly changed owing to the influx of a Jewish population, which has led to the exodus of many of the previous residents, but the work is carried on with faithful zeal and constant hopefulness.

The Blenheim Church came into being on October 12th, 1848, when seventy-two members who had withdrawn from South Parade were united with sixteen others in Church fellowship under Rev. Robert Brewer, who had retired from the pastorate of South Parade in the previous July. The new congregation gathered in a room in Park Lane, and the constitution of the Church was in accordance with the principle of an open communion. In November, 1849, the foundation stone of Great George Street chapel was laid by Mr. George Goodman. He became a member of the Church during the next year, being baptised in his own house. Mr. Goodman was four times Mayor of Leeds, for several years a Member of Parliament, and received a Knighthood in 1855. He remained in membership until his death in 1859. The new chapel was opened in 1851, having cost £3,300. As there was no provision for a Sunday School, this work was carried on in other premises. In 1861, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached in the Town Hall on behalf of the reduction of the debt, and in 1862, Lord Teynham was the anniversary preacher. At this juncture, the trustees of the Leeds Infirmary required the site of the chapel, and the building, with the land, was bought by them for £4,500. The stones of the chapel were afterwards used for the erection of St. Simon's, an Anglican place of worship. The land upon which Blenheim stands was then purchased, the surroundings at that time being almost rural. Blenheim was opened on the Good Friday of 1864, having cost £6,000, and Dr. Brewer's pastorate closed in the same year, after nearly sixteen years' ministry. Rev. G. B. Thomas was minister at Blenheim from 1865 to 1870, and was followed, in 1871, by Rev. J. W. Butcher. His coming was attended with tokens of blessing; the debt was cancelled, a chapel-keeper's house built, and pew rents abolished. In 1874, the land on which the Camp Road Mission stands was purchased, and the premises built at a cost of £2,000. Ten years later, considerable enlargements were made, the cost having been provided by Miss Elizabeth Summers and Mr. T. Holroyd. Blenheim has been sustained

from the first by generous supporters. The income from a legacy of £500, left by Mrs. Hamilton Richardson, is distributed every Christmas amongst the poor "within this district and denomination." Mr. Butcher's pastorate continued until 1888, and he was followed, in 1889, by Rev. Frank Wells. In 1892, a Chapel Extension Scheme was carried out at a cost of £2,400, towards which amount a legacy of £1,000 had been bequeathed by Mr. Thomas Holroyd. In October, 1894, the Church sustained a greivous loss by the sudden death of its minister, who had greatly endeared himself to his people. In October, 1895, Rev. P. T. Thomson, M.A., commenced a fruitful period of service, which he maintained until his removal to Leicester, in 1905. During his residence the Church celebrated its Jubilee by installing the electric light, whilst the clock in the tower was a Jubilee gift from the Holroyd family. In 1904, the new organ was installed. Mr. Thomson was succeeded by Rev. A. M. Ritchie, M.A., and in 1908-9 the Church applied itself to the task of a much needed enlargement of the School. This was carried out at an expenditure of £3,065. Mr. Ritchie removed to Watford in 1911, and Blenheim is at present without a pastor.

The story of the Armley Church is one that bids us never to despise "the day of small things." The
Armley. Church was first organised on September 7th, 1848. In the previous year, the Leeds Baptist Village Mission had stationed Mr. Robert Hogg at Armley, as an evangelist, and he, after holding cottage meetings, rented the "Smithy Elm", a blacksmith's shop, which was furnished for worship. From the services at the smithy, ten converts were baptised, and in that humble home the Church had its birth. So poor was the cause that it waited for more than a year before it could carry out its resolution "that a tablecloth and cup be purchased for the Lord's Supper." The site of the smithy being required for railway purposes, the Church removed, in 1851, to a joiner's shop, and in the following year to a room in Station Road. Mr. Hogg now resigned, carrying with him the affection of his little flock and the proceeds of a farewell tea-meeting which the Church

presented to him as a parting gift. For several years the cause seems to have languished, but in 1856 five converts were baptised, and the pews—the total rents of which amounted to £3 10s. od. per annum—were repainted “green inside and buff outside” at a cost of thirty-six shillings. A resolution that “the appeal of the widows’ and orphans’ fund be squashed for the present” shews that the Church had but little to give when it had provided for its own needs, but its ambitions are evidenced by the fact that, when Mr. Spurgeon was preaching in Bradford, in 1859, Armley sent a deputation of two of her members “to try and get him to come to Armley.” In 1865, Mr. Henry Marles was recognised as pastor, but he resigned in 1868, to be followed by Rev. James Walker, who at once applied himself to the task of raising funds for a new building, which was opened on March 8th, 1871. After a brief pastorate by Mr. Rowson, the Rev. A. P. Fayers received the Church’s invitation. He was minister at Armley from 1876 to 1883, the Church recording its testimony to his zealous and faithful service. He was succeeded by Rev. W. Sumner, in 1884, and on June 9th, 1891, their new chapel—Sion, Carr Crofts—was opened for worship. Three years later the Church became self-supporting, and in 1898 celebrated its Jubilee by a month of special services. Mr. Sumner sustained his office for twenty-seven years, retiring in 1911, and leaving a Church which now numbers 234 in her membership.

The York Road Church was established on December 3rd, 1861. It consisted of 31 members, who
York Road. secured their dismissal from the Mother Church at South Parade for this purpose. These friends had for many years been engaged in the Sunday School, founded in 1842, in Steel Street, removed later to Joy’s Fold, and now being conducted at the Miners’ Institute. The letter of dismissal prognosticated many difficulties—a prophecy abundantly fulfilled; but these many difficulties have, through the grace of God, been overcome. In the Church’s early days practical help was rendered by the Itinerant Society, and more recently by our County Association, but York Road rejoices that during recent years she has

been a self-supporting Church, with an outlook brighter than ever before. In 1871, when the walls of the present building were nearing completion, they were blown down during a severe gale, and the question "whether the project should be abandoned" was considered. Happily the decision was in the negative, but the calamity heavily increased the financial burden, which, for years, seriously harassed the work of the Church. York Road is now happily free from this incubus. The neighbourhood has always been regarded as especially difficult for Christian work, but that recently there has been a most encouraging response to the Church's efforts is evident from the fact that last year York Road received thirty-two members into her fellowship by baptism. The ministers at York Road have been Revs. James Roberts, James Jack, John Compston, John Bell (1874-6), J. Smith (1876-80), J. Kitchener (1881-7,) W. J. Wintle (1890-3), C. Riseborough (1894-8), and P. Miller (1900-4). Its present pastor, Rev. A. G. Haste, settled in 1906, and the Church has recently celebrated its Jubilee with much rejoicing and thanksgiving. The Church has been earnestly supported by its officers and leaders and a succession of devoted pastors, and now enters upon her fifty-first year of service with a spirit of faith and good cheer.

The first attempt towards the establishment of a Baptist cause in this part of the city was made
Burley Road. about the year 1860, by the Church then meeting in Great George Street Chapel. The effort was, however, abandoned. The attention of South Parade being attracted to the necessities of the district, land was purchased in 1868 for the erection of a school and chapel. The school was commenced in August, of that year, Sunday evening services for worship being conducted by the students of Rawdon and by other supplies. The Rev. Wm. Best, B.A., then pastor of South Parade, greatly assisted the new enterprise, and, in May, 1870, Rev. W. T. Adey was appointed to take charge of the Burley Road work. Morning and evening services were now held and the Lord's Supper observed. The work was so richly pros-

pered that in 1873 it was determined to build a new chapel. South Parade volunteered a most generous assistance, Mr. Alderman Barran and Mr. Wm. Illingworth each subscribed £500, and further gifts had, in June, 1874, raised the sum to £2,418. The new building was opened on November 17th, 1875. On April 30th, 1877, with the cordial consent of the mother Church, Burley Road entered upon an independent career, South Parade transferring a great number of her members to the new fellowship. Mr. Adey resigned his charge in September, 1878, and was followed by Rev. W. R. Golding. The Church was greatly blessed during Mr. Golding's ministry of fifteen years, and it was a sore grief when failing health necessitated his retirement. In November, 1896, Rev. F. W. Walter became his successor, remaining until 1908. After an interval of a few months the Church gave a hearty invitation to its present pastor, Rev. W. Cleland, who maintains the work, supported by the affectionate regard of his people.

The Kirkstall Church owes its inception to the work of two young men who came from Leeds and
Kirkstall. commenced preaching Baptist principles in the open air. They afterwards rented a room in Temperance Street, where they were able to gather a small congregation. The effort being attended with the promise of success, the little company was emboldened to build, and in 1849 the present chapel was opened. In the Association Report for 1850, the name of J. Chiselett appears as pastor; he was followed by Mr. Jones, who was succeeded by Mr. Carter—still remembered by some as an exceedingly popular lecturer. After his resignation, occasioned by ill health, Kirkstall remained for many years pastorless, the work being conducted as a Mission Station by the successive endeavours of the neighbouring Churches of South Parade, Horsforth, Bramley, and Burley Road. In the year 1901 the Church was re-formed and Rev. C. Welton appointed to its ministry. He laboured for ten years faithfully and well, until he retired from the active ministry. He was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. J. Ford, who settled at Kirkstall in January, 1911.

The cause at Beeston Hill originated from a meeting held, on August 19th, 1873, under the **Beeston Hill.** auspices of the Home Mission Society, which was attended by a few Baptists residing on the south side of the city. For a short time Cottage Meetings were held weekly, and a room was secured in Elland Road for Sunday Services. It was felt, however, that steps should be taken to secure a permanent place of worship, and land was accordingly purchased in Cemetery Road, the infant cause being taken under the care of the South Parade Church. The foundation stone of the School-chapel was laid on June 21st, 1875, and the opening services took place on March 19th, 1876. The services were at first conducted by students and lay preachers, but in May, 1877, the Rev. Henry Winson undertook the pastoral charge. The work continued under the joint direction of a local committee, formed from the South Parade Church and the Yorkshire Association, until, in 1894, the Association discontinued its support. The debt on the School-chapel was cleared in 1889, and a new Chapel Fund was opened. With the assistance of the Leeds Baptist Council, a gift of £500 from the sale of the old North Street Chapel, and a similar amount from the Centenary Fund, the present chapel was erected at the cost of £4,941, and opened on July 1st, 1903. Until 1905 the work was continued as a mission of South Parade, but in that year a separate Church was formed, and in 1906, Rev. S. J. Robins was invited to its pastorate. He was succeeded, in 1909, by Rev. T. W. Armour. Beeston Hill has a large school, and has already attained a membership of 230.

The Church at Harehills Lane is the child of the Church at South Parade, and forms part of the **Harehills Lane.** scheme to which the mother Church devoted herself when she realised the necessity of abandoning the work in her old home, to seek a life more abundant in Churches established in more populous localities. The Harehills site had been secured some years earlier by a few far-seeing Baptists, in a neighbourhood which was then but little developed. The chapel was opened on December 4th,

1907, and fifty-five members of South Parade decided to make it their spiritual home, retaining, for the time being, their membership with the parent Church. In June, 1908, Rev. Herbert Trotman became pastor at Harehills, and on November 24th, 1909, the cause was formed into a separate Church, one hundred and twelve members being received into fellowship.

Turning now to the wide field beyond the city, which is covered by the Leeds District, we find that the **Gildersome.** Church at Gildersome holds a first and an honoured place. The story of its life during the 18th century has been related in this volume by Principal Blomfield.* The opening years of the 19th century found the cause in a feeble condition, as it was without a pastor, and lacking the spirit of unity. But, in 1807, Rev. William Scarlett came to its ministry, to find a home amongst its people for thirty-four years, and a last resting-place in the chapel graveyard. The ancient chapel then seated 250 people; it had no baptistry, the ordinance being administered in a walled-in bath which had been constructed in a neighbouring plantation. In 1810, a Sunday School was established and conducted for twenty-five years as the united effort of the three denominations in the village, after which time it was continued by the Baptists alone, until, in 1866, they removed to their school next the chapel. After the death of Mr. Scarlett, the ministry was sustained by Rev. R. S. Frearson (1843-6), and Rev. J. Sargent (1850-6). After an interval of some years, Mr. John Haslam, of Rawdon College, received a unanimous call in August, 1862, and began a ministry destined to continue for thirty-five years, during which period the Gildersome pastor became one of the best known of our Yorkshire ministers. In 1863, the increased accommodation required led to a proposed enlargement of the chapel, but the

* The Gildersome deed, of which a photograph is given in this volume, records a grant of land for a "Chappell or Meeting-house for Divine Worshipp. Thomas Hardcastle granted this land for the sum of £3 15s. od., "divers other good causes" moving him to do so. His father had been ejected from the Vicarage of Bramham in 1662, and was afterwards imprisoned at York and Chester, and at London. In 1671 he became pastor of Broadmead, Bristol, in which city he twice suffered imprisonment, "still preaching as soon as ever he came forth, and so continued till his death. He was seven times imprisoned for Christ and a good conscience after he left off conformity."

work had not proceeded far before it was discovered that the insecurity of the ancient building necessitated its abandonment, and the Church faced the greater responsibility of erecting an entirely new Sanctuary. The task was successfully accomplished, the chapel opened on May 2nd, 1866, and the debt defrayed within the following ten years. In 1868, an organ was presented to the Church, and in 1871 the building of a new Manse was undertaken. In 1867, a day school was commenced, and maintained until 1871, when a School Board was formed for the village, the Baptist minister being for many years a member and for some time its Chairman. In his first year of ministry, the Sunday afternoon service was replaced by evening worship, and, in 1864, the Church adopted an "open communion." In 1872, twenty-four members were dismissed to form the Church at Morley. In 1874 and 1875, a gracious revival was experienced, and in 1879, the pastor, who contemplated his resignation, was urged to continue amongst his people. In 1882, new class-rooms were erected, and, in 1886, the Church undertook the completion of its scheme of school premises by building a Hall as a Memorial of the faithful generations of worshippers who had for nearly two centuries sustained the service of the Church, which should also be an expression of thankfulness for the twenty-five years' ministry of its pastor. The Hall was opened in July, 1887, having cost £1,200. In 1897, Dr. Haslam retired from the pastorate to devote himself to the educational work of New College, Harrogate, a school which had been first established by Mr. Sargent at Turton Hall, Gildersome, and of which Dr. Haslam had become the Principal. He was succeeded at Gildersome, in 1898, by Rev. G. M. Rice, who removed, in 1904, to a pastorate in Brisbane, and was followed by Mr. Harold Spooner, a student of Rawdon, who continues in the ministry at Gildersome.

Our interest at Farsley arose through the work of Rev. William Crabtree, of Bradford, whose occasional preaching visits resulted in several becoming members of his Church. The first chapel was built in 1777, but no Church was formed until



FARSLEY.



STANNINGLEY.



RODLEY.



MORLEY.



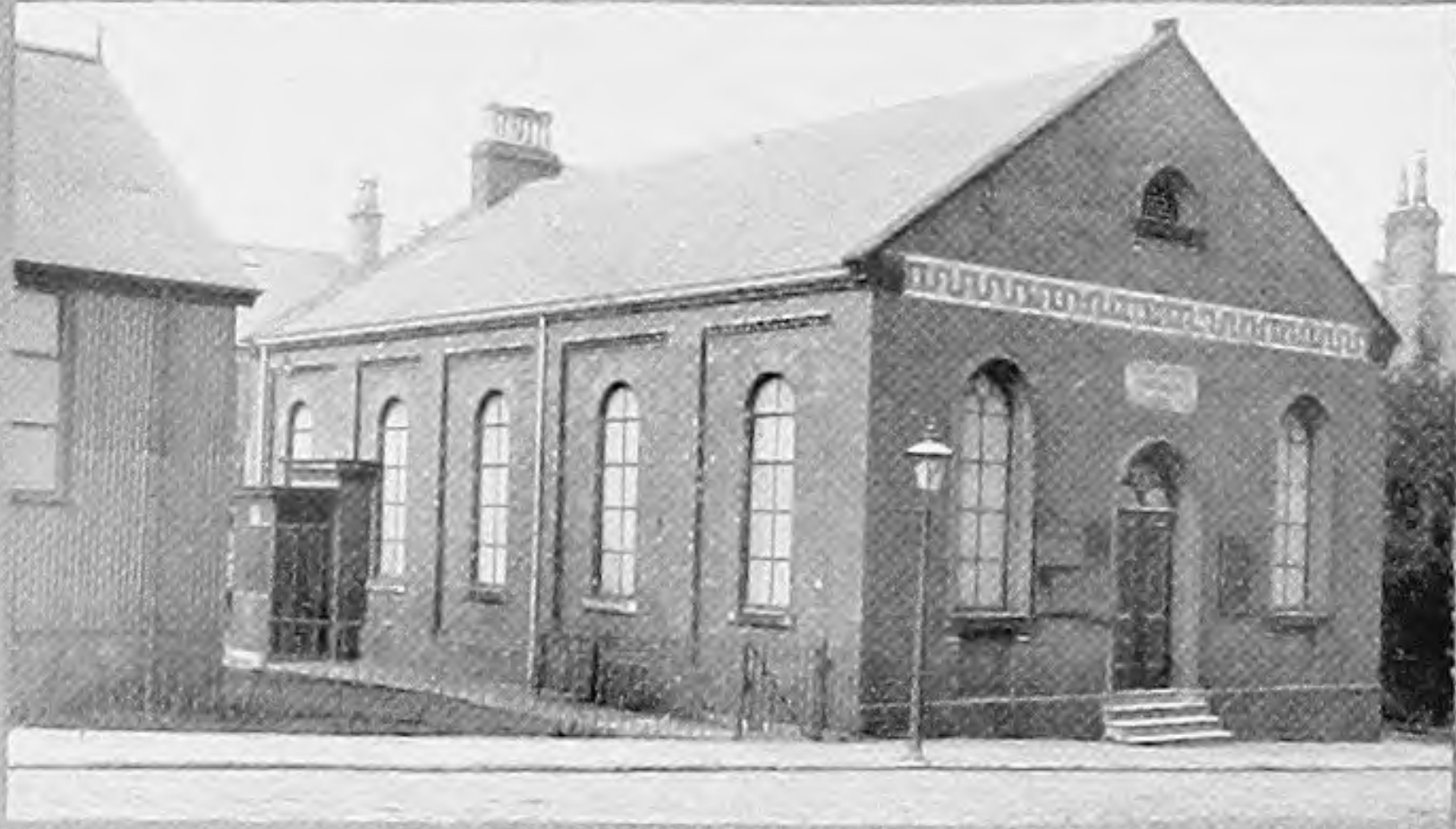
PUDSEY.

LEEDS



HORSFORTH.

DISTRICT.



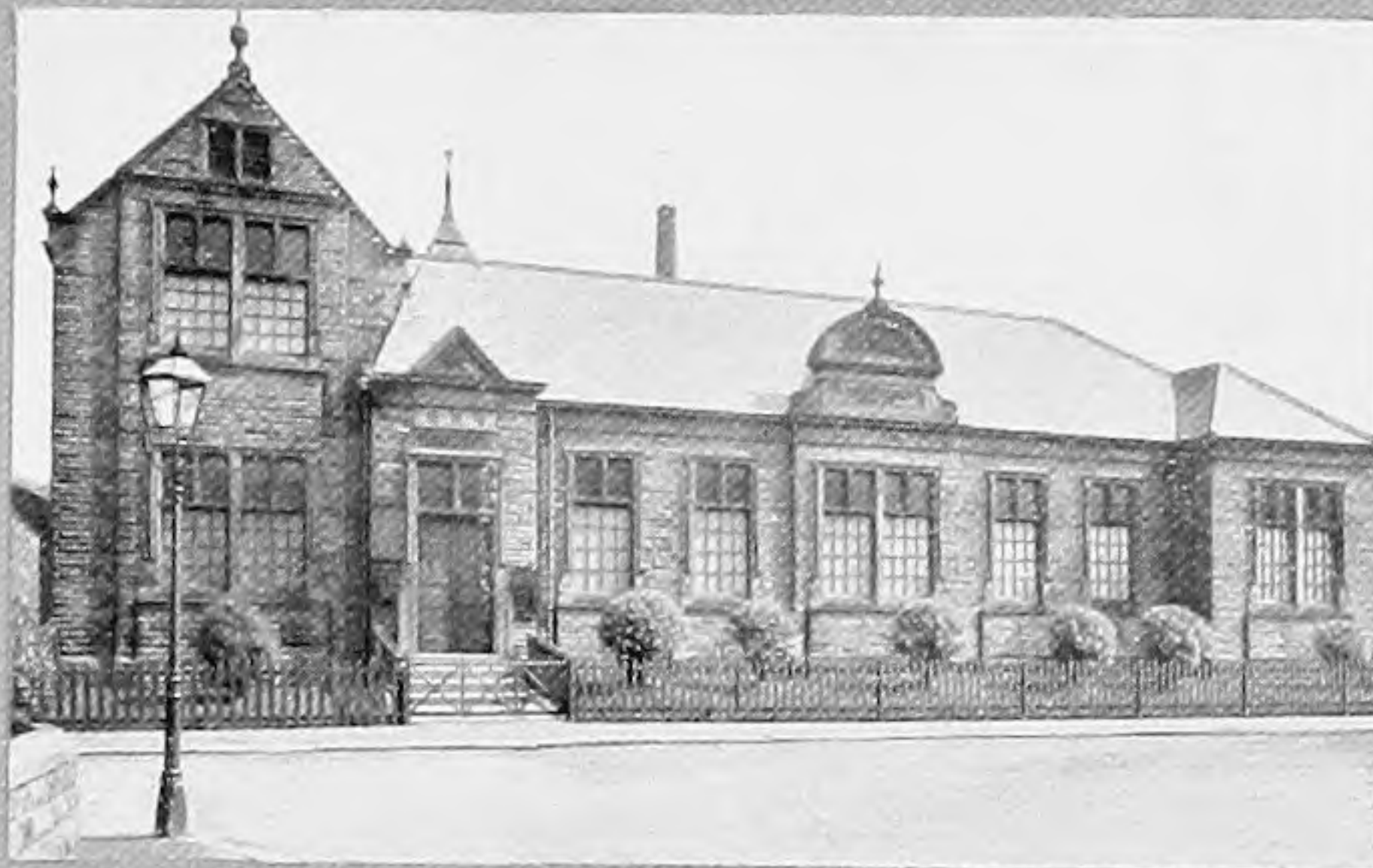
SALEM, BRAMLEY



DEWSBURY



BATLEY



STAINCLIFFE



PONTEFRAC



ZION, BRAMLEY

LEEDS DISTRICT

March 27th, 1780, and in the interval Rev. William Roe was called from Sutton-in-Craven to take charge. He continued his ministry until shortly before his death in 1795. The work prospered, for, in 1784, an enlargement of the building was necessary. In 1795, Rev. John Whitehead—a student under Dr. Fawcett—settled, but sustained the work for only a very few months, and died in March, 1797. He was followed by Rev. J. Ashworth, from Gildersome, who remained from 1797 to 1801, when, with a number of members resident in Horsforth, he left to form a new interest there. For some years the cause languished—the pastorate was vacant, no additions were made, and the Church was almost extinguished. A pastor was secured in June, 1807, in the person of Rev. J. Sharpe, formerly an Inghamite preacher, but then a member of the Baptist Church at Halifax. So impoverished were the people that he had for some years to work at a carpenter's bench which he set up in a building adjoining the chapel. The records shew only thirteen baptisms during his pastorate of fourteen years. In 1823, various improvements were made in the chapel, including the provision of a baptistry. In February, 1824, Mr. Jonas Foster, from Horton College, entered on a long and successful pastorate. At his coming the membership numbered only sixteen, but his settlement was the commencement of a new era. The congregation increased, and, in three years, more than fifty additions were made to the Church. Increased accommodation had to be provided by internal alterations in 1830, and in 1836 and in 1844 the chapel was enlarged. In 1835, the building still in use as a school at Rodley was erected, and in 1850, the chapel and school at Pudsey were built, largely by the efforts of the Church at Farsley. Mr. Foster closed his ministry in 1858, and passed to his rest in January, 1865, amidst many manifestations of sorrow. In April, 1859, the Rev. Edward Parker was called to the pastorate. His coming was followed by abundant blessing. A spirit of zeal and holy harmony prevailed. In 1865, the need for increased accommodation was felt to be

urgent. After prolonged consideration it was decided to build a new chapel, and by the close of 1867 half the estimated expenditure, £4,000, had been promised. At the close of the opening meetings in October, 1869, the chapel was declared free of debt. In the course of a few years a new organ was required, and this, with the decoration of the chapel, cost £1,600. A bazaar in 1876 for this purpose realised more than £2,000. The Church celebrated its centenary in July, 1877, and, in the following October, Mr. Parker accepted the Presidency of the Baptist College at Manchester. Subsequent pastorates have been : Rev. J. Naylor (1879-82) ; Rev. J. R. Fawcett (1883-87) ; Rev. H. Ellis, M.A. (1890-8) ; and Rev. J. W. Ford, D.D. (1903-05). The present pastorate of the Rev. A. V. Thomas, A.T.S., dates from September, 1906. On the opening of the new chapel, old "Rehoboth" was employed for Sunday School purposes, but in 1898, a movement was initiated for new premises. After much devising of ways and means, the new school was opened in 1906, and before the close of the School's Centenary year the entire cost of £4,000 was defrayed.

The Horsforth Church carries us back to the dawn of the 19th century, for, in 1801, Mr. Ashworth, the pastor at Farsley, having seceded from that Church with a number of its members, opened a room in Broadgate Lane, Horsforth, for Baptist worship.* The place was quickly crowded, but in the following year their pastor was removed by death. Under this painful discouragement they were supported by the counsel and pecuniary help of Messrs. Joseph Sharp and James Aspin, of Leeds, so that they were able to open their chapel in June, 1803. Mr. Mabbutt was its first pastor, but was succeeded in 1804 by Rev. Joseph Shaw, who retained the office until 1813. The Church now passed through a period of considerable vicissitude and did not elect a pastor until 1827. Mr. Yeadon, of Horton College, was then ordained,

* Horsforth was one of the early preaching places of John Moore, for in the Session Rolls at Wakefield we find :—"House of John Moore, Horsforth, Dissenting Meeting-house recorded. Leeds, July, 1697."

remaining at Horsforth for ten years, during which time the chapel and graveyard were enlarged. A series of brief ministries followed, until, in 1864, Rev. John Harper accepted the call of the Church and remained until 1876. Following him came Revs. W. H. Rolls, R. Smith, and C. S. Douglas. In 1898, additional class-rooms were provided for the accommodation of the school. In 1905, Rev. H. Townsend, M.A., became minister, and was succeeded in 1911 by the present pastor—Rev. W. H. Potter.

The Masham Church was originally a branch from the Church at Snape. For the same reason that
Masham. it was deemed necessary to form a distinct interest in Bedale, a separate interest was formed in Masham, in 1815. The Church also enjoyed the benefit of Mr. Terry's labours, as he ministered every Lord's Day, in each of the three places, Masham, Bedale, and Snape. At Masham, the meetings were held in an upper room. Mr. Haigh, who had for some time laboured with Mr. Terry, succeeded to the pastorate at his death, but resigned in the year 1825. The pulpit was supplied by students until 1827, when Mr. John Jordan, from Horton College, was ordained to the pastorate. A chapel, with a dwelling house, was erected in 1828, and, for a time, the congregations were large and encouraging. Mr. J. Jordan was succeeded by Mr. Thomas Jordan, who was followed, in 1838, by Mr. Mackay. 'In 1840, the pastoral office was held by Mr. Peacock, who was followed, in 1853, by Mr. T. E. Wycherly. In 1854, Mr. J. Burroughs accepted the office. This pastorate, also, was of short duration, for, three years later, Mr. Harrison succeeded him. Mr. Lefevre settled in 1860, but, in 1865, resigned "at six hours notice." Mr. Rowson was pastor from 1865 till 1870, and was followed by the Rev. R. J. Beecliff, who had the oversight of both Bedale and Masham. In 1880, the Rev. G. Charlesworth commenced a long and prosperous ministry, which came to a close in 1895. He was succeeded by the Rev. F. Allsop. In 1904, the Rev. W. H. Poynton, M.A., took occasional duty at Masham. In 1910, Rev. E. A. Cartwright enjoyed a happy

ministry until the spring of 1911, when he removed to Leeds. In April of the same year, the Rev. Edward Moore accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorates of both Masham and Bedale. The Church at Masham has remained much about the same through all these changes, a few faithful friends steadfastly witnessing for the truth under many difficulties.

The Boroughbridge and Dishforth Churches may be very properly placed together, for their history is **Boroughbridge.** scarcely separable. Each had its origin as a branch of the Church at Bedale. In 1811, Mr. Thomas Darnborough, a tanner of Boroughbridge, and an Independent, became convinced of Believers' Baptism, and was baptised by Mr. Terry, the pastor of Snape and Bedale. A similar movement took place at Dishforth, Mr. Thomas Morely, a farmer, being baptised, with his wife, (at Snape), in 1814. Anxious to bear witness to their faith, Mr. Morely at once converted two cottages into a meeting-house, and on New Year's Day, 1816, a Church was formed, and Mr. Darnborough ordained to the pastorate. He laboured with much success until 1824, his death being a great loss to the Church. In 1826, a chapel was opened at Langthorpe, Boroughbridge, the services having previously been in hired houses. Mr. John Crook, of Horton College, filled the pastorate of the two Churches from 1825 to 1833. He was succeeded by another Horton student, Mr. Francis Johnstone, the Church then consisting of thirty members, and maintaining preaching services in four neighbouring villages, whilst its contributions to the Baptist Missionary Society amounted to nearly £50 per annum. Mr. Johnstone was followed, in 1840, by Mr. John Pulsford, but in 1843 the Churches separated, Dishforth becoming an open communion Church, and Boroughbridge maintaining the contrary principle. From 1844 to 1862 the ministers were Revs. G. Wilson McCree, W. B. Davies, G. C. Caterall, W. Wallis, and E. Lewis. Boroughbridge was then closed for a time, but was eventually reopened by the Association and the Church re-constituted under the pastorate of Mr.

F. W. Bruce, in 1875. In 1882, Mr. Caterall again became pastor. In 1888, Dishforth, which had been closed, was renovated and reopened, and Mr. Joseph Powell engaged as a colporteur. In 1890, the two Churches were reunited and reorganised with a membership of twenty-one. In 1896, the Church became included in the Northallerton group, with Rev. F. W. Allsop as pastor, and Messrs. J. Powell and W. Rhodes as evangelists. From the year 1899, the services have been sustained by the Lay Preachers' Association, but the Dishforth chapel is at present closed.

The Church at Staincliffe was formed on March 25th, 1821, and consisted of four brethren who had been baptised by Rev. Isaac Mann, of Shipley. They met in the upper room of a house in Chapel Fold, and Dr. Steadman presided over their first Communion Service. This little company was so abundantly blessed that it began to build almost immediately, opening a chapel on April 27th, 1822, and holding a first baptismal service on June 15th. In 1832, the Church felt able to give a call to Mr. T. H. Facer, a Horton student, under whose ministry the congregation increased so rapidly that galleries were added to the chapel. Mr. Facer resigned in 1843, and was followed by Rev. John Allison. At his coming there was a debt of £200 on the chapel, but this was soon cancelled. A school was built in 1852, but five days after its opening the Church lost its pastor by death. He was followed by Rev. T. Hall, who remained until 1872, after which Rev. J. Hillman ministered for eighteen months. In 1878, Rev. J. Kendall began a pastorate which continued for twelve years, and the present buildings were opened on Good Friday, 1880. Subsequent ministries were those of Revs. F. Oliver (1890-3), and J. Rigby (1893-9). During the latter pastorate a Manse was built. After a lengthy interregnum, Mr. Edward Porter, a student of Manchester College, was ordained pastor in 1900, and sustained a happy service of nearly twelve years. He closed his ministry on May 7th, 1911, on which day he received seventeen members into the Church. The Church is at present without a pastor.

The Church at Stanningley, a thriving village between Bradford and Leeds, dates back to the year **Stanningley.** 1826, and was commenced under the care of the Itinerant Society. Mr. Matthew Gaunt, of Pudsey, and some Baptists residing in Stanningley who were members of the Church at Bramley, laid the needs of their neighbourhood before Dr. Steadman, of Horton College. A room was secured, and Mr. Edwards, a student, preached the opening sermons. The new cause met with such good encouragement that in the next year they commenced chapel building, and on June 18th, 1828, opened their sanctuary for worship. Three months later, a Church of six members was formed, and it is of interest to know that, after eighty years, descendants of all the six are now to be found among the members of the Church. In 1835, Mr. John Jordan, of Horton College, undertook the charge of the little flock, which now numbered seventeen; in 1842, he gave place to Rev. William Colcroft. Three years later the chapel was enlarged and the cost at once subscribed. In 1846, the Church dismissed nine members to commence a cause at Pudsey. Stanningley for forty years sustained two separate Sunday Schools, one on the chapel premises, and another in the lower end of the village. The latter school was so successful that, during the pastorate of Rev. Henry Watts (1868), new premises were opened. In 1887, the two schools became one, making their home in the school at the lower end of the village, but the increase of the population near the chapel will probably result in a renewed school effort there. In addition to the pastors already mentioned, the Church has been ministered to by the Revs. J. Rigby (1871-5); E. Dyson (1876-8); E. S. Neale (1882-6); A. Harrison (1888-91); G. A. Bloomfield (1896-1900) and E. Higson (1903-10). During the last pastorate steady progress was made, and the Church is now waiting the advent of a leader who will continue the good work which the Church believes still awaits it. Last year the Church spent £500 on improvements and renovation.

The cause at Bedale had its origin in the now extinct cause at Snape, which was originally a branch of the ancient Church at Hamsterly, Durham.

Bedale. William Terry was ordained pastor; he was baptised in 1793, and laboured in Bedale and the villages around until his death in 1819. Upon his decease the members living at Masham formed themselves into a separate Church, and Mr. Wrightson took the pastoral charge of the remainder. The choice not being unanimous, nine brethren withdrew their membership, and purchasing a dwelling-house in 1821, converted it into a chapel. In 1827, Mr. Robert Thomson accepted the pastorate, the Church being constituted on January 4th, of that year. He resigned in 1829, and until 1836 the pulpit was supplied by Mr. Atty, one of the members. In 1841, Bedale was one of the Churches which was greatly strengthened by a visit from that remarkable evangelist, Mr. Pulsford. In 1842, the chapel, rebuilt to twice its former size, was reopened by Rev. Eustace Giles and Mr. Pulsford. Between the years 1836 and 1855, Bedale had eight pastors, and from 1860 to 1873 the Church book contains no minutes. In 1875, Rev. R. J. Beecliffe became minister, remaining three years, and the building of the present chapel was undertaken. It was opened in 1879, having cost £1,450. From 1880 to 1894, Rev. G. Charlesworth was pastor, and the Church celebrated the centenary of the beginning of the cause. Rev. F. Allsop was minister from 1896 to 1903, and Rev. J. Young from 1904 to 1910. In the following year the Rev. E. Moore undertook the charge of Bedale with Masham.

At Ossett we have two causes, the mother Church at South Ossett having recently celebrated the centenary of the beginnings of the Baptist interest in the town. The Church is the outcome of the work of the Baptist Itinerant Society, Dr. Steadman sending his students from Horton College to preach in the cottage of Mrs. Fothergill. In 1819, a barn was rented and furnished for worship. The Church was not organised until September 17th, 1834, when it numbered fifteen members. The first pastor at Ossett was Rev. Robert Carr (1841-6). He

preached in a Geneva gown and bands, which were known locally as "wattles." Rev. W. Rowe was minister from 1846 to 1851, and I find no record of another settlement until that of Rev. E. Dyson, in 1872. In 1860, their barn was offered for sale, with an adjoining cottage and plot of land, and these the Church bought for £280. The cottage they fitted up as a schoolroom. The present chapel was built in 1868, having cost £1,200, the membership of the Church being twenty-nine. Mr. Dyson remained for six years, during which period the counsel and aid of the Home Mission were sought. Rev. J. W. Comfort was pastor from 1877 to 1882, and Rev. E. Greenwood began in 1882 a ministry which did not close until 1904. In 1894, a new school was erected, and, in 1899, £700 was spent in adapting it to day-school purposes, there being no public schools in the town other than those of the Anglican and Catholics. In 1894, several members were dismissed to form the Central Church. In 1906, Rev. T. R. Lewis became joint pastor of the two Churches at Ossett, resigning in 1908, to be followed in the next year by Rev. C. Cotes. The Church has enjoyed a most successful centenary effort, which has resulted in the renovation of the chapel, in which new galleries have been added and other improvements made, costing £1,000.

The present cause at Wakefield began in 1836, but a previous effort had been made by students from Horton College, who had held services in a schoolroom, in Hardy Croft, as early as the year 1812. In 1818, Dr. Steadman baptised three converts in the river, and meetings were afterwards held in the Old Assembly Room, where a baptistry was constructed. The effort was, however, relinquished, as was a second attempt in the year 1827. In 1836, a Congregational chapel in the town was closed; on April 24th, 1836, it was reopened as a Baptist meeting-place by the Itinerant Society. Finding that a pastor was absolutely necessary for the establishment of the cause, they invited Mr. Joseph Fox, a student of Horton, who began his ministry in May, 1837. Their first baptismal service was held at Ossett, January 9th, 1838, and, their members having increased to twenty-seven, the Church was formally constituted

on March 15th, 1839, and three deacons appointed. Mr. Fox remained for four and a half years, adding seventy-three members to the Church. The necessity of a new chapel being imperative, land was secured, and the present chapel opened on March 20th, 1844, the Church then numbering ninety-nine members. The building evidently taxed the resources of the people very severely, and the swift succession of brief pastorates suggests the difficulty the Church had in supporting a settled ministry. The Church has had thirteen pastors :—Revs. J. Fox, D. Boyce, W. Howieson, W. Colcroft, A. Perrey, M.D., G. C. Catterall, H. Hardin, W. Turner, W. Satchwell, J. Ford, J. Cottam, H. J. Martin, and the present pastor, Rev. L. Banner, who commenced his ministry in 1910. The chapel is at some disadvantage from its position not being in close vicinity to the population. During Mr. Turner's pastorate the chapel was considerably improved, additional rooms built, an organ installed, and, better still, a hundred members were added to the Church. During the pastorate of Mr. Ford (1882-93) the interior of the building was modernised, and during more recent years the electric light has been installed through the generosity of one of the members.

Of the several Baptist Churches in Middlesbrough, only that at Linthorpe Road is federated with the **Middlesbrough** Yorkshire Association. The first Baptist effort was made in 1849, when meetings were held in the house of Mr. Ainsworth. A Church was formed in 1857, by Rev. W. Leng, of Stockton, and consisted of nine persons who were transferred from Churches in other towns. Mr. Ainsworth served gratuitously and faithfully in the office of pastor for a number of years, being greatly honoured and beloved. The work, though beset by many difficulties, was continued with signs of the Divine favour until 1862, when there arose a dispute which resulted in the separation of eleven members, who formed the Church now worshipping in Newport Road. In 1862, the twelve members who remained ventured to take a room at the Oddfellows' Hall for Sunday services. They applied as a Church for admission to the

Yorkshire Association, and were cordially received in 1865, their number then being twenty. In 1869, the Church removed to the disused Welsh chapel in Stockton Street. Here they remained for three years, during which time land was secured in Boundary Road, and a building erected at a cost of about £500. In this forward movement practical sympathy was received from the Association and the Loan Fund. The advancing years of Mr. Ainsworth, and the growing requirements of the work, now compelled the people to consider the question of a pastor who could wholly devote himself to the service of the Church. With the help of the County Home Mission, the Rev. G. W. Wilkinson became minister in 1875. He remained about three years, during which time the membership rose to fifty. The Rev. R. H. Roberts followed in 1880, remaining five years and enjoying the love and confidence of the people. Meanwhile the town was rapidly extending in the direction of Linthorpe, and the people were leaving the neighbourhood around the chapel. With commendable foresight a plot of ground was purchased in the new thoroughfare. By the help of many friends a commodious school-chapel, with classrooms, was erected, and opened in 1888. The total cost was £2,700. At that time the membership was thirty-seven, and there remained a debt on the new buildings which for years threatened almost to overwhelm the Church. In 1889, the Rev. T. Armstrong became pastor, and laboured with great devotion. The debt was reduced and the prospect greatly improving when a lengthened industrial trouble had disastrous effects on the town. In common with other Christian communities the Church was greatly distressed. In 1894, the present pastor, Rev. R. Ensoll, began his ministry, the debt being then £600 and the membership forty-seven. The membership has risen to seventy-four, the debt has been cancelled, a gallery added at a cost of £350, lecture rooms erected, and all these liabilities have been discharged. The Church which was in receipt of an annual grant from the Association—generously made and long continued—is now self-supporting. The spirit of the people is one of prayerfulness and expectancy, and it may be

said that the outlook of the Church is more hopeful than at any previous period.

The Church at Pudsey had a humble beginning, for when it was formed in January, 1847, its only home

Pudsey. was a room "with pigstyes underneath." Its membership numbered twelve, and its frugal condition is seen by the fact that, the rent of the room being in arrears, a levy of sixpence per head was made upon the members. In 1851, a chapel—now used as a Sunday School—was opened at Littlemoor, and Rev. James Hillyard was appointed pastor in 1853. In 1857, Rev. James Stuart accepted the joint pastorates of Pudsey and Stanningley. In 1866, Rev. H. Watts was pastor, who reported to the Association an increased congregation and additions to the Church. In 1870, Rev. H. Dunn undertook a brief ministry, after which the Church remained without a pastor for nearly twenty years, the pulpit being very acceptably supplied by students and lay preachers. In 1893, Rev. F. W. Turner, a Rawdon student, was ordained to the pastorate which he held successfully for nearly twelve years. Stimulated by a gift of £500 from the late Mr. Briggs Priestley, M.P., a building scheme was inaugurated in 1895, and the chapel opened in November, 1897. In seven years it was freed from debt, the Church having raised nearly £5000 during the twelve years. Pudsey acknowledges its indebtedness to many friends for the successful consummation of its building efforts, which have placed it in possession of spacious and convenient Church premises. The present pastor is Rev. W. K. Still, who began his ministry at Pudsey in 1909.

There have been Baptists in the City of York from an early period, for Theophilus Browning obtained an Indulgence in 1672, to preach as

York. a Baptist in the house of William Wombwell, of York. Nor can we forget that William Mitchel was twice imprisoned under the Conventicle Act, at York Castle; he writes to "my friends in York who visited me in the time of my imprisonment." It was probably seven years after this that Mitchel became a Baptist, but his imprisonment in the

Castle is certainly a matter of Baptist interest. Our first clear trace of a Baptist congregation in the city is at the close of the 18th century. Hargrove's "History of York" records that "the first members of the Baptist Church were immersed in the Bathing House, New Walk, in October, 1799." In the published life of Dr. Mason we read that his grandfather, Francis Mason, who died in 1801, was described as "founder of the Baptist Society in York." He recalls the meetings of this Society in a large upper room in his father's house, on Peaseholm Green. Its members were not Calvinistic but Unitarian in doctrine. This Society, after some wanderings, eventually became merged in the congregation at St. Saviour-gate Chapel. Andrew Fuller visited York in 1802, and is surprised at learning that, in addition to a few Socinian Baptists a little Baptist Church had lately been formed there. This must be the congregation to which Hargrove refers—"The Baptists assembled for worship, in July, 1802, in a large room in College Street." In 1806, they purchased a chapel from the Methodists, but in 1818 the cause was broken up by internal dissensions. There is no further record until the formation of the present Church in 1862. The Baptist Home Missionary Society then hired a lecture hall, and on January 19th, it was opened for worship. On December 28th, a Church of thirty members was formed, which next year was placed under the care of the Itinerant Society. The first four candidates were baptised on March 27th, 1864. In 1865, Mr. G. E. Foster, of Cambridge, when visiting the city, was grieved at the absence of a Baptist chapel. He was led to offer £1,000 towards the erection of a building worthy of the denomination. The challenge was accepted, and the building of the present stately structure was commenced. The Rev. T. Pottinger held the pastorate for three months, and was succeeded by Rev. J. F. Smythe, in January, 1867. In the same month the foundation stone of the chapel was laid, and the building occupied on June 17th, 1868. The arduous work of collecting funds mainly devolved upon Rev. John Barker, of Lockwood. Upon Mr. Smythe's retirement, in 1871, the Church called the Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., during whose ministry of two



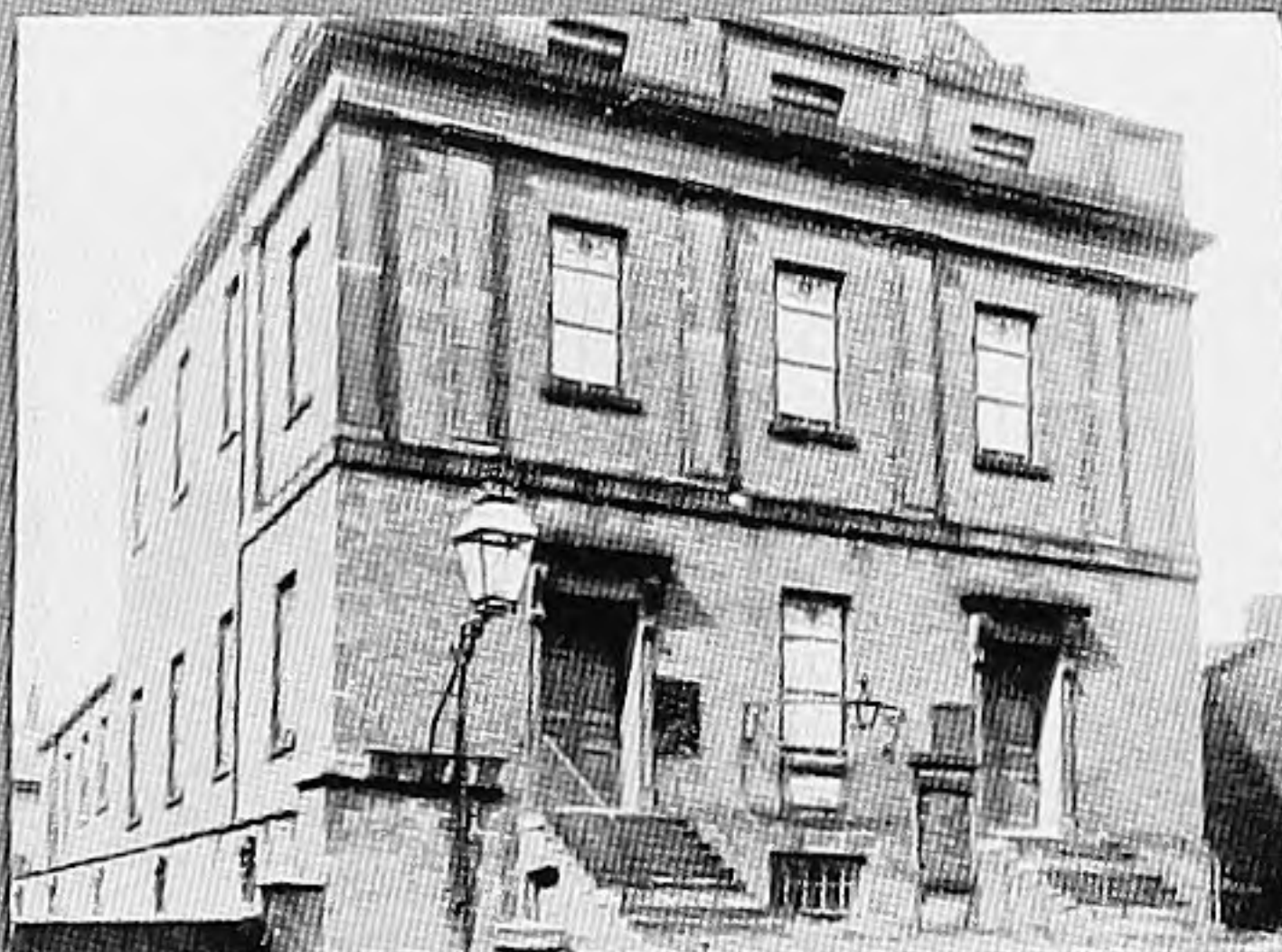
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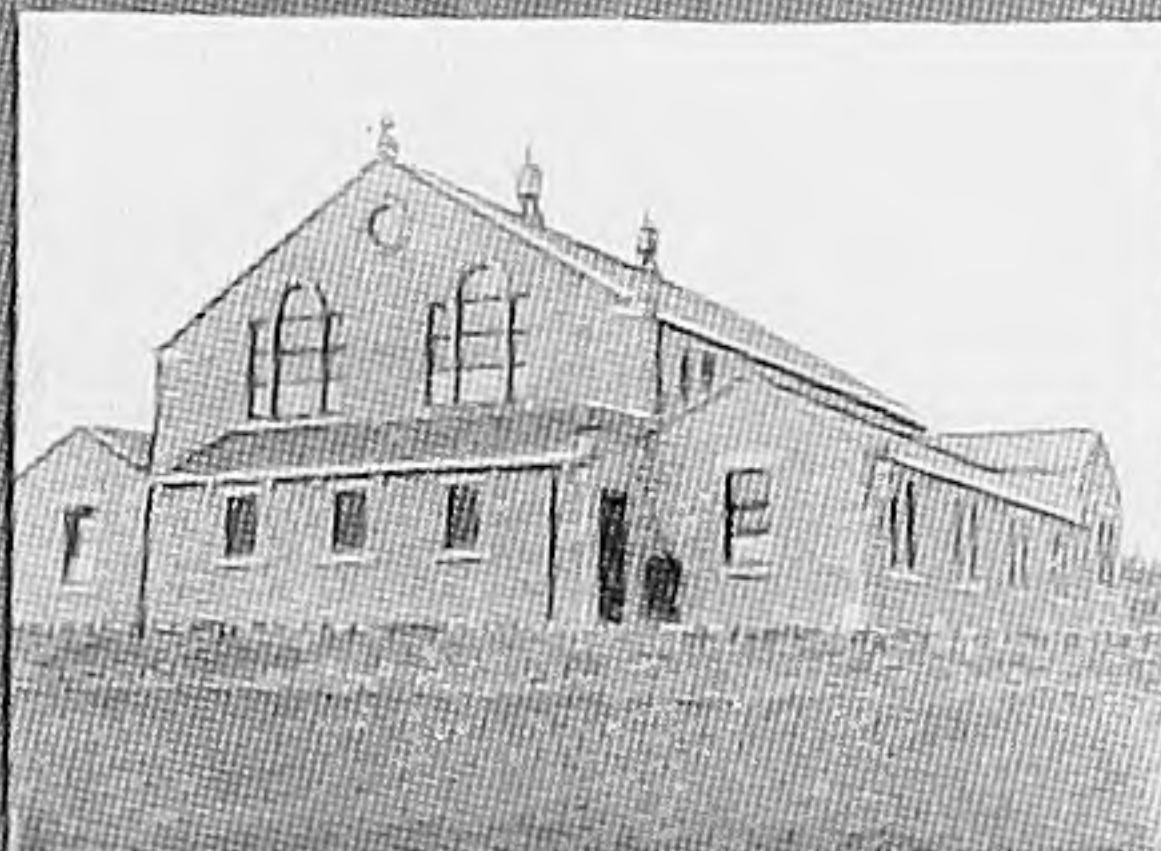
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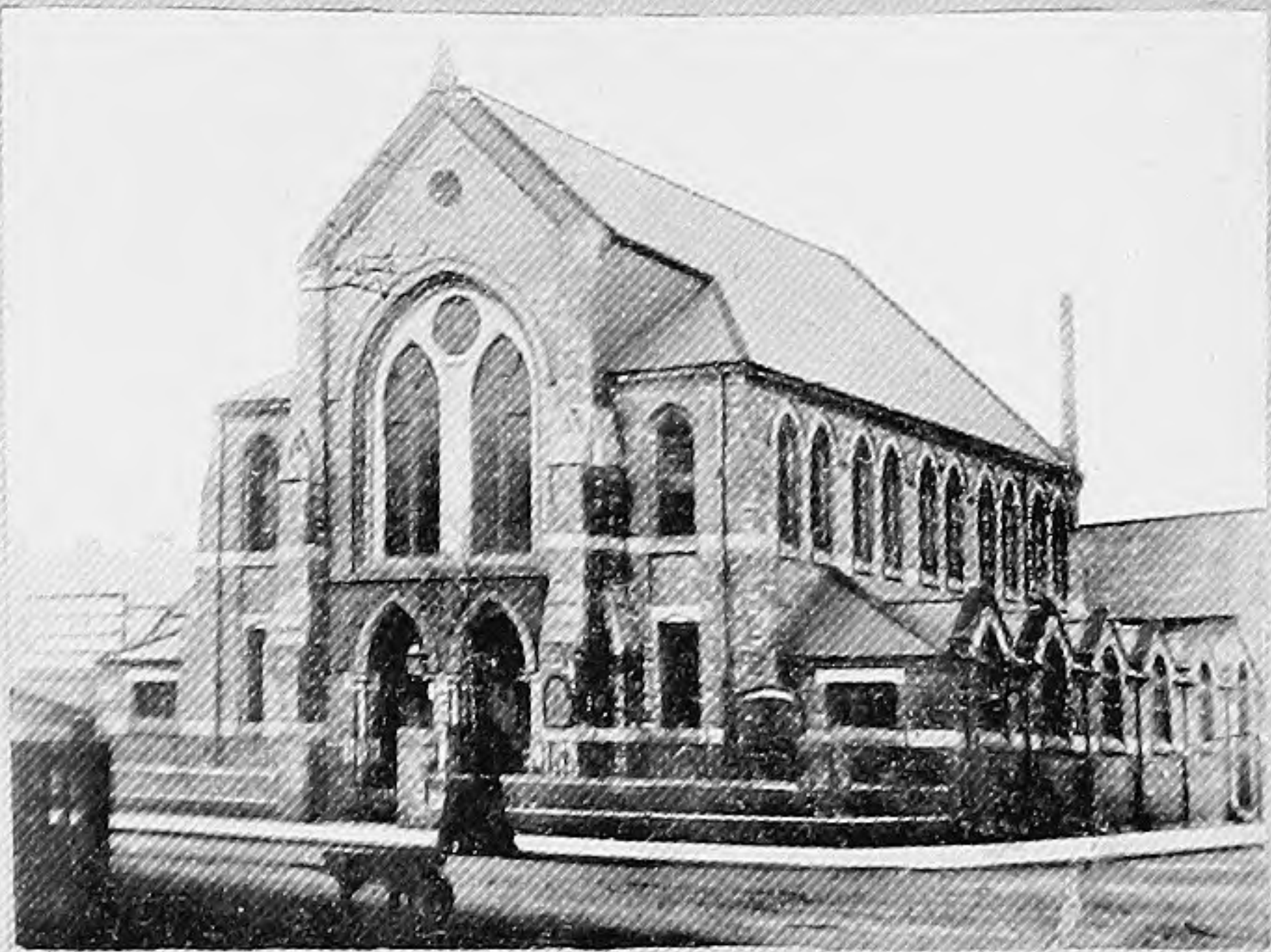
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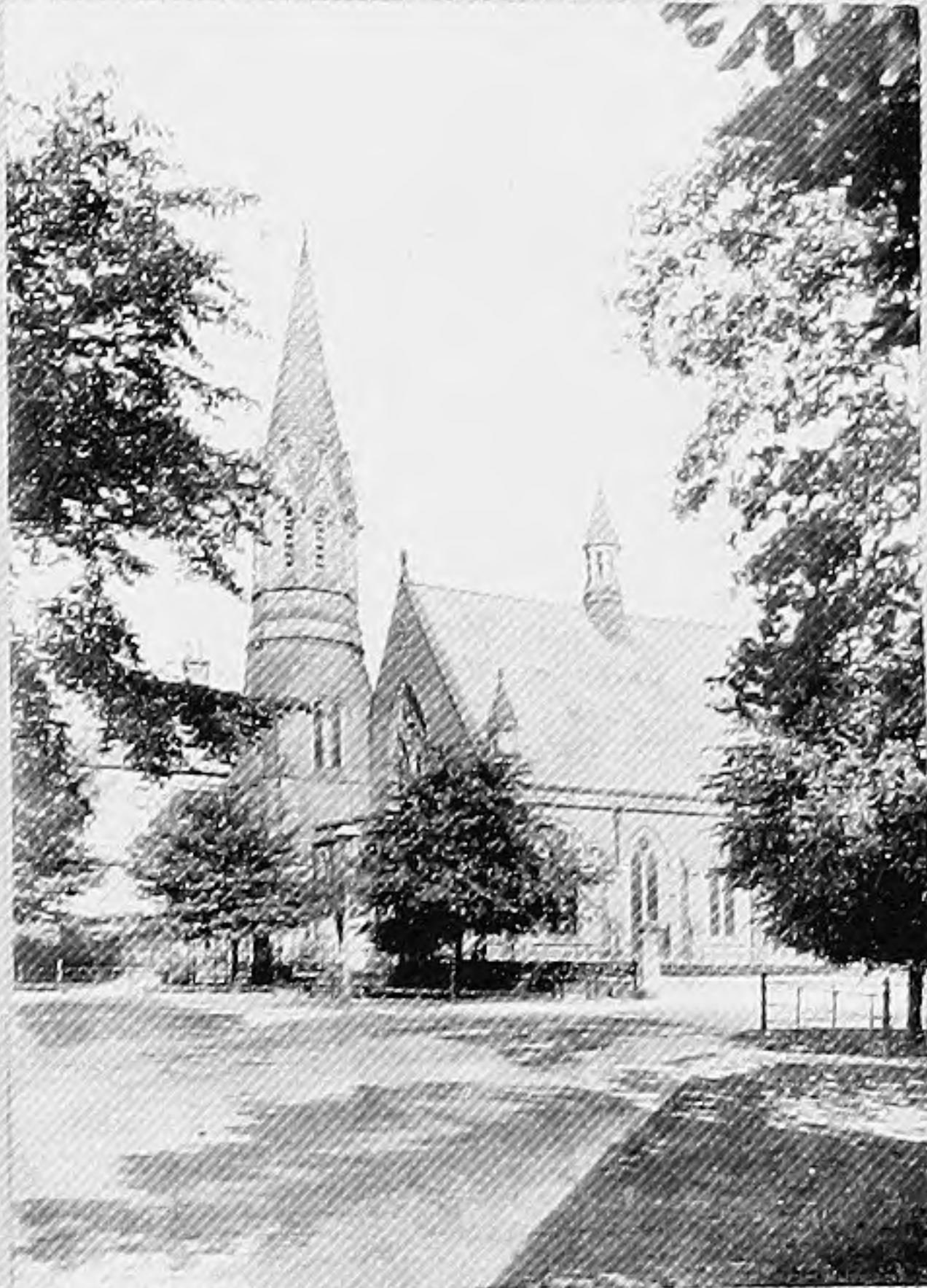
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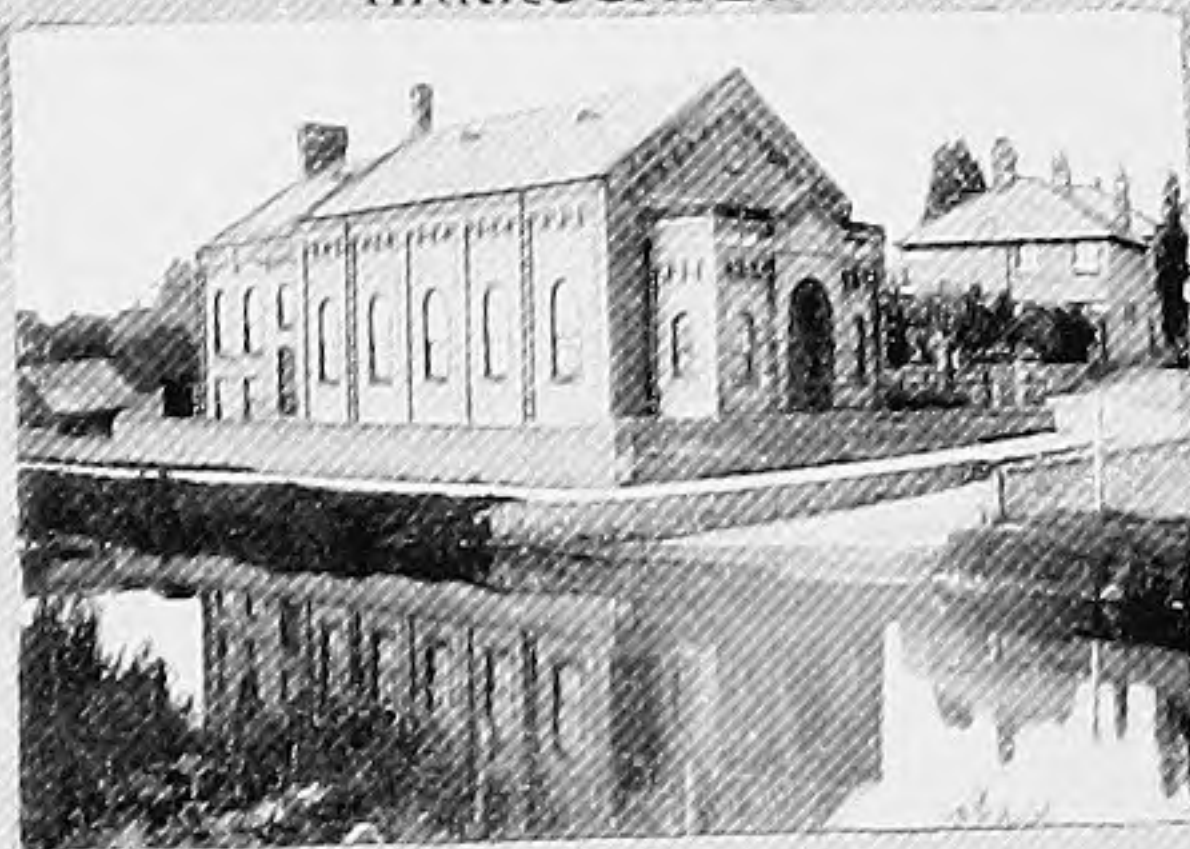
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years classrooms and a caretaker's house were added to the premises. This period is memorable in the Church's history by the fact that Messrs. Moody and Sankey commenced their great English campaign in the York chapel. Mr. Meyer was followed by Rev. T. E. Cooke, who remained until 1881. Faithful service has since been rendered by Revs. W. Turner (1882-8); E. E. Fisk (1889-94); C. Pates (1895-1905), and M. Cumming (1905-6). Various influences have operated against the prosperity of the Church in recent years, and in 1907 the assistance of the County Association was sought. By counsel and financial help, an attempt was made to secure the return of better conditions, and in March, 1909, Rev. D. R. Smith accepted the call of the Church and the Association to the pastorate. His work has been accompanied with encouraging signs, a spirit of harmony prevails, and the future gives promise of an enlarged life.

The Church at Dewsbury is the outcome of a suggestion made in 1863, by Rev. Benjamin Wood, of **Dewsbury.** Bradford, to the General Baptist Conference, that work should be attempted in the town. Mr. James Smith, with Mr. James Astin, engaged the Assembly Room in Wakefield Road, the first service being held on July 21st, 1864. On January 15th, 1865, the Church was duly organised, the Revs. B. Wood and R. Horsfield giving the right hand of fellowship to thirteen persons. Baptismal services were conducted at the public baths, and excited much local interest. In 1867, a call to the pastorate was given to Mr. N. H. Shaw, of Chilwell College, who commenced his ministry on August 4th. At this time the Church adopted the financial method of weekly offerings to which it has ever since adhered, although it did not place these under a voluntary assessment until 1881. Chapel building efforts were commenced, and, in August, 1869, the Conference offered £1,000 to the fund if the Dewsbury Church would engage to raise an equal sum. The challenge was eagerly accepted, and on December 7th, 1871, the building was opened for worship free of debt, the inaugural sermon being preached by Rev. Alexander Maclaren. The Church applied itself with systematic

diligence to the visitation of the neighbourhood, and, in 1872, became self-supporting. In 1874, it joined the Baptist Union. Mr. Shaw concluded his ministry in 1878, having dedicated his future services to missionary work in Rome. He was succeeded by Rev. George Eales, who remained for four years and was followed by Rev. A. C. Perriam (1884-91). In 1890, the chapel was renovated, and a lecture room built. In 1892, Rev. Charles Payne undertook the pastoral charge, which he sustained for thirteen years. Upon his retirement the call of the Church was given to Rev. J. Stewart, M.A., whose ministry extended from 1907 to 1911. During its history the Church has maintained a steady rate of progress, and is at the present time in a healthy and vigorous condition. The present pastor is Rev. D. T. Patterson, who has recently removed from Halifax to his new charge.

The Batley Church was born of the desire for progress which actuated the Leeds District. A chapel being vacant in Wellington Street, the **Batley.** Baptists were gathered together, and Mr. J. H. Hardy, of Rawdon College, appointed as their pastor. After necessary renovation, the "old brick chapel" was opened on December 12th, 1875, and the new cause, with its Sunday School, flourished exceedingly. Between the years 1878 and 1882, dissensions sorely harassed the good work, but the Yorkshire Baptist Association came to the rescue, and the enfeebled fellowship removed from the little room—in which it had worshipped since Mr. Hardy's resignation, in 1880—to a more central one in Commercial Street. In 1883, Mr. A. Cooper, of the Pastor's College, was called to the pastorate, and in 1885 the Church acquired the present Park Road Chapel, which it purchased from the "Christian Brethren" at a total cost of £1,700. £700 was raised and the remainder borrowed from the Loan Fund, the Church afterwards receiving a grant of £500 from the Building and Extension Fund. Rev. J. Aldis, junr., became minister in 1891, and in the next year considerable structural alterations were made. He was succeeded, in 1895, by Rev. F. Wynn, who was followed by Mr. P. D. McGowan, in 1899, and by Rev. W. H. Tomkins, in

1904. Mr. Tomkin's brief stay of two years was accompanied with many tokens of the Divine blessing. Mr. J. Waddingham, a member of the Church, undertook its oversight for nine months, but the County Association, after three years in which the Church had seriously declined, came to its assistance. A committee was formed from the neighbouring Churches, and Rev. F. W. Butt-Thompson was invited to the pastorate. He commenced his ministry in October, 1910, and, under his care, the Church is steadily regaining her lost ground.

The Morley Church was founded on September 11th, 1872, when twenty-four members were transferred from the Church at Gildersome; its pastor, Rev. John Haslam, with Rev. J. Barker of Lockwood, presided over the memorable service. On May 8th, 1871, a meeting of the Baptists living in the town had been held, which resulted in the hiring of the Oddfellows' Hall, where services were at once undertaken. A Sunday School was formed of thirteen scholars, seven of whom subsequently joined the Church, five of their number remaining to this day. Aided by a generous grant of £70 per annum from the Home Mission, the Rev. J. Wolfenden was called to the pastorate, which he faithfully sustained for three years. In November, 1874, a new school-chapel was opened, the occasion being made memorable by the presence of Revs. Hugh Stowell Brown, J. P. Chown, and Alexander Maclaren. In 1875, the vacant pastorate was filled by Rev. R. Davies, who laboured with much blessing for ten years. He was succeeded by Rev. R. Green, who was only spared for a brief year of ministry. In 1889, Rev. C. Welton began a pastorate which extended to ten years, and, in 1897, the present commodious chapel was erected, which, with its lecture hall and classrooms, presented opportunities of increased activity and usefulness. From 1902 to 1904, Rev. G. Robinson was pastor, and, after a lengthy interregnum, the Rev. W. H. Tompkins undertook the leadership in 1907. He has led the Church into many Christian activities, which have been attended with sustained success.

The Salem Church, Bramley, had its origin in 1878, when seventy-two members withdrew from **Salem, Bramley.** the Zion Church, Bramley, to form the new cause. The Rev. A. Ashworth, who had been pastor at Zion for fourteen years, became the first pastor at Salem, where he continued until his death in 1885. After two years, in which the pulpit was supplied by students from Rawdon, the Rev. W. Rice accepted the pastorate, but continued for only eighteen months. The Church now remained without a pastor until 1897, when Rev. James Wilkinson, who had been for eight years minister at Zion, accepted the call of the Salem Church. He remained with his people until his sudden death on the last day of the year 1907. During the period of his ministry new school accommodation was provided, structural improvements were made in the chapel, and, through the gift of two friends, an organ was installed in 1901. The Rev. G. W. Wilkinson, the brother of their late pastor, supplied the pulpit for two Sundays in each month until, in August, 1909, Rev. Robt. Tindal accepted the pastorate in which station he still continues.

The Normanton Church is the result of an effort made by the Committee of the Home Mission, **Normanton.** who opened the Co-operative Hall for worship on November 9th, 1873. For some months the services were continued, but to reach the people it was found that visitation and pastoral oversight were needed. The Committee obtained the services of the Rev. John Meyers, who began his ministry on the first Lord's Day of August, 1874. The congregations increasing, it was found necessary to seek some more commodious place, and a site was purchased in High Street for £300. The chapel was opened for public worship, May 7th, 1878. On November 19th, the Autumnal Meetings of the Association were held in the new chapel, and in the evening a Church was formed, consisting of thirty-two members. The Rev. John Meyers was then chosen pastor, and the meeting closed

with the observance of the Lord's Supper, the Rev. W. C. Upton, of Beverley, presiding. Until January 5th, 1882, the Church was managed by a Committee, but from that date seven deacons have been annually elected. In 1883 Mr. Meyers retired, after having served the Church faithfully for nine years. In 1884, Mr. J. T. Heselton, of Rawdon College, took up the work. The Church had now grown to a membership of seventy-four. For sixteen years Mr. Heselton laboured and left the Church with a membership of eighty-five. He was followed by the Rev. J. Young, who worked for three years with great earnestness, and during this time an organ was purchased and an organ chamber built. In December, 1904, the present pastor, Rev. J. E. Shephard, settled. Up to this time an ever-growing Sunday School had met in the body of the Chapel, which, together with a kitchen and a small classroom were all the available premises. In May, 1905, it was resolved to purchase additional land and start a building fund. On Saturday, June 16th, 1906, the memorial stones were laid, and on Monday, October 2nd, Sir George White, M.P., President of the National Sunday School Union, opened the premises. He spoke in the highest terms of the nine classrooms; he "had seen nothing in the whole of his experience to be compared with them." Some £2000 were expended in the schools, caretaker's house, and reseating of the chapel. The work has been amply justified, for on Sunday afternoons the main hall is filled with young people. The last two years have witnessed the removal of a large number of earnest workers, and some who were numbered among the pioneers of the movement. Change is inevitable in a mining district, yet amidst it all a Church is being reared which has more than justified its existence.

The Church at Crigglestone was constituted with five or six members in 1822, and erected its chapel **Crigglestone.** in 1824. The cause owes its inception to Mr. John Hattersley, a member of the Wakefield Church, who had gathered a Baptist congregation in the village, and was ordained pastor by Dr. Steadman.

He ministered to the little Church, and contributed of his substance to its support, until his death in 1829, when his son, Mr. William Hattersley, was ordained to his father's office. During the years that have followed, the incoming of other denominations, working under the Circuit system, has adversely affected this isolated Baptist congregation, and on several occasions it has been proposed to close the chapel. This has been happily avoided by the interposition of the Home Mission, and the Church was re-formed in 1879. At the present time the cause is under the fostering care of the pastor of the Wakefield Church, and is supplied by the Lay Preachers' Association; its outlook may be described as distinctly hopeful.

In the fashionable town of Harrogate we are represented by the stately chapel which stands in Victoria Avenue. It is the outcome of our county "Building and Extension Fund," which, turning its attention to Harrogate, engaged the Montpellier Rooms for services, in 1876. The experiment proved to be so successful that steps were quickly taken for the erection of a chapel. The splendid site in Victoria Avenue was secured, and the schoolroom opened for worship on May 5th, 1878. In 1879, the workers were greatly encouraged by an unexpected legacy of £1,000, bequeathed by Mrs. Rogers, a lady who was a member of the Church of England. On October 12th, 1880, the Church was formed, numbering thirty-eight members. The building of the chapel was now undertaken, the corner stone being laid on August 4th, 1882, and the completed sanctuary opened for worship on June 20th, 1883. In the same month the Sunday School was organised. In the following year a valuable organ was presented by an anonymous donor. The advance of the cause is seen in the fact that during its first decade there had been raised, for all purposes, the sum of £14,600. During these ten years the Church lost two of its most generous supporters, by the death of Rev. Thomas Pottinger, and the removal of Mr. T. S. Aldis. In 1888, the Rev. J. G. Raws—then co-pastor with Dr. Maclaren—was invited to the first pastorate of the Church. He commenced his ministry on Easter Sunday, 1889, the remaining debt being then cancelled. In that

year the Church lost another of its most generous supporters in the death of Mr. William Stead, and, in 1892, its treasurer, Mr. W. R. Thorp, removed to the South of England. Mr. Raws resigned his pastorate in 1894, his health compelling his removal to Australia. His place was filled in 1896 by the Rev. T. Graham Tam, whose ministry of ten years will always be a notable period in the history of the cause. The Church gathered increasing strength and influence, and the death of its pastor, on August 10th, 1906, was an event of widespread sorrow.—“A man of culture, and zealous in all things for purity and righteousness, he was loved by his Church and congregation, and greatly respected throughout the town of his adoption.” The Church did not elect his successor until 1909, when the Rev. J. R. Walker, of Regent’s Park, London, accepted the Church’s call and still continues in its ministry. During its thirty-five years of history the Church has been able to raise over £40,000 for its various funds.

The Church at Northallerton has a history the interest of which gathers about a young Baptist of **Northallerton.** the name of William Stubbins. He, believing he was divinely prompted to undertake evangelistic work, left Retford, in Nottinghamshire, in 1844, and went out not knowing whither he went. Directing his steps northward, he at last settled at Northallerton. Unknown, and without resources, he visited the sick and dying, and held cottage services, and, to provide for himself the bare necessities of life, opened a day school. In 1850, he bought a plot of land at Brompton, built a chapel, and gathered a Church of forty-five baptised believers.* In 1866, he bought from the Wesleyans of Northallerton their disused chapel, and for twenty-three years conducted on every Sabbath two services at Northallerton and one at Brompton. As age advanced upon him his congregations declined, until sometimes only one member would be present at the Communion service. Never losing heart, he constructed a baptistry in 1883, and built a small manse in which he lived until his death. After his

* William Stubbins held very strong General Baptist convictions, which prevented him from federating the Northallerton Church with the Association.

funeral, the cost of which was defrayed by the sale of his furniture, it was found that the chapel had been mortgaged and the property was offered for sale. The Rev. T. G. Rooke, B.A., Messrs. Arthur Briggs and W. H. Bilbrough instructed Rev. J. Haslam (Secretary of the Building and Extension Fund) to purchase the chapel and put it in trust for the denomination. The total cost of its purchase and renovation, with the exception of a small loan from the Loan Society, was contributed by them and a few other friends. It was hoped to make Northallerton the centre of a group of village Churches, and the Rev. F. Allsop undertook their pastorate under the auspices of the Association, in 1896, remaining until 1903. In 1897, the premises were renovated, and in 1900, a manse was built. Mr. Allsop was followed by Rev. J. Young, who removed to Canada, in 1910, and the Church invited Mr. Powell to succeed him.

The Bethel Church, Rodley, was begun as a mission station of the Farsley Church, in a schoolroom
Bethel, Rodley. which was built in 1835. In this room the school was conducted, and public worship held, until the present chapel was built in 1892. The Church was formed in January of that year, with a roll of thirty-four members. For a number of years both before and after the opening of the new chapel, the cause was chiefly maintained by the students of Rawdon College, but in August, 1901, Mr. H. J. Charter, B.A., B.D., of that college, was ordained to the pastorate. In 1906, Mr. Charter resigned his charge in order to devote his life to the foreign missionary field, and for three years his place was not supplied. In 1909, Rev. Robert Tindal accepted the joint pastorates of Salem, Bramley, and Rodley, under the happy federation of the two Churches. At the present time Rodley is completing a scheme of alterations and additions to the old schoolroom.

The Central Church at Ossett is an outgrowth from the Church at Ossett South. On January 25th,
Central, Ossett. 1894, a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Jonas Glover to consider the advisability of commencing a new cause in this part of the

town, and in the following June, services were begun in the Co-operative Hall. The Church was constituted on January 14th, 1895, with nineteen members. In 1898, it reported the completion of a new school-chapel with nine classrooms and a lecture hall, since which time a caretaker's house has been added, and additional land purchased. The Central Church united with the mother Church in the pastorate of Rev. T. R. Lewis (1906-8), and still continues in this unity under the ministry of Rev. T. Cotes. It is anticipating the building of a new chapel, in the near future.

The present Baptist Church at Pontefract is of recent formation, but there is good evidence of a **Pontefract.** Baptist community at Pontefract during the Commonwealth period. Amongst reports made to the Archbishop of York, concerning some of the Yorkshire Deaneries, in 1669, Pontefract is mentioned as having three Conventicles, the Presbyterians numbering thirty, the Quakers eighty, and the Anabaptists thirty. The entry from the report says, "Many of the male sex were in actual armes against the King. See the returne itselfe." The actual return I have as yet been unable to discover, and it appears not to be in the archives of the Diocesan Registry at York. The present cause began in humble fashion in 1905, when a room was rented at six shillings a week, and seats were purchased from the Mechanics' Institute. The promoters of the new endeavour were Mr. E. Rusling and Mr. J. Greening, and a small committee was formed to carry on the work. Owing to the death of their landlord the room was offered for sale, and the Yorkshire Baptist Association purchased the place for £240. Mr. P. D. McGowan was of great assistance to the cause, and with the help of the Lay Preachers the services are properly maintained. A Sunday School and other organisations have been very successfully undertaken, and under the labours of Mr. F. Frost, the lay pastor, the little Church was cheered by eleven baptisms during the last Associational year.

**THE CHURCHES OF THE CRAVEN
DISTRICT.**

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.

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The Craven District, which represents our interests in the extreme west of the county, is—like the East Riding—largely rural in character. Its only big industrial town is Keighley, and its chapels are to be found in such quiet and alluring places as Ilkley in Wharfedale, Haworth among her moors, or some of those villages from which the primeval beauties of Airedale have not entirely disappeared.

At Barnoldswick we have the most ancient of our existing Yorkshire causes. Neal states **Barnoldswick**. that there were no Baptist Churches in Yorkshire in 1715, and Skeats, accepting the statement, says "I am aware that no existing Church in Yorkshire can trace its origin to this date." They were evidently unconscious of Barnoldswick and Bridlington, which, with Rawdon and Gildersome, can lay a valid claim to this distinction.* The history of the Barnoldswick cause is an inviting theme, but the story of its early days falls to the pen of another contributor to this

* In January, 1689, at the Wetherby Sessions, the "Barn of Christopher Edmondson in Barnoldswick" was registered for worship. The signatures to the application were those of "John Dickonson, Martin Dickonson, John Wright, John Dugdale, John Barrett." The same applicants obtained, at the same time, an order for the Barn of Thomas Cockshott in Kildwick. The Title deed which forms one of our illustrations, records the sale of this barn,—“one little barne” with other properties, by John Taylor to David Crosley, in 1694. “All which John Taylor did buy of Christopher Edmondson, Henry Higgin and Matthew Watson by virtue of one deed bearing date the eleventh day of January in the twelfth yeare of the Raigne of our late Sovereigne Lord King Charles the Second,” &c.

volume. In the year 1800, from which date we continue its annals, Nathan Smith was pastor. In addition to his ministerial labours he was weaver, malt merchant, and schoolmaster. He continued in his station for forty-one years, passing away, a venerable figure, in 1831. He was succeeded by Rev. J. B. Spooner, who having resigned in 1839, the Church for some time availed itself of the services of Rev. Wm. Fawcett, then residing in the neighbourhood. In 1845, Rev. Thos. Bennett became minister, and as the old sanctuary became too small, the present chapel was built. It was opened in 1852, and, through the generosity of Mrs. Mitchell, the entire site was purchased for £7. Mr. Bennett continued at Barnoldswick until his death in 1886, when he was succeeded by Rev. E. R. Lewis (1888-93). During this pastorate the Church undertook the building of a new school, upon which it expended £1600. Mr. Lewis published an interesting volume on the history of the Barnoldswick Church. Rev. A. T. Brainsby was pastor from 1897 to 1904, and under his leadership the chapel was remodelled to its present form. In 1905, Rev. F. M. Buck accepted the pastorate, remaining until 1909.

During Mr. Bennett's ministry at Barnoldswick difficulties arose which were followed by the formation of a second Church, in 1868. The new community at first worshipped in "the new lathe," with Rev. James Wilkinson as its minister. He greatly endeared himself to his people, and in his term of service the new Church sent Roger Briggs and Benjamin Brooks to prepare for the ministry. Mr. Wilkinson was followed by Rev. N. Richards (1877-81), and a chapel was built. After the retirement of Mr. Richards the Church remained pastorless for fifteen years, but, at the close of this long vacancy, Rev. D. McCallum undertook the charge (1896-1900). He was followed by Rev. A. Nightingale (1900-04), and the present pastor, Rev. G. E. Towle. Last year the two causes united in a great and successful celebration of the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the Church. Five buildings still stand in the village to bear witness to Baptist progress:—the ancient barn, the cottage, the

old chapel, "Bethesda," and the premises of the new Church.

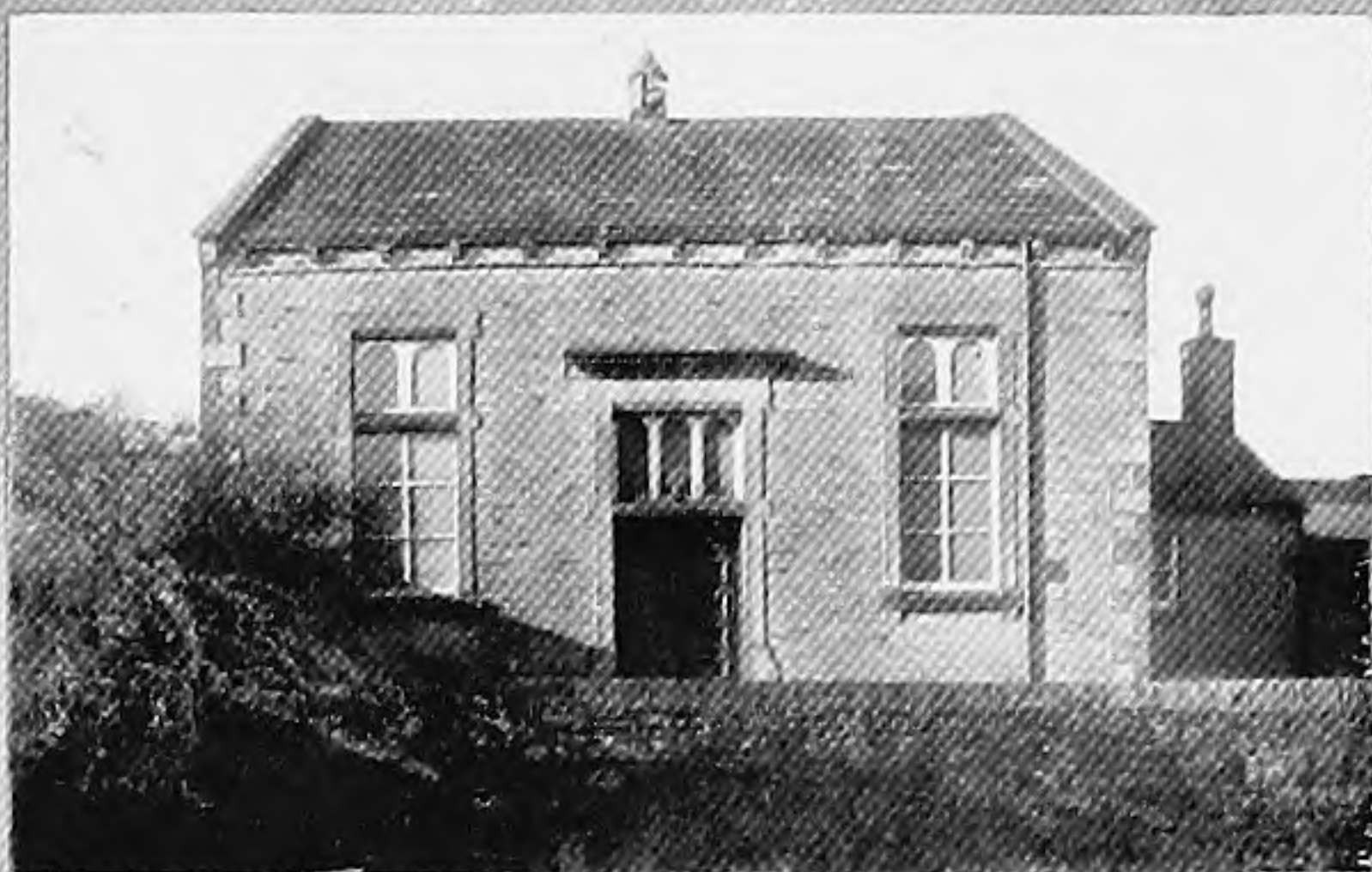
The history of the early years of the Church at Sutton-in-Craven has been related by **Sutton-in-Craven**. Principal Blomfield. At the beginning of the nineteenth century we find Rev. John Walton sustaining the pastorate (1780-1807). His ministry was greatly blessed to the village, for he was a man of considerable ability and outstanding piety. Sutton did not invite his successor until 1812, when Rev. F. W. Dyer commenced a brief ministry; the chapel was restored at a cost of £180, a sum which the Church at that time evidently regarded as a serious responsibility. Rev. Joseph Gaunt was ordained in 1818, remaining until 1826. Another period of seven years elapsed before the appointment of Rev. J. D. Marsh, whose engagement terminated in 1836. In 1837, Rev. Wm. Fawcett, a grandson of Dr. John Fawcett, commenced a ministry full of blessing to the Church. Having resigned in 1841, he resumed his work in 1843, and a new school building was opened. In Lady Horsfall, of Glusburn, Sutton has still among its members a descendant of Dr. Fawcett; Lady Horsfall's grandfather, Mr. James Fawcett, being Dr. Fawcett's grandson. Mr. James Fawcett was baptised at Sutton by his brother, Rev. Wm. Fawcett, in 1838. Rev. Peter Scott succeeded to the pastorate in 1847, retiring in 1853, to be followed by Revs. J. Walcot (1854-7), and R. Wing (1860-1). In 1861, Rev. W. E. Archer accepted the invitation of the Church, and in 1865 the chapel was rebuilt and enlarged, the cost amounting to £3300. Mr. Archer retired in 1883, and in the following year Rev. John Aldis, junr., succeeded him. During the seven years of Mr. Aldis's continuance, the present school premises were erected and chapel alterations made, on which £5770 was expended. The present pastor, Rev. F. W. Pollard, began his ministry at Sutton on March 6th, 1892. In 1904-5 the manse and the caretaker's house were erected, and last year the bi-centenary of the Church was celebrated by the general renovation of its entire premises.

In 1875, the Church undertook mission work at Glusburn, organising a Sunday school and preaching services. Mr. Horsfall—now Sir J. C. Horsfall, Bart.—realising the needs of Glusburn, erected the splendid pile of buildings known as “The Institute.” Upon its opening, in 1892, the lecture hall, with certain classrooms, was placed at the disposal of the Mission. In 1904, Rev. G. Armitt was invited to the co-pastorate of Sutton with charge of Glusburn, in which offices he remained for three years, to be succeeded, in 1908, by Rev. E. Smith. Sutton is a splendid example of Non-conformist continuity, and of the possibilities of progress when a Baptist Church is supported by a faithful succession of workers, and encouraged by a large-hearted generosity.

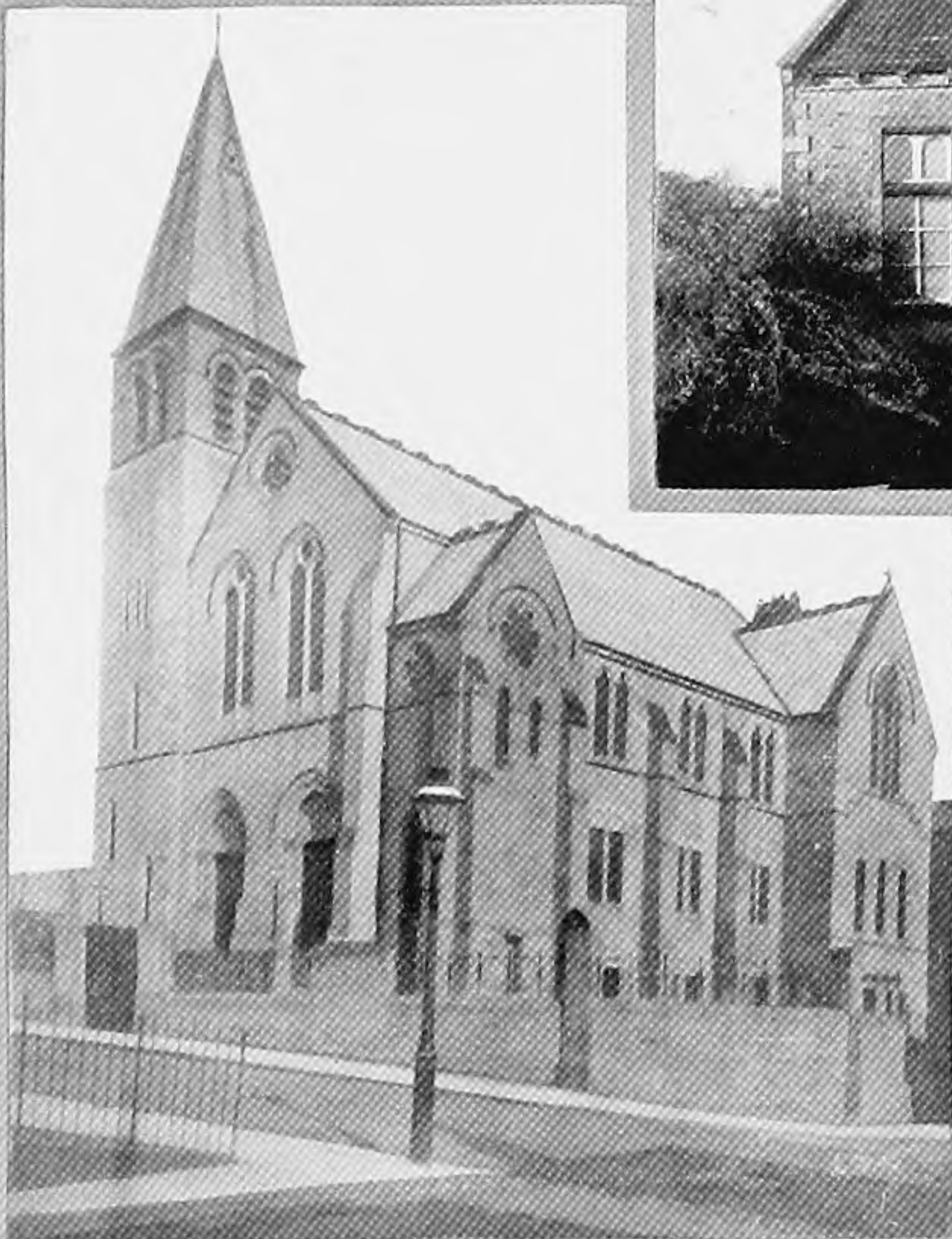
The Church at Cowling Hill has a history of 170 years, the Baptist faith being first introduced **Cowling Hill.** by that great itinerant, David Crosley. He founded this cause in the last year of his life, 1744. Cowling Hill was continued as a branch Church of Bacup until 1756. Mr. Nuttall, afterwards of Lumb, was a frequent preacher in these early days, his duty including a Sabbath day's journey of thirty miles and having for its reward the modest fee of a half-crown. Its pastors during the eighteenth century were S. Wilkinson (1756-9); C. Sugden (1761-72); B. Cowgill (1780-6); James Shuttleworth (1788-1826). In 1826, Rev. Nathaniel Walton commenced a ministry which continued until his death in 1872. He had, in 1849, baptised Isaac Brown; his convert became his successor in 1875. It is worthy of remark that this little sanctuary, an outpost of the Baptist faith in Craven, has for more than a century supplied its pastors from its own ranks. Mr. Brown remained until 1881, and on July 7th, 1901—his seventy-ninth birthday—he preached the closing sermons in the old chapel, prior to its renovation. Mr. S. Parkes, a colporteur, served the cause with much fidelity from 1892 to 1903. The pulpit is at present supplied by lay preachers, and students from Rawdon. The Association Letter of 1842 says that the Keighley, Earby, and Hellfield Churches had their origin in part from Cowling Hill.



KEIGHLEY.



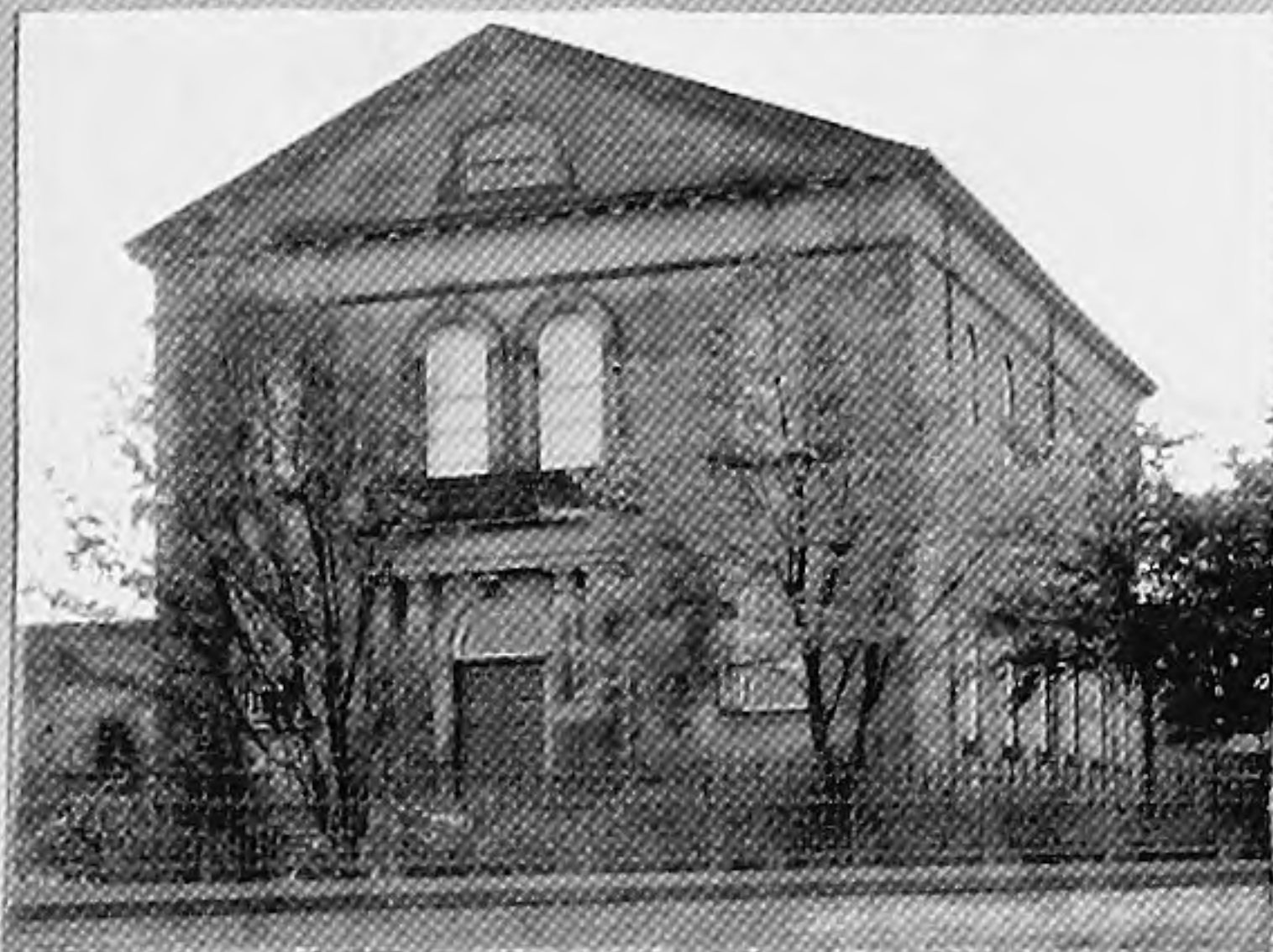
COWLING HILL.



BINGLEY.



CULLINGWORTH.

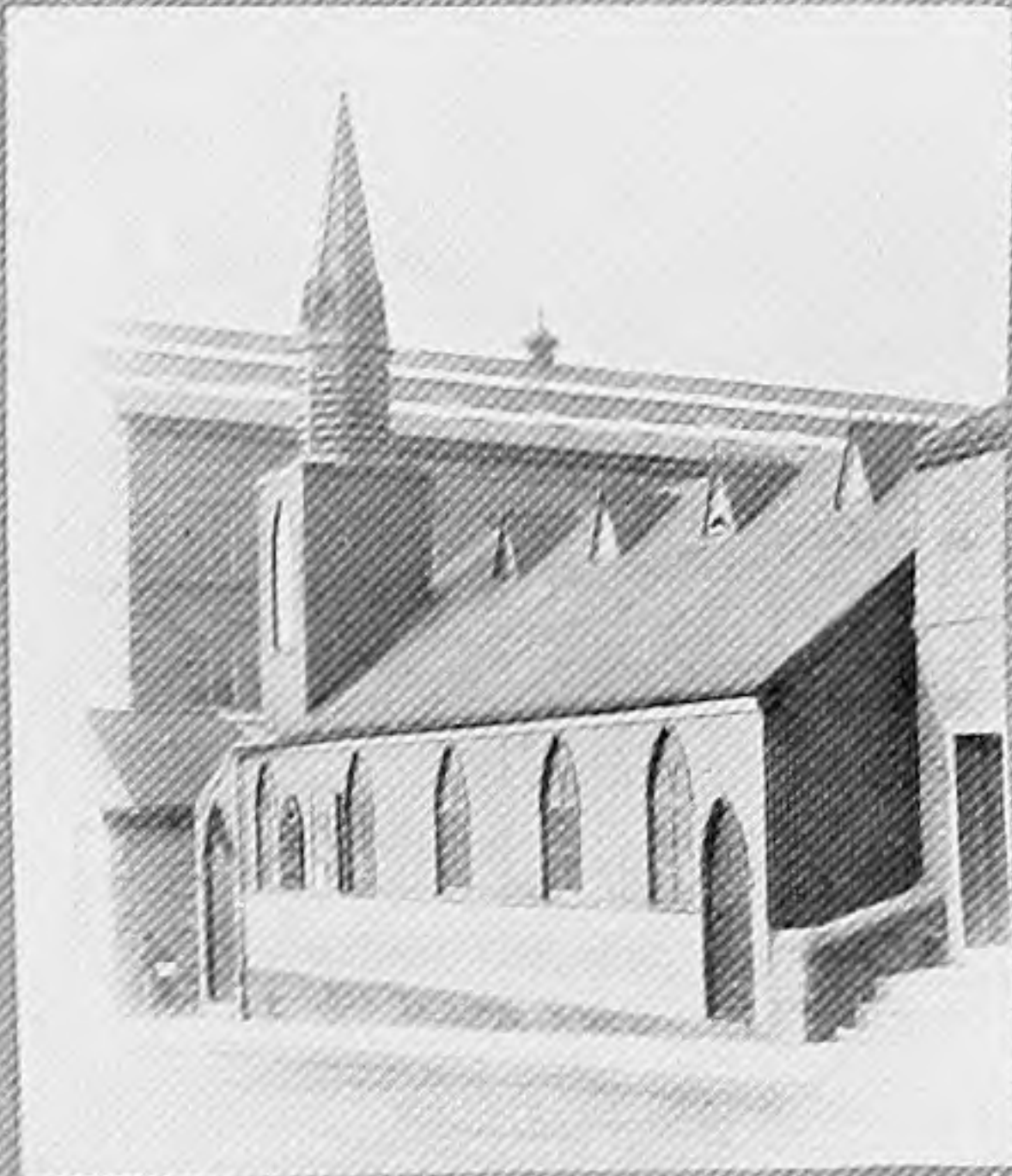


SLACK LANE.

CRAVEN DISTRICT.



GLUSBURN INSTITUTE



BELMONT, SKIPTON



SKIPTON



SALTERFORTH



CONONLEY



ILKLEY

CRAVEN

DISTRICT

The West Lane Church, Haworth, had its genesis in the religious awakening which followed **Haworth.** the advent of William Grimshaw to the incumbency of Haworth.* To that fervent evangelist we owe a lasting debt, for among his converts were at least three who became Baptist pastors:—Crabtree of Bradford, Hartley of Haworth, and Richard Smith, who became the first pastor at Wainsgate. James Hartley gathered the people together in 1748, and in 1752 the little company was formed into a Church, and built a chapel which needed to be enlarged in 1775. Mr. Hartley remained in its pastorate until his death in 1780; and to Haworth chapel came every Sunday the youthful John Fawcett, walking from Bradford to attend his ministry. Mr. Hartley was followed by Rev. Isaac Slee—formerly a clergyman of the Church of England—but his opportunity of service was brief. Of a delicate constitution, he died of consumption in 1784. Mr. Miles Oddy undertook the charge at Haworth in 1785, and upheld it for forty-five years. During his ministry the cause at Hall Green was established by a secession of members from West Lane. Mr. Oddy was succeeded by Rev. W. Winterbotham (1831-41), who was followed by Rev. A. Berry (1844-50). Under Mr. Berry's ministry the present chapel was erected. The Rev. J. Wood was minister (1853-62), after whom came Rev. John Aldis, who was the pastor from 1862 to 1868. Rev. F. Harper, the next in succession, remained for nineteen years. At that time the Church was blessed with many able and zealous workers, and the names of Greenwood, Horsfall, Haggas, and Sugden will ever be cherished at West Lane. The present pastor, Rev. D. Arthur, began his ministry at Haworth in 1889, and whilst the population is a decreasing one—the village having declined by a thousand during the last decade—the work is continued with earnestness and good promise, for the school was never larger, and a mission work is maintained at

* Haworth was one of John Moore's preaching places, for at Leeds, July 1693, the "House of Thomas Fether of Northis in Haworth," was registered for Worship. The applicants were "Thos. ffether, John Holmes, Robert Heaton, Nicholas Dickson, Michael Pighells, Chr. Holmes. George ffether, John Moore, Joseph Pighells."

Hawksbridge. In June, 1909, new school premises were opened and a remarkable reunion of old scholars was held. Special reference was made to the invaluable services rendered to the Church by the Greenwood family, and, among other speakers, Sir James Roberts, Bart., of Saltaire, testified to the debt he owed to the school and its superintendents, under whom he had received instruction in his boyhood. Haworth experiences the loss of many of its young people who move to the larger centres, but, notwithstanding this, it looks with hope to the future.

The Bingley Church dates from the year 1764, but claims an earlier Baptist interest by the fact

Bingley. that John Moore was a pupil of Wm. Hustler, of Bingley, in 1675. Moore became a Baptist under the preaching of Wm. Mitchel, and several local houses were registered for worship in their joint names, although no cause was permanently established. John Fawcett was connected with Bingley through his marriage with the daughter of John Skirrow. Mr. Skirrow was excluded from the Methodists for his Calvinism, and was baptised by Mr. Fawcett, with nine others, in the River Aire. He registered "Short's House," facing the Market Place, for preaching. This resulted in the formation of a Church, and the erection of a chapel in 1764. John Wesley, visiting Bingley in 1766, laments "with a heavy heart that so many Methodists here have gone over to the Anabaptists." For the first fifty years the Church appears to have had a succession of brief pastorates, the names of Butterworth, Dracup, Hartley, Harrison, A. Greenwood, and J. Greenwood following each other in rapid sequence. From 1811 to 1820 the pulpit was supplied by lay preachers, among whom William Garnett was a favourite. He is said to have taken a delight in announcing to his congregation that he had never "rubbed his back against the walls of an Academy." In 1820, Mr. Bottomley, of the Horton Academy, was ordained pastor. He was followed in 1829 by Mr. McKaig. Very painful trouble now arose which involved expensive litigation, "the details of which," says an Association record, "would

only serve to show how severely a Church may be scourged by the wickedness of an ungodly minister." The congregation was broken up, and the chapel closed for eight months. The Church was reformed in 1832, and again experienced a series of brief ministries until the settlement of Rev. J. C. Forth, in 1864, who remained until 1871. The Rev. Thomas Hanson, coming in 1872, was only spared for one brief year of service, but it was a year in which a fuller life and a sweeter spirit was remarkably manifested in the Church. He was succeeded by Rev. F. E. Cossey (1875-91). The new chapel was then in course of erection. Opened in 1876, its entire cost of £5000 was met within a few years, largely by Mr. Cossey's indefatigable efforts. In 1893, Rev. E. R. Lewis accepted the call of the Church, and, chiefly through his endeavours, the Dubb Mission Hall was erected; it still continues to sustain an excellent work in a needy district. Mr. Lewis was succeeded, in 1901, by Rev. J. H. Carter, and in 1906 the present pastor, Rev. James Jack, entered upon his ministry at Bingley.

The Church at Keighley has attained its centenary, having been founded in 1812. That the **Keighley.** Baptists were active in the town a century earlier than this is evident from a complaint of the vicar, in 1713, that "for want of knowledge some were seduced by yt vile sect of ye Quakers, and others by yt wicked crew of ye Anabaptists." * In 1809, Mr. John Town—residing at Keighley, but a member at Haworth—arranged for worship in the house of Mrs. Sunderland, and this resulted in the baptism of four persons. The worshippers removed to a large upper room in Mr. Town's house, and in 1812 a Church of about twelve members was constituted. Mr. and Mrs. Town received their dismissal from Haworth, and it is a matter of delightful interest to know that the present secretary of the Keighley Church is a great-grandson of its founder. A chapel was opened on March 29th, 1815, seating five hundred people and costing £990. Its first pastor

* These Baptists met at the house of "John Wright, Kighley," whose house was registered under the Toleration Act, at Wakefield, 1695. The application was signed by John Holmes, Michael Pighells, and Robt. Merall.

was Joseph Shaw, who removed to found the Slack Lane cause in 1819. He was followed by Thomas Blundell (1820-4), and Abraham Nichols (1825-36). Mr. Nichols assisted his slender income by conducting a private school. In 1835, trouble arose from a political cause in which the pastor seems to have played a manly part, for he says "he will honourably resign his situation. Right he cannot, principles he dare not, sacrifice." The present writer would willingly linger over the pages of the volume published as a souvenir of the Church's centenary, but space only permits him to refer the interested reader to that engaging volume. Successive pastors have been:—Daniel Crambrook (1839-42); Joseph Stuart (1844-7); Wm. Howieson (1848-9); James Harrison (1850-2), and J. P. Barnett (1853-7). In 1858, Rev. W. E. Goodman commenced a ministry extending to 1886. The Albert Street chapel was opened in 1865, the total expenditure being £3800. In 1869, Benjamin Brigg was sent as a student to Rawdon, and in 1875 an organ was installed. Mr. Goodman, who retired from his long pastorate with many expressions of esteem, was succeeded by Rev. James Alderson (1887-1903), "the influence of whose quiet and upbuilding labours abides." In 1904, Rev. A. H. Sutherland accepted the call of the Church, but removed to Hull in 1910, to be followed at Keighley by Rev. T. G. Hunter. The Church celebrated its centenary by the establishment of a "New School Fund," the cost of the anticipated undertaking being £3000.

Reference must be made to the mission station at Worth, which had its beginning in 1872, with a Sunday school of four scholars. In 1874, a school-chapel was opened, costing £1200, and this was enlarged in 1894 by the expenditure of a similar amount. In 1897, Rev. Wm. Hughes became co-pastor at Keighley with the oversight of Worth, where he continued his ministry until the beginning of the present year.

The Slack Lane Church, Keighley, is the fruition of work begun in a room at Bogthorn, in 1819, **Slack Lane.** by Mr. Joseph Shaw, pastor of the Keighley Church. Trouble had arisen between the Church and its pastor; the Keighley church-book

assigns five reasons for the dispute, of which two were that he had not fulfilled his promise to reside at Keighley, and that he had neglected to preach the doctrines of discriminating grace. On March 19th, 1820, Mr. Shaw, with five other members, formed the new cause, and in the following year the building now used as a school was erected. Mr. Shaw remained until 1829, and, in 1831, Mr. Jonas Rhodes, a young deacon of Keighley, was called to succeed him. His ministry was swiftly closed, his death occurring within a year of his acceptance of the charge. Mr. D. Evans, a Horton student, settled at Slack Lane in 1836. He met with much encouraging success, but, difficulties arising, he resigned in 1841. During Rev. Wm. Varley's pastorate (1845-51) the Church experienced much blessing; and a manse was built. In 1855, Rev. Job Lee entered upon a ministry of thirty years' duration, towards the close of which, on Good Friday, 1880, the present chapel was opened, having cost £3000. Mr. Lee was followed by Rev. Hugh Davies in 1888, who remained for seventeen years. Rev. J. W. Raper, the present pastor, settled at Slack Lane in 1907.

The cause at Hellifield appears to have had its rise in the year 1808, when a parcel of ground, **Hellifield.** in a certain field called Cross Close, was conveyed to trustees for the purpose of erecting a Particular Baptist chapel. An Association report for 1842 says that Hellifield had its origin, in part, from the Church at Cowling Hill. It is difficult to give a clear account of the history of the Hellifield Church owing to its changing relationship to the Church at Long Preston. Sometimes the two Churches appear on the records as Long Preston-cum-Hellifield, at other times they are entered separately, and in some years Hellifield is not included in the returns. In 1816, Mr. Hardacre was ordained pastor of Long Preston, at Hellifield, but the Churches afterwards separated. In 1842, Hellifield numbered twelve members. The Rev. W. Giddings became pastor at Long Preston, in 1871, and in 1882 Hellifield united itself with its sister Church under his pastorate. An Association Report for that year

says :—" Hellifield, for years past, has owed its existence as a Church to the self-denial of one brother, who has walked from Airton, four miles away, in order to keep open the house of prayer and maintain the worship of God. He was taken ill at the recognition service of Mr. Giddings, and died after a few days' suffering, leaving an example of faithfulness to great principles rarely seen. The future prosperity of the Church will always be identified with the name of Hargraves of Airton."

Mr. Giddings died in 1887. He was greatly beloved by his people :—" An earnest preacher and a devoted pastor, his sincere piety and gentle spirit were manifest in every action. For years to come his influence will be felt in the homes of Long Preston and Hellifield, and his name will be a household word in the dales of Craven." In 1889, Rev. J. Davis settled as pastor, but terminated his engagement in 1892, to be followed by Rev. J. Russell, who remained for a very brief period. Rev. Geo. Armitt undertook the work in 1897; under him the Churches were again united. Mr. Armitt removed in 1904. The Church is at present supplied by lay brethren.

The Long Preston Church, the most westerly of our Yorkshire Churches, built its chapel in **Long Preston.** 1833, but an old report of the Association states that Baptist preaching was first undertaken in the village about the year 1782, in the house of Wm. Holgate :—" This excellent man sustained at his own expense Mr. Ross, who lived and preached in his house." * The ministers who succeeded Mr. Ross were Samuel Hall and Thomas Newhouse. After them came Samuel Hardacre, one of its own members, who had joined the Church about the year 1797. He was ordained pastor at Hellifield in 1816, but continued in his trade as a tailor, and pursued his ministry until 1852. His successors were Robert Hogg (1853-5) and Alfred Spencer (1856-63).

Mr. Ross had been pastor of the disbanded Church at Tosside, Bolland. He is mentioned in the Gildersome Church-book :—" John Ross, who was received by transfer from the Baptist Church at Bradford, was called forth and sent out by us to preach the everlasting Gospel in Craven."

Mr. Spencer lived in the small chapel-house and kept a day-school. After pastorates by Revs. J. Spooner, W. Giddings, and J. Davies, Mr. Wildgoose of Manchester supplied the pulpit for twelve months, and in an Association report we read "The baptistry which has not been opened *since the erection of the Chapel*, was opened on May 10th, 1897." Rev. G. Armitt undertook the charge in 1898, and since his removal in 1904, the Church has remained pastorless. It enjoys a small endowment bequeathed by a member of the Tattersall family, who had at the beginning generously contributed to the erection of the chapel.

The Earby-in-Craven Church was founded on May 31st, 1819. It numbered twenty-six members, **Earby-in-Craven.** the majority having been members previously at Barnoldswick, or Cowling Hill. Barnoldswick was strongly opposed to the separation, for in its letters of dismissal we read—"It gives us great pain that in opposition to all our advice, and in plain violation of our solemn covenant, you have forcibly left us as a Church. Yet we exercise forbearance, and leave you to the disposal of Him who does all things well." Mr. William Wilkinson, one of their number, was chosen pastor at a salary of £10 per annum; this very moderate provision he supplemented by handloom weaving and keeping a day school. The necessity of chapel building being urgent, their pastor went on a begging pilgrimage to London, soliciting help from the Churches in the towns through which he passed. He reached Bloomsbury chapel on a Sunday morning; Dr. Brock prevailed on him to preach, after which the congregation contributed a handsome collection. He returned to Yorkshire with a hundred pounds, and the new chapel was opened on Good Friday, 1821. The pastor continued with his little flock for twenty-seven years, until his death in 1846. After him, Mr. Richard Heaton, a local preacher of Settle, was ordained to the office in 1849, but his ministry was closed by death in 1853. The following year, Mr. J. M. Ryland of Horton College was elected pastor, and in 1858 the site for a larger chapel was presented by Mr. Thomas Riley. The

building was opened for worship on March 29th, 1861. During Mr. Ryland's ministry the Church was blessed by receiving into its fellowship some who afterwards became its best workers and supporters. The pastor's health giving way, his resignation was followed by several brief and uneventful pastorates, after which the Church remained without a minister for twelve years. During this period several enterprises had been accomplished, and, in 1893, Rev. W. Wynn accepted the Church's invitation. He remained until 1904, during which time a manse was built at a cost of £1000, and considerable improvements made in the chapel premises. Many were added to the membership but dissensions afterwards arose which led to serious secessions. Mr. Wynn was succeeded by Rev. R. Tallontire (1905-9); the present pastor, Rev. C. W. Townsend, succeeded him in 1910.

The Cullingworth Church was formed in 1836, and arose out of the work inaugurated by Rev. M. **Cullingworth.** Saunders, of Hall Green, and Rev. D. Taylor, of Bingley. They rented a room called "The Lodge", and established a Sunday school. On June 15th, 1836, seven persons were baptised in the stream at Cownouse Bridge, and a Church of twenty-two members was constituted. Mr. Joseph Harvey, of Horton College, was, in the following autumn, ordained to the pastorate, and the chapel, costing £900, was built in 1837. That the enterprise was attended with difficulty is evident from the church-book:—"We have builded our walls in troublous times, but Ebenezer!" Mr. Harvey's stay was brief, and he has had six successors, but at present the pulpit is supplied by students and lay preachers. Cullingworth has a stationary population, the massing of the textile industry in the large centres giving the village but little opportunity of growth. In 1870 a wave of prosperity enabled the Church to enlarge its premises, and similarly, in 1898, new schools were built. This latter enterprise was inspired by the generous gift of £300 by Mr. John Clayton. Mr. E. Wadsworth was also a helpful benefactor of the Church,

bequeathing at his death £1000 for the upkeep of the freehold. In 1909 the chapel was entirely renovated at an outlay of £1300. The cause at Cullingworth is carried on by a small, but zealous and united people, who are at present bending their energies to the extinction of a debt of £350 incurred by the recent renovations.

The Horkinstone cause, lying on the edge of the moors above Haworth, dates from 1836. In that **Horkinstone.** year some friends at the Hall Green chapel, Haworth, met to discuss the possibility of undertaking a school and occasional preaching at Horkinstone. The wisdom of the step was at once evident by the enrolling of 124 scholars and fifty teachers on the day the new work was inaugurated. A building was provided in the following year, but the Church was not formed until October 15th, 1849. Until the year 1863 the baptisms took place in a neighbouring mill dam. In that year, also, a day school was built and a school maintained until it passed over to the School Board in 1879, to be eventually purchased by the West Riding Council, in 1910. The Church has had no pastor, being supplied by lay preachers; but it has had faithful workers not a few. Among these Mr. Abel Kershaw has been connected with the school as scholar, teacher, and superintendent for nearly seventy years, and for fifty years has served as Secretary and Treasurer of the cause.

The Cononley Church has a history of some sixty years, at the beginning of which we find a **Cononley.** company of Baptists meeting in a room for worship, and originating a Sunday school. From the room they proceeded to the Oddfellows' Hall. As some members of the Sutton Church resided at Cononley, the time was at length considered opportune for assuming a separate responsibility, and on Christmas Eve, 1861, a Church was constituted by Rev. W. E. Archer, of Sutton. It was not until 1874 that the way was made plain for the Church to build. A site having been procured, a committee of members of Sutton and Cononley prepared a bazaar which

realised £200. The chapel was opened on Good Friday, 1877. A debt of £470 remained, to be for some years a sore burden to so small a community, but this was at last removed by the generous assistance of Sutton. The Church has throughout its history been supplied by lay preachers.

The Salterforth cause originated in Sunday school work, in connection with which a building was erected in 1851. Five members were dismissed to form the new Church, in October, 1861, from Barnoldswick. Amongst its first members was Richard Petty, the head of a well-known family, whose brother John afterwards became the President of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, and Principal of one of their Colleges. In 1862, Rev. Isaac Brown became its first pastor, with a salary of £35 and the privilege of conducting a private business of his own. He was blessed with additions to the Church, but resigned in 1867. The premises were extended in 1873, at a cost of £200. In 1897 Mr. A. T. Greenwood, now pastor of the Central Church, Hull, undertook the work at Salterforth, leaving two years later to enter the Pastor's College. For some time Rev. W. E. Goodman, formerly of Keighley, served the Church in an honorary capacity. Rev. E. Thorpe entered on the pastorate in 1892, and in 1894 the new chapel was opened—a commodious village sanctuary seating 350 worshippers. In this enterprise the Church was assisted by the Loan Fund, and by a grant of £400 from the Twentieth Century Fund. The present pastor, Rev. John Whitaker, commenced his ministry in 1910, and it is interesting to read that as a child he was one of the earliest scholars of its school.

The Church at Skipton is the outcome of pioneer work undertaken by Samuel Jones and Robert Skipton. Hogg, who, in 1848, travelled as evangelists of our faith through Airedale. At Skipton they preached in the market place, where their Baptist statements were opposed by the Wesleyan minister

then stationed in the town. This opposition culminated in a public debate which roused no little interest, a thousand copies reporting the discussion being sold. In this atmosphere of theological contention the Church was born, for services were immediately held in private houses, and in 1849 a room was opened for services. On Christmas Day of that year a public baptism took place in the river Aire. The Church was constituted on March 26th, 1850, with the small roll of eleven members. The chapel was built in 1861, at an expenditure of £1300, and in 1864, Rev. Francis Britcliffe became its first pastor. He continued in his office until his death in 1878, and was succeeded, in the same year, by Rev. W. Judge, whose resignation in December, 1911, was necessitated by ill-health. New school premises were erected in 1899, the responsibility of £1000 being defrayed in six years.

The Belmont Church, Skipton, is the result of a withdrawal of about forty members from the
Belmont. mother Church. These, at first, met for worship in each other's houses, after which they held services in the Town Hall for more than a year. The late Rev. Charles Williams, of Accrington, desiring to retain them to the denomination, formed them into a Church in 1890. They erected an iron chapel for their temporary needs, but have not been able to replace it by a more substantial building. The Church was received into the Association in 1891, and Rev. J. S. Griffiths became pastor in 1893. In 1894, a successful bazaar released the Church from its building debt. Following Mr. Griffiths, the pastorate has been held by Revs. G. Edwards, A. G. Yeats, and C. S. Douglas. The pulpit is at present supplied by students and lay preachers, and it is of interest to record that three scholars of its school have entered the ministry. To those who are familiar with the town of Skipton it seems desirable that we should be represented there by one strong, united Church. The possibility of such a future union is cherished, I believe, by some members of both the present Churches.

The Ilkley Church is a child of the Yorkshire Association, by whom it has been most liberally supported since its inauguration in February, 1899. Until that year the Baptists had no cause in Wharfedale. After a few months of casual ministrations, the Rev. W. H. Ibberson took the oversight of the Church, which was then worshipping in an iron chapel belonging to the Ilkley College. The need of a permanent structure soon became pressing, and was fervently urged by Mr. Ibberson. As a result the sum of £1000 was received for the site, together with a considerable sum towards the new building. The total cost of the scheme was £4000; the opening sermons were preached in the new chapel in February, 1903. Mr. Ibberson having resigned in January, 1904, the Rev. A. Nightingale was appointed pastor in July of the same year. After a successful course of five years he removed to Todmorden, and, after a period of waiting, the Rev. Robert Wood, of Hull, accepted the call of the Church in July, 1910.





HORKINSTONE



HELLIFIELD

Craven District



LONG PRESTON



EARBY



HAWORTH



CRANSWICK



KILHAM



DRIFFIELD



MALTON



NEWBALD

**THE CHURCHES OF THE EAST AND
NORTH RIDINGS DISTRICT.**

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.

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Although the City of Hull returned a population of 278,024 at the last census, and the Baptists have held an interest there for more than a century and a half, we have only three Churches within the city limits. These, happily, are housed in new premises, and as they occupy commanding situations we may confidently anticipate their future progress and an enlargement of denominational life.

The Boulevard Church must be regarded as representing the earliest Baptist effort, although the **Boulevard.** Baptist Historical Society has evidence that, about the year 1700, a member of the Motherby family of Hambleton spent a large sum in building a Baptist chapel in Hull.*

The Boulevard Church was founded May 15th, 1736, by "a handful of the dust of Zion, residing in and about Kingston-upon-Hull." John Gibson was called to be pastor, but before his ordination met death by drowning when voyaging to London. The records of the Church's first century are extremely scanty, occupying only nine pages of its minute book. Removing to Salthouse Lane in 1757, it worshipped there until 1866, when it migrated to South Street. Amongst its ministers, the names of John Beatson

* The only reference to this family that I know is in the Bridlington church-book. About the year 1725, George Motherby applied for his dismissal from the Isle of Axholme Church, to Bridlington. The Bridlington Church wrote a letter of strong reproof to Axholme. "You can't but remember, some of you at least, yt George Motherby, who lives now at Hull, has signified his desire some months if not some years ago to have a letter of recommendation and dismissal from you to ye Church of Christ, in ye practiss of believer's baptism meeting at Bridlington: but he has receiv'd no answer from you in all this time, &c."

(1771-94); W. Arborn (1811-18); J. McPherson (1820-37), and D. M. Thomson (1837-60) stand conspicuous. In 1795, a secession of members formed the George Street Church, and again, in 1885, a similar withdrawal resulted in the cause of Trafalgar Street. At the close of last century another removal was recognised to be imperative, the neighbourhood having become absorbed into the business part of the city. With the assistance of the Twentieth Century Fund, and the County Association, this was effected; and on May 21st, 1903, the fine suite of buildings on the Boulevard was opened. The Rev. Robert Wood undertook the charge of the Church in its new home, remaining until 1910, when he was succeeded by Rev. A. H. Sutherland.

The Central Church has already been mentioned under the name of George Street. The Rev. W. **Central.** Pendered having, in 1794, preached for six months at Salthouse Lane, was not elected to the pastorate. Some, believing the occasion to be opportune for a second cause in Hull, requested him to undertake such a work. This was without any breach of unity. The new Church at first met in a room over the Corn Exchange, and opened the George Street chapel on May 18th, 1796. During Mr. Pendered's ministry William Ward—afterwards one of the great trio of missionary pioneers in India—was baptised.* The Church has had a succession of fifteen pastors, among whom are the memorable names of John Pulsford (1843-5) and John O'Dell (1858-63), (1876-95). Mr. O'Dell's ministry is still fragrant, for its saintliness and devotion, in the memories of many living members. In continuing the Church's history the scene now shifts to Beverley Road. In 1885, a new cause, known as the Hull Baptist Tabernacle, was established, with Rev. Frank Russell as pastor. In 1890, a corner site in Trafalgar Street and Beverley Road was purchased, and a school-chapel opened, March 22nd, 1892.

* The interest of the Associated Churches in the cause of Foreign Missions is seen in the fact that when the Association met at Hebden Bridge, in 1794, the same year in which Carey and Thomas had landed in India, letters from these brethren were read to the assembled delegates.

Proposals for union with George Street were under consideration in 1898, but did not become effective until July, 1902, when the diaconates of the two Churches were appointed a committee of management for the united Church which numbered 370 members. The present writer well remembers preaching the closing sermons at George Street on November 8th, 1903. In the following year the Rev. J. E. Shephard resigned the pastorate of George Street, after nine years ministry which had been interrupted by a serious illness, and in December of that year the foundation stones of the Central Church were laid, the building being opened for worship on February 22nd, 1906. Its total cost was £9000. In 1905, Rev. R. O. Johns accepted the pastorate, removing in 1909 to Luton, to be succeeded by Rev. A. T. Greenwood.

The East Park Church, Hull, was founded by the County Association. With the help of the Twentieth Century Fund, an excellent site was procured in a rapidly developing district on the Holderness Road. A temporary iron building was placed upon it, and Rev. A. C. Carter began his ministry with its opening in February, 1909. The Courtney Street Mission, which had existed for ten years, was transferred to the Association, who united it to East Park; its workers—the great majority of whom came from the Central Church—formed the nucleus of the new cause. The congregation has steadily increased and the Sunday school has outgrown its accommodation. The Courtney Street Mission is still maintained, and East Park has raised more than £100 for the renovation of the Mission premises. East Park has great promise for the future, its fast approaching problem, which is already under consideration, being the necessity of a permanent building.

In the village of Bridlington, and almost under the shadow of its Priory, there was founded, **Bridlington.** on September 16th, 1698, the second most ancient of our county causes. The Bridlington Baptists say they were "born in a gale," but

the story of the gale has already been written for us by Principal Blomfield. The Bridlington church-book, which commences with the founding of the Church, is our most interesting county record. It reflects so faithfully the lights and shadows of the Church life of the period, that it is to be hoped the entire record of its first century, from 1698 to the retirement of Joseph Gawkrodger from the pastorate, in 1794, will at some time be published. Robert Prudom, its first pastor, dying in 1708, James Hepburn preached during four years "with a view." On February 22nd, 1713—"A meeting was held on the present necessity of ye church, ye members whrof being desired to tarry after sermon. It was enquired: I. Query. Whether or no Br. James Hepburn have approved himself qualified, after above four years tryall, to take the pastoral charge, yea or no. It was agreed in the negative he is not qualified." From this point the name of James Hepburn, who was one of the original members of the Church, disappears from the history; perhaps he retired from the pursuit of a ministry of which the probation was so protracted and its success so precarious. Geo. Braithwaite, A.M.,* who was pastor from 1713 to 1734, was, in 1727, invited to the pastorate of Broadmead, Bristol, but, according to the Broadmead Records, replied "that he durst not leave the place where he is, under present circumstances." The pastors during the 18th century were Robert Prudom (1698-1708); Geo. Braithwaite, A.M. (1713-34); Wm. Wells (1735-7); Richard Machin (1737-43); John Mitchell (1746-8); John Oulton (1750-4); Thos. Wilbraham—blind, but an eloquent preacher—supplied the pulpit (1754-61); Joseph Gawkrodger (1767-94). Robert Harness was ordained to the pastorate in 1796, remaining here fifty years. The town owes much to this devoted man of God who went in and out among the people for more than half a century. He came from the Church at Hull, and was twenty-three years of age when he began his ministry. There are still some remaining who remember the venerable pastor and heard him preach. He was held in great esteem in the

* Baptised by David Crosley, in London, 1705.

town, and was universally regarded as a deeply religious man of God. He passed away in April, 1849, and is buried in the chapel yard in a vault which had been presented to him by the Trustees on the death of Mrs. Harness, in 1841. He was followed by Edward Trickett (1846-8); G. H. Orchard (1848-52); J. W. Morgan (1852-66); T. Pottinger (two years); John Baines (1870-2); John Bentley (1873-9). The old Bayle Gate chapel was at last vacated, after being the home of the Church for more than a century and a half. The present building was opened in September, 1874, having cost £3200. Since then the pastorate has been held by G. Barrans (1879-83); W. J. Hunter (1884-6); W. Walsh (ten months); W. T. Whitley, M.A. (1888-91); John Scilley (1892-7). The Rev. H. F. Griffin accepted the call of the Church in 1897, and speedily undertook the erection of new school buildings, which were completed in 1899. After an earnest and successful ministry, ill-health compelled his resignation in 1905, and in 1908 he was called to his rest. Rev. W. Slater was appointed to the charge in 1906, where he continues a fruitful ministry. It may be said of this ancient Church—after a career of more than two centuries—that her eye is not dim nor her natural force abated.

Among the rural surroundings of the East Riding we find the Bishop Burton Church, dating **Bishop Burton.** from the year 1764. It then numbered fifteen members, and had for pastor Richard Hopper, a native of the village, afterwards minister at Nottingham. In 1770 its numbers had increased to thirty, and, the house in which they worshipped being dilapidated, they built themselves a chapel. In the same year David Kinghorn, the father of Joseph Kinghorn, was invited “to take pastoral charge over us, for to warn us of our enemies and shew us our refuge. We do also agree for your present comfort to raise £26 per annum; and to provide a house, and to make intercession for the fund.” A very lively description of David Kinghorn is written in the life of his son:—“He was very tall, and sturdily upright. His hat, with a round and very shallow crown, and broad,

upturned verge, rested on an ample, white, full-bottomed wig. His upper dress was of dark blue; the coat of great length and amplitude, with copious sleeves and wide flapped pockets. His nether dress was of black velvet, buckled at the knees; with dark grey stockings, terminated by square-toed, substantial shoes, and large square buckles." The dress of this rural pastor was not lacking in dignity, but could scarcely be supported on ten shillings a week. Mr. Kinghorn ministered here for twenty-nine years. He was succeeded by Mordaunt Cracherode,* who gave place to Abraham Berry (1813-43). After him follow several brief pastorates. During the ministry of Josiah Palmer the chapel at Newbald was built. The maintenance of these village causes is by no means easy, but the names that have appeared on this roll of membership indicate the valuable service which such a community can render to the Denomination. From Bishop Burton came Joseph Kinghorn, Thomas Sample—afterwards of Beverley, and Robert Gray, who for many years has held an honoured place in the Baptist ministry of Birmingham. The present pastor, Rev. S. Skingle, settled in 1896, and during his ministry a new school-room has been built.

The Ebenezer Church, Scarborough, was established in 1771. In this fashionable seaside resort we
Ebenezer, are represented by three Churches, of which
Scarborough. "Ebenezer" is the oldest. Its founder, Wm. Hague, was born at Malton, in 1736, coming to Scarborough when he was twenty years of age. Here he indentured himself as a sailor for three years, during which period his thoughts turned to spiritual concerns. Leaving the sea he made great efforts to improve his mind, learning to read and write. In 1776, he, with five other Methodists who had embraced Calvinistic doctrines, became acquainted with members of the Bridlington Church. Hague, with four of his friends was baptised. They now engaged

* Cracherode was subsequently minister at Sutton-in-the-Elms. After preaching on a Sunday afternoon at an outlying village, he was found dead on the road side, his age being forty-nine.



EAST PARK HULL



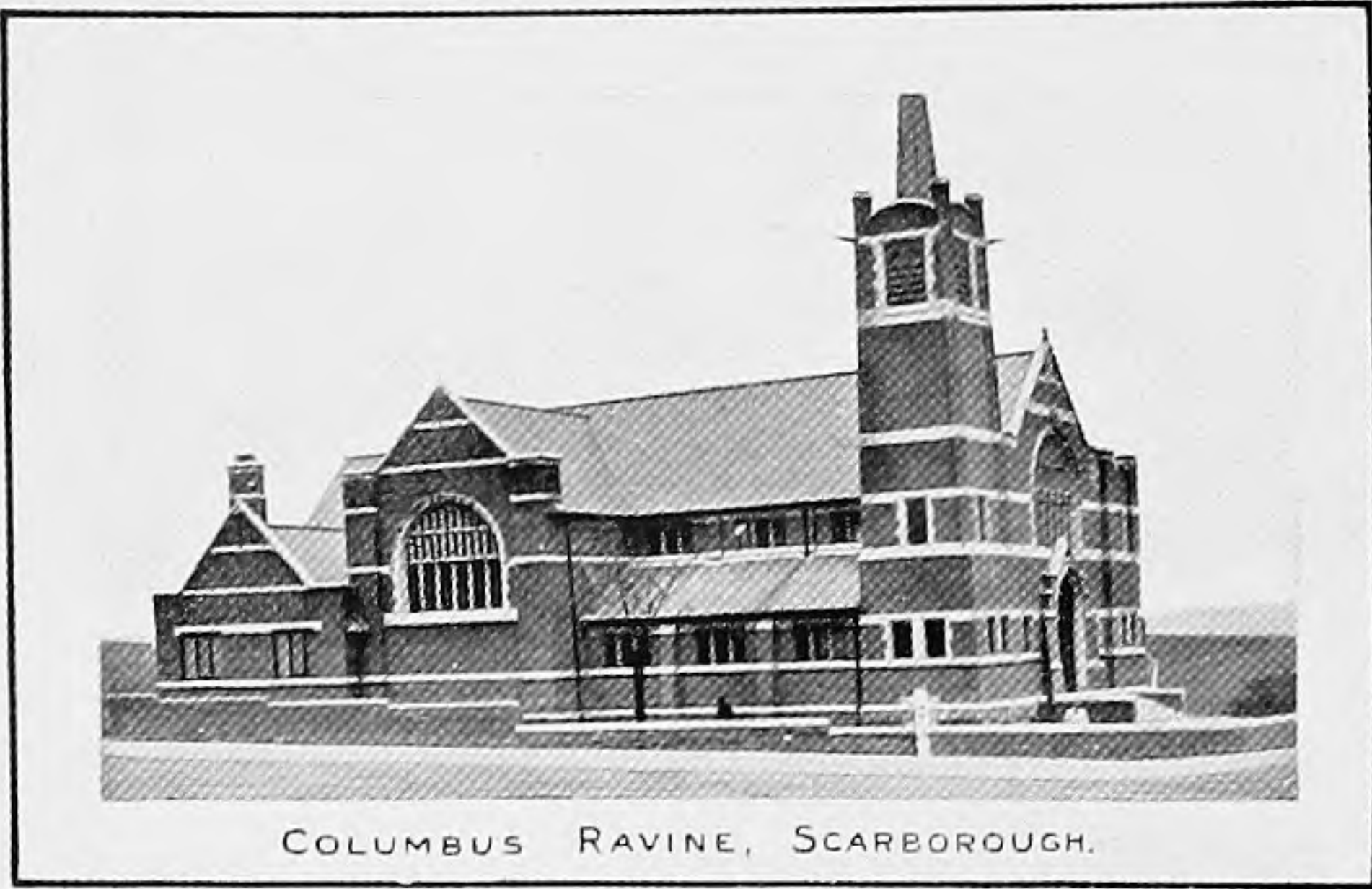
CENTRAL HULL



BRIDLINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH



BOULEVARD HULL



COLUMBUS RAVINE, SCARBOROUGH.



BEVERLEY.



EBENEZER, SCARBOROUGH.



BISHOP BURTON.



ALBEMARLE, SCARBOROUGH.

a large upper room near the Sands, and Hague, being pressed to preach, consented. Converts being gained, the little band applied to Bridlington for permission to found a cause at Scarborough. This was granted on January 20th, 1771, and Hague was ordained to its ministry. The Ebenezer Chapel was opened in April, 1777. It was thrice enlarged—(1790-1801-1809)—until it was capable of holding 500 people. Wm. Hague continued in his pastorate for forty-eight years, and there is a record of his preaching when eighty-five years old. He died in 1831, at the great age of ninety-four. The next two ministries were brief, John Sykes dying at the early age of thirty-one, and his successor, Joseph Foster, at twenty-four. In 1826, the Rev. Benjamin Evans was ordained pastor, and on the following day, November 5th, the foundation stones of the present chapel were laid. Opened on August 12th, 1827, it seated 900 people and had cost £2600. Under Dr. Evans the Church reached the zenith of its prosperity. Its pastor was widely known, and his influence in the town was great. He retired in 1862, his closing years having been troubled by a division in the Church on the subject of "open communion," resulting in the movement which established the second Church. After Dr. Evans, the Revs. R. H. Bayley, A. Rollason, R. Mesquitta, J. P. Smith, and G. B. Combs ministered at Ebenezer. Owing to the westward trend of the population, extensive alterations were recently carried out, in an attempt to adapt the premises to the needs of the changing neighbourhood. The present pastor, Rev. G. B. Linton, settled in 1909.

The Albemarle Church, Scarborough, was founded in 1863, through circumstances already related.

Albemarle. Dr. Acworth was among the forty-one persons who, on March 6th, 1864, separated themselves for worship, on which day they observed the Lord's Supper on the basis of an open communion. The Rev. James Lewitt accepted the pastorate, and under his leadership the Albemarle Church was built, which was opened on July 23rd, 1867. The work being followed with the divine blessing, the members soon found the

necessity of building school premises and a caretaker's cottage, a task accomplished in 1868. At the close of Mr. Lewitt's labours (1875), the Church had grown in membership from forty-seven to one hundred and eighty-three. There followed him the Revs. W. H. Tetley, W. T. Adey, and W. J. Parker. In 1892, Rev. Robert Wood began a ministry which continued eleven years, during which the membership was increased to 343. New institutions were established, the schools enlarged and pew rents abolished. During the present pastorate of Rev. J. N. Britton the Church has continued to grow and expand.

The Columbus Ravine Church is an evidence of Albemarle's activity. The Victoria Park estate being under building development, a site was secured in the heart of the new district, and, in 1904, the purchase money was paid. During the next two years Albemarle set her own house in order, by paying off her school debt and thoroughly renovating her own premises. In 1907, the £1000 for the newly purchased site was in hand and a building scheme inaugurated. The foundation stones were laid on May 4th, 1910, and the building opened on May 3rd, 1911. It seated 600 worshippers; the cost was £2600, of which sum a debt of only £500 remained. A call for volunteers to undertake the new work resulted in the setting apart of forty-five members from Albemarle for this purpose, and from this company deacons were duly chosen. The Church remains linked with Albemarle, the funds, though kept in separate accounts, being the concern of both Churches. Columbus Ravine is a striking testimony to the possibilities which lie within reach of a Church whose members are eager to extend the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The Driffield Church was founded in April, 1786, when ten persons were baptised in the mill stream at Poundsworth, by Joseph Gawkerodger, of Bridlington. They with others were united on that day in Church fellowship. These were the outcome of work begun a year before by a Mr. Wrightson,

a member of Salthouse Lane, Hull. He became pastor of the newly gathered flock, and in 1788 a chapel was opened. Their pastor remained until 1797, after which the Church appears to have been in an unsettled state. Reorganised in 1814, the Rev. James Normanton commenced a ministry which extended to 1846. A swift succession of seven pastors during the next fourteen years suggests that Driffield was passing through contentious experiences. In 1861, Rev. W. T. Monk was called to its oversight, and the next year they completed their present chapel. In 1863, Rev. A. Bowden became minister, and was followed by Rev. J. Baxandall. In 1873, Rev. Charles Welton undertook the work, remaining until 1889. During these years the mission cause at Cranswick was revived. Here, for more than fifty years, Mr. Coupland, a layman of Cherry Burton, had preached every alternate Sabbath until his death in 1875. At Driffield the school was enlarged and a minister's house built. Subsequent pastors have been Revs. I. Watson, F. D. Tranter, T. Burros, and D. Chinnery. Driffield and Cranswick are at present under the faithful care of Mr. P. D. McGowan.

The Kilham Church is one of Bridlington's many children. It was founded in 1821, having a membership numbering ten, and John Rouse as pastor. The meeting-house was erected in 1819, and had cost £450. He remained for three years, and was followed by Rev. D. Taylor for a similar period. Rev. J. Hithersay became pastor in 1829, and gave place to Rev. W. Hardwick, in 1842. Rev. Benjamin Shakespeare settled at Kilham in 1854, removing to Malton in 1857. At Kilham he married the daughter of Rev. John Hithersay. Mr. Harrison Oxley was invited to the pastorate in the following year, remaining until his sudden death in 1888. Since this period the Church has gradually declined, the present membership numbering only six. In 1908, Rev. W. Slater, of Bridlington, undertook to tend the feeble cause, and a much-needed renovation of the premises has been successfully undertaken.

The Malton Church is the result of the labour of the Itinerant Society. This Society had been founded at Bridlington, in 1817, and when meeting at Driffield, in 1821, Malton was discussed as a desirable preaching place. Work being straightway begun, six persons were baptised in the river Derwent before the year had closed. A Church was formed in 1822, and "Salem" was built in the following year. A series of brief pastorates was followed by the settlement of Rev. David Boyce, in 1840, when a remarkable revival was experienced under a mission conducted by Thomas Pulsford, an evangelist of the Itinerant Society. Thomas Pulsford—father of John Pulsford, our Baptist mystic—seems to have passed like a flame of Pentecostal fire through the Churches. A hundred persons joined the Church at Malton, and it was necessary to add a gallery to the chapel. In 1857, Rev. Benjamin Shakespeare entered on the pastorate, and in the same year the Church sent Matthew Hudson to Horton College. Mr. Hudson's first charge was at Portland Chapel, Southampton, and it is of interest to learn that one of his daughters is the wife of Mr. Herbert Marnham, Treasurer of the Baptist Union. Mr. Spurgeon preached at Malton in 1860, the railway warehouse being crowded with nearly 3000 people. Mr. Shakespeare remained until 1863; his son, Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, M.A., was born at Malton during the first year of his father's ministry there. Space forbids our following the Church's history through the remaining years, except to add that the Church has had ten pastors since 1863, and that during the pastorate of Rev. Joseph Rigby (1879-93) a new school was erected and the chapel renovated. The Rev. P. Williams is the present pastor.

The Beverley Church came into being on October 15th, 1833, and consisted of some thirty members who had been accustomed to assemble in a room in Toll Gavel. They elected Robt. Johnson, of Greenock, as pastor, and, with commendable zeal, opened the Well Lane chapel during the next year.

Dr. Thomas Sandwith, an Episcopalian, gave the site. Mr. Johnson continued a fruitful ministry until 1851, over 300 members having been received into the Church. His successor, Rev. G. Gregson, after two years of service proceeded to the Indian Mission field. He was succeeded by Rev. Carey Upton, whose pastorate of thirty-four years has left memories still ardently cherished. He guided the Church into many open doors of service, establishing preaching stations at several of the neighbouring villages. He was a devoted supporter of the County Association, serving as one of its Secretaries for seven years, and being elected to its Presidency in 1872. During his ministry at Beverley, John Hulme was commended to Rawdon College for the work of the ministry, and since then has maintained a ministry at Stratford Road, Birmingham, for more than thirty years. Rev. C. B. Williams—a son of Rev. Charles Williams, of Accrington—filled the place left vacant by Mr. Upton's death, and during his period of office the Temperance Hall was purchased for Sunday School purposes. Mr. Williams, having resigned in 1895, was followed by Revs. Thos. Gardiner (1896-1900) and A. Woodward (1901-4). The town authorities, desiring to purchase the chapel property for street improvement purposes, entered into negotiations which resulted in the payment of £1000, and the provision of a site for a new chapel and schools. The buildings were opened on July 7th, 1910, and on the following Sunday, the Mayor and Corporation attended the service in state. The cost of the chapel and the "Upton Memorial Schools" was £4150, of which only £600 remains to be defrayed. Beverley has been greatly blessed in its membership. Alderman Thomas Sample sustained many of its offices and received many honours in the county, passing away, in 1904, after fifty years fellowship with the Church. His sister, who survived him four years, left the Church a legacy of £1000. Mr. Wm. Arnott, who died in 1910, had long served the Church with great devotion, and in the same year died Mr. W. H. Elwell, Mayor, and the only Baptist who has been elected to the chief magistracy of the ancient borough.

The present pastor, Rev. W. H. Davies, is in his eighth year of ministry at Beverley.

The North Newbald Chapel was built in 1867, the cause having been undertaken as a mission station attached to Bishop Burton. The pulpit was for some years supplied from Beverley and the neighbourhood. At that time the district possessed a strong force of lay preachers, for, from Beverley, came Alderman Sample and Alderman Stewart, and Messrs. W. Arnott and J. W. Clark; whilst from Bishop Burton came Robert Gray and John Hulme, and Josiah Palmer, their pastor. The chapel was closed for some years owing to serious dissensions, but, in 1899, a Church consisting of ten members was formed, and the Rev. U. G. Watkins was invited to its honorary pastorate. He still continues this helpful ministry with the assistance of the lay preachers.



**THE CHURCHES OF THE HALIFAX AND
HEBDEN BRIDGE DISTRICT.**

BY

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In this District, which has its two centres in the busy town of Halifax and the romantic valley of Hebden, we have nineteen Churches. The District has a stirring Nonconformist history, for Henry Root—lecturer at the Halifax Parish Church—established an Independent cause at Sowerby, in 1645. Here he preached until the dark days of the Act of Uniformity, after which he suffered great severities during three imprisonments at York Castle.* In addition to this pioneer of spiritual liberty, we have Oliver Heywood ministering at Coley, and David Crosley and William Mitchel both from Heptonstall Slack. At a more recent period, Dan Taylor is born at Northowram, and John Fawcett is preaching and writing at Wainsgate and Hebden Bridge. Of our nineteen Churches, seven date their beginning from the eighteenth century. We shall best understand their history and activities by observing their chronological order, and narrating their story under this arrangement.

The Church in the district which—according to our Association Year Book—boasts the greatest **Roomfield,** claim to long descent, is the **Roomfield Todmorden.** Church, Todmorden. Roomfield considers herself to be the direct descendant of the ancient cause at Rodhill End, which was disbanded in 1783.

* The Separatists of Halifax were evidently a bold people, for, in 1675, Thomas Wakefield, of Halifax, was indicted for not attending church, and for calling the constable "a fforsworne rogue, and saying the King's precept was a ffratching paper."

The surviving trustee sold the chapel, in 1807, for £65, the proceeds being given to the new Millwood chapel, which afterwards became the cause at Roomfield. In 1807, some Baptists, previously connected with Rodhill End, were expelled from a Paedo-Baptist Church which they had joined, on account of their inconvenient propagation of Baptist principles. These at first gathered together in the disused meeting-house at Rodhill End, where they made a brief sojourn before building the chapel at Millwood in 1808. Mr. John Sutcliffe, the surviving trustee aforementioned, became their first pastor. He was a "stuff maker", and a man of considerable means and influence, but he was only spared to the Church for six years. He was succeeded by Mr. John Driver (1816-29), who supplemented his small salary by weaving. Mr. Driver's ministry was followed by five pastorates of so brief a nature that they only covered twelve years. A long pastorless interval followed before Rev. T. Dyall accepted the call in 1868, which he resigned in 1870. The Church was now to enter on a new experience, for, in 1871, the Rev. Henry Briggs began a ministry destined to continue for thirty-seven years. With the advent of Mr. Briggs a new era of industry began. In 1877, the Church removed to its new home at Roomfield. Here a spacious chapel had been built, with a commodious school, and, in 1883, a manse and caretaker's house were added. Roomfield has been enriched by the helpfulness of many friends. In a message of thanks which the Church sent to the Hope Church, Hebden Bridge, in 1881, it acknowledged with gratitude that "from first to last we have received £1000 from your congregation." During the years of Mr. Briggs' ministry, Roomfield has raised £10,000 for building and property purposes. In 1908, their pastor resigned his charge with many tokens of his people's love and sorrow, and was succeeded in the following year by Rev. A. Nightingale.

The Wainsgate Church will be for ever associated with the name of Dr. John Fawcett. Its rise, **Wainsgate.** in 1750, and the history of its first fifty years, have been already related in a previous chapter. When the little company built their

first modest meeting-house on the Wainsgate farm, far up the moor-side, they found they had not raised the walls high enough. This defect was remedied by the economical, but scarcely satisfactory, method of digging out the inside of the building, which they lowered by eighteen inches. In this chapel they remained until the necessities of space compelled them to erect a new building, in 1815. In the year 1800, Isaac Normington became the eighth pastor of the Church, and remained for ten years. He was immediately followed by Rev. Mark Holroyd, who exercised a ministry of twenty-five years, at the close of which he proceeded to the United States. The Church now experienced a succession of four brief pastorates, namely:—those of Joseph Garside (1837-9); Jonas Smith (1845-7); Thomas Hanson (1849-51), and Thomas Vasey (1851-5). On April 26th, 1855, Rev. John Bamber came to Wainsgate and commenced a period of faithful service which extended to 1878. One of his first efforts was the building of a new chapel, which was opened on May 24th, 1860. The work had been entered upon with such zeal that the cost of £1458 was more than provided at the close of the opening services. Mr. Bamber was succeeded by Revs. G. W. Wilkinson (1878-94); David Lindsay (1896-99); James Jack (1901-6), and the present pastor, Rev. Ernest Higson, who settled at Wainsgate in 1910. In 1905 the Church became possessed of a large new cemetery, which, with the old graveyard, is one of our most interesting Baptist burial places. The interior of Wainsgate presents a startling surprise to the visitor, for he will find within the plain exterior one of the most beautiful and costly marble pulpits which the denomination possesses. This was the gift of Mrs. Mitchell and Miss Cousin, in 1891. The communion table was presented by the Redman family. Here, too, are “storied windows richly dight,” the remarkably fine series of stained glass lights having been presented by the Mitchell family of Boston Hill. The Church bears nobly its burden of years, and is the centre of much spiritual activity.

The Pellon Lane Church, Halifax, can contemplate a history of more than a century and a half, **Pellon Lane, Halifax.** for it was founded in 1755, when Mr. Crabtree, of Bradford, baptised several persons and assisted at the formation of the Church. For eight years the new cause met in a house at Haley Hill, the members attending the Lord's Table at Bradford. Its pastor (1755-60) was Mr. Bamford, of Bacup. His successor was Mr. Joshua Wood, and in 1763 a chapel was opened. The Church appears to have been much disturbed by Sandemanian errors, which led to the exclusion of twenty members. In 1772, Wm. Hartley, a pupil of Dr. Fawcett, was ordained to the ministry here, to be followed by Mr. Hindle in 1779. The chapel was enlarged, but Mr. Hindle—"unhappily being of an irritable disposition, a trifling matter discomposed him." He resigned in 1789. In 1800, Wm. Ackroyd, a member of Hebden Bridge, began a ministry which extended over a quarter of a century. The Rev. Samuel Whitewood coming in 1831, the old chapel was pulled down and the present structure opened in 1834. Mr. Whitewood resigned in 1850, but returned in the following year to remain until his death in 1860. In 1850, the present schoolroom was built and the chapel remodelled to its present form. In September, 1861, Rev. Thomas Michael was called to the pastorate, which he maintained for twenty-three years. On February 6th, 1879, the Church suffered from a fire which destroyed the organ, the gallery, and the roof, but the building was reopened in the following August, although a cost of £3600 had been entailed. More recent pastorates have been those of Revs. Duncan Stuart (1885-8); A. B. Preston (1889-93); F. Slater (1895-1905), and J. M. Hamilton (1906-11). Pellon Lane welcomed Rev. T. A. Bampton as its minister in March of the present year.

The Birchcliffe Church, Hebden Bridge, will be for ever associated with the name of Dan Taylor. **Birchcliffe.** The story of his life and labour rightly belongs to an earlier section of this volume. In 1764, he, with a congregation of fourteen, built a

chapel at Birchcliffe. Its cost of £140 was largely collected in the itinerant preachings of its pastor. In 1783, Dan Taylor removed to Halifax, and John Sutcliffe—a member of the Church—was ordained to the Birchcliffe pastorate. In 1792, it was necessary to add a gallery to the chapel. The Rev. A. Barker filled the vacant pulpit from 1799 to 1803. During this time, Henry Hollinrake, a young member, showing evidence that he “had parts for speaking”, was sent to the London Academy. He departed with the Church’s blessing and “a web of cloth”, returning to be ordained minister at Birchcliffe, in 1806, where he was destined to continue in the pastorate for forty-nine years. In 1807, some forty members withdrew to form the Church at Heptonstall Slack. In 1818, Birchcliffe numbered 203 members, and on August 11th, 1825, a new chapel was opened upon which the Church had spent £852 12s. 1½d. In 1827, the site having been given, a Sunday school was erected. During “the forties” the Chartists desired the use of the chapel for a lecture, but it was replied that “no political question could righteously be spoken of in our place of worship.” In 1853, the Church reluctantly accepted the retirement of its pastor, then in the extreme feebleness of old age, and he was succeeded by Rev. J. B. Lockwood, who, in 1860, was compelled by ill-health to resign. In the same year Rev. W. Gray accepted the pastorate. During his thirty years’ residence the cause made good progress, adapting itself in many ways to the changing times. In 1889, it was determined to build a new chapel. The reasons assigned are diverse, but cumulative and conclusive, namely :— “dry rot in the old chapel, the growth of æstheticism, and the inability to obtain seats.” Mr. Gray was followed by Revs. H. Bull (1891-3), and J. Gay (1894-8). The great work of the new chapel was now entered upon, the corner stones being laid on July 3rd, 1897, and the sanctuary opened for worship October 31st, 1899. The Rev. S. J. Robins was called to the pastorate in July of that year, remaining until 1905, and was succeeded in the following year by the present minister, Rev. A. J. Harding.

The Birchcliffe chapel is one of the finest church properties belonging to the Denomination. It stands in an almost secluded position, and near by the earlier buildings; the total cost, with its furnishings, has been £14,000, and this large expenditure has been already completely defrayed. The Church has for the past twenty-three years raised an average yearly sum of nearly £600 for this purpose, in addition to bearing its current expenses. During the last five years the work has been rendered more difficult owing to disruptive influences in local industrial conditions, but these are now, happily, disappearing. Two years ago, the Church, having heard that the tombstone of its founder, Dan Taylor, in Bunhill Fields, was in a broken condition, undertook the work of replacing it with a new tombstone bearing the old inscription.

The North Parade Church, Halifax, also commemorates the labours of the same ardent evangelist.

North Parade, In the course of his itinerating ministry he
Halifax. preached at Halifax in the house of Mr. Hutchinson. The converts thus won were, in 1773, united in Church fellowship at Queensbury, and maintained preaching services at Halifax. In 1775 a chamber was hired in Gaol Lane, but "few attended except when Mr. Taylor preached." Ground was bought at Haley Hill and a chapel built. In 1780, Mr. Bates was invited to the pastorate, but offence at his doctrinal views resulted in his speedy resignation. The cause became a separate Church of thirty members in 1782, and in 1783 they invited Dan Taylor to leave his prosperous work at Birchcliffe for their pastorate. He remained with them until his removal to London in 1785. For the next forty years the Church passed through depressing experiences, but, in 1823, Mr. Jonathan Ingham began a pastorate, which, at its conclusion, in 1833, left the Church full of life and service. A removal to a more favourable part of the town was desirable and, in 1854, "North Parade" was opened. In that year Rev. Robert Ingham became pastor, and continued until 1862, when he resigned to devote himself to authorship. His successor was



PELLON



TRINITY ROAD

HALIFAX

DISTRICT



WEST VALE



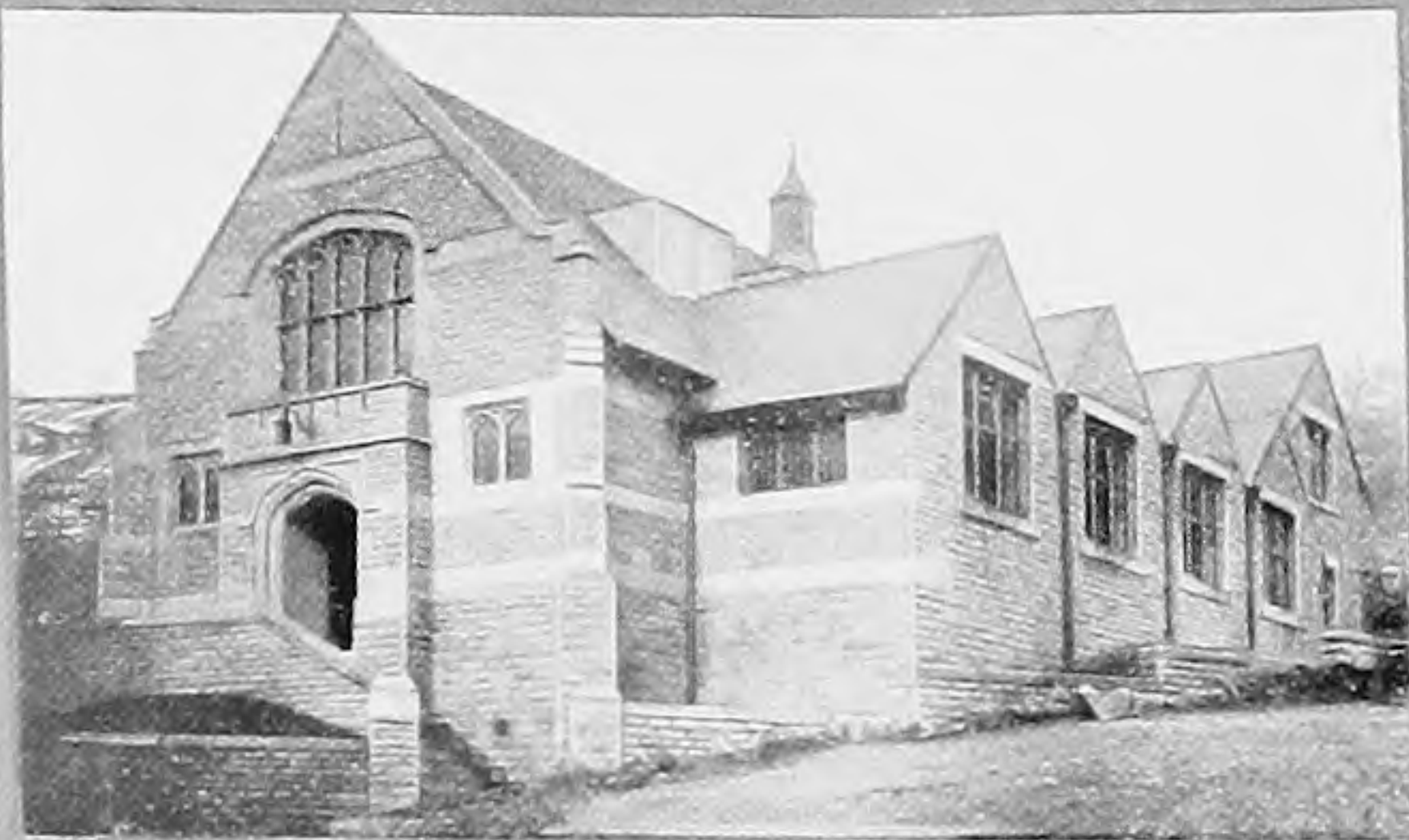
LEE MOUNT



PELLON LANE



NORTH PARADE



NAZEBOTTOM



NORLAND



WAINSGATE



HEPTONSTALL SLACK



HOPE, HEBDEN BRIDGE

HALIFAX



BREARLEY

DISTRICT

Rev. Chas. Clark, whose brilliant gifts drew great crowds to the chapel. In 1866, Rev. Richard Ingham accepted the senior pastorate, with Mr. T. H. Atkinson, of Chilwell College, as his junior colleague. In 1858, the failing cause at Ovenden had been taken under the Church's care, and in 1863, a new cause was undertaken at West Vale. During the last half century the Church has been served by Isaac Preston (1868-76); W. Dyson (1878-87); Carey Hood (1888-1903), and D. T. Patterson (1904-12). Although the expansion of the town has greatly altered the surroundings of the Church, it has been quick to shape its methods to the new conditions, with most auspicious results.

The "Hope" Church, Hebden Bridge, is the result of a dismissal of members from Waingate, Hebden Bridge, with Mr. Fawcett, their pastor to form a new cause in the valley. This was in 1777, and they at once built the "Ebenezer" meeting-house. Their appeal for help in this enterprise was signed by such widely-known leaders as Crabtree, Medley, Rylands, Stennett, Rippon, and John Newton. Dr. Fawcett continued as pastor until his death in 1817.* Among the first Baptist Sunday schools in the county was that at Hebden Bridge, where the work was begun in 1786. Amongst its teachers was John Foster—the essayist—who was baptised in 1787. Succeeding pastors were Abraham Webster (1818-19) and John Jackson (1821-33). John Crook held the office from 1841 to 1859. In 1846, eight members were dismissed to form the Brearley Church. "Hope" chapel was opened in 1858, having cost £3750. The Rev. Josiah Green held the pastorate from 1860 to 1875, to be followed by Rev. W. H. Ibberson (1877-81), and in 1880, the entire interior of the chapel was refitted and beautified. He was succeeded by Rev. Henry Hall (1882-9), who was followed by Rev. Wm. Jones (1891-1906). The pastorate of Mr. Jones will be long

* In 1810, Dr. Fawcett preached his last Association Sermon, at Bradford. He was then in his seventy-first year, and very feeble. He had just suffered a great bereavement in the loss of his wife. "When he entered the pulpit every eye was fixed upon him as he announced his text, 'Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth,' and he had not proceeded far when almost every individual present was melted into tears."

remembered at "Hope", for their minister not only served the Church with much faithfulness but took a leading place in the district and in the citizenship of the town. As chairman of the School Board, as a promoter of the Nursing Association, as organiser of the local Free Church Council, and as a leader in Christian Endeavour work, Mr. Jones filled a sphere of great usefulness and influence, whilst his devotion to the work of the County Association resulted in his election to its Presidency. In 1899, the Church provided itself with a new organ, and again made structural alterations, the £1300 expended being raised by the ready gifts of its people. Mr. Jones was succeeded in 1908 by Rev. E. Owen, B.A. The Church having received a gift of £1500 from Alderman Wade for a school extension scheme, an enterprise involving an outlay of £4000 was undertaken and successfully completed in 1911.

The Steep Lane Church, Sowerby Bridge, sprang from the Independent Church at Sowerby, owing
Steep Lane. to a secession of members on account of the Arian views of the minister. A chapel was built at Steep Lane in 1751, but it did not become a Baptist Church until 1779. The change was probably due to its minister—Rev. John Dracup—accepting Baptist principles. The early ministers of Steep Lane were James Bartle (1779-84); John Dracup (second pastorate, 1784-95); Wm. Wrathall (1796-1800); John Moss (1800-6). In 1803, nine members were dismissed to form the Church at Rishworth. Mr. Isaac Mann, from Horton College, sustained a brief pastorate at Steep Lane, to be succeeded, in 1811, by Rev. Thomas Milns. During the twelve years of this pastorate a new chapel was built. He was followed by Lawrence Shaw (1824-29), and Joseph Shaw (1829-35). The Church then remained without a minister for sixteen years. In 1851, Rev. W. E. Goodman settled at Steep Lane, and during the six years of his stay the new school was built. Rev. W. Nicholson accepted the pastoral office in 1857. He was a man of considerable attainments and an author of several works. After two years and a half he resigned, but

his people urged him to remain with them :—“ If you will not leave us, we will love you, pray for you, and build you a comfortable house.” Mr. Nicholson remained until 1863. The subsequent history of Steep Lane is the life story of Rev. Wm. Haigh. Having come in 1864, a young man of twenty-three, he has devoted his life to the building up of this Church, which stands as an outpost of our faith on the steep hillside, where the moors stretch towards Lancashire. His zeal soon resulted in the opening of a new school in 1874, and a new chapel in 1875. The £3000 expended was raised in ten years. Mr. Haigh, after forty-six years service, resigned his charge in 1910. He came to a membership of seventy; he left a Church roll of 210, a cause stronger than at any period in its history, and a memory of zealous and godly labour which Steep Lane will never forget. The Church has sent three of her sons into the ministry. To visit Steep Lane is to be at once conscious of an earnest and spiritual Church fellowship. Although it continually suffers from the migration of families which move down from the hillside to the valley towns, it yet successfully maintains its congregation and its activities. The present pastor is the Rev. E. Porter.

The Rishworth Church was formed at the beginning of last century. At that time there was no **Rishworth.** place of worship in the township; but neighbouring ministers came occasionally to preach, with the result that several joined the Church at Steep Lane. In 1803, a Church of thirteen members was organised, and in the same year the chapel was opened. In January, 1807, Mr. Luke Roebuck, of Sheffield, was chosen pastor, and continued until 1812. The prosperity of the school led the Church to purchase two houses adjoining the chapel, which were converted into school premises and a manse. Mr. Thomas Mellor, a member of Salendine Nook, became pastor in 1815, and remained until his death, in 1852. The Rev. E. Dyson was minister from 1853 to 1863. Since those days the circumstances of the Church have become more difficult, owing to the decline in the population. During

the "sixties" an unfortunate divergence resulted in more than half the members seceding to form another Church. Its Baptist history was brief, the new cause becoming Congregationalist. The Rev. J. Wilkinson was pastor at Rishworth from 1874 to 1888, during which time a manse was built. The old school was pulled down and the new schools erected, in 1898, at a cost of £2800. These present a striking contrast to the humble architecture of the Church's earlier efforts. The present pastor, Rev. V. R. Smeed, settled at Rishworth in 1909.

The Heptonstall Slack Church was inaugurated, in 1807, by thirty-seven members who withdrew from Birchcliffe. They engaged the meeting house which had been vacated by the Particular Baptists at Heptonstall. The following year a chapel was built, and James Taylor (a nephew of Dan Taylor) invited to the pastorate. In the year 1822, the Church had attained a membership of two hundred, and the Rev. Richard Ingham became minister. He was a native of Slack, and had been educated at Oxford for the Established Church. During his godly ministry of twelve years the Church increased to 300 members. His successor was the Rev. Wm. Butler, under whom the building was enlarged, and the Church continued to receive accessions. It reached its zenith in 1844, when it recorded a membership of 502 with a school 700 strong, and became the fourth largest Church in the General Baptist denomination. The Rev. E. Bott undertook the charge in 1848, but a period of local depression arose through the decline of the home-weaving industry, which led to the migration of the people. Mr. Bott was followed by Rev. Caleb Springthorpe, who closed, in 1873, an honourable ministry of twenty years, during which new school premises had been built. Rev. J. Lawton was pastor from 1874 to 1882, and the present chapel was opened in 1879, costing £2500. Mr. Lawton still survives at an age of ninety years. Succeeding pastors have been J. Hubbard (1884-91); D. A. Spence (1891-3); J. K. Archer (1895-1903); who was followed by the present minister,

Rev. E. G. Thomas. The Church has not been content to sit at ease in Zion. As early as 1816, it began a branch cause at Blakedean which it still maintains; also a cause at Broadstone where, after many years of work, an excellent chapel was built in 1892. The Church at Nazebottom was also the outcome of the Church at Heptonstall Slack.

The Wellington Road Church, Todmorden, was first united in fellowship on November 9th, 1845, and **Wellington Road, Todmorden.** was composed of a few families who were transferred from the Church at Shore for that purpose. They began to hold services in the Mechanics' Institute. Their pulpit was supplied by ministers and lay preachers until Mr. Abram Wrigley was appointed pastor, in August, 1849,; he remained until 1853. During this time they removed to Sobriety Hall, where the work was afterwards carried on without the aid of a pastor. In 1859 the chapel was opened for worship, and on the first Sunday in May, 1861, Rev. J. Finn became minister. He resigned in 1869, and after him came E. W. Cantrill (1871-5); W. E. Bottrill (1876-8); W. March (1880-7), and Thos. Cotes (1888-1909). Wellington Road has given three of her sons to the ministry, and, although at times she has suffered in temporal things from the fluctuations of trade, has never lacked earnest workers who were ready "to bow their necks to the yoke of the Lord."

The Brearley Church first met on March 22nd, 1846, numbering only eight members, who had **Brearley.** been transferred from Hebden Bridge. They represented the three families of the Fawcetts, the Rileys, and the Hodgsons. Their place of worship had been built by Mr. Hodgson, to whom they paid a small annual interest upon his outlay. It was opened on November 12th, 1845, and named "Bethel", but was known locally as "Little Faith", having been so built that in the event of failure it could be easily converted into cottages. For seven years the new cause had no pastor, but more than forty members were received into its fellowship. In May, 1853, Rev. Peter Scott became minister, remaining until

advancing years compelled his retirement. He died, in 1866, in the house of his friend Rev. Wm. Haigh, at Steep Lane. He was succeeded by Rev. P. Lewis, who came from Rawdon College, in 1867; his successful work necessitated the building of a new chapel. The ground was given by Mr. Hodgson, and the new sanctuary was opened for worship on July 15th, 1875, having cost nearly £3000. In the same year a day school was begun, and maintained until 1884, when it was relinquished into the hands of the Sowerby School Board. In 1877 the Church passed a resolution accepting the open communion principle. Mr. Lewis, who resigned in 1882, was succeeded by another Rawdon student—Rev. F. Allsop (1883-96). The cause continued successfully, and in 1887 a manse was built; but, in the years immediately following, two of the three mills in the village were closed, and the Church suffered very serious losses by removals. Rev. R. H. Rigby followed with a brief ministry of three years, giving place to Rev. W. A. Livingstone (1899-1905). The Church is at present without a pastor.

The Trinity Road Church, Halifax, was constituted on May 5th, 1851, as the second Particular **Trinity,** Baptist Church in the town. On that day **Halifax.** fifty-five members were enrolled. Their first place of worship was a room in Horton Street, which soon became too small; as there was no accommodation for Baptism, the ordinance was administered in the Public Baths. Trinity chapel was opened on August 18th, 1854, and of the £4000 expended a debt of £2500 remained. This, by the assistance of a generous offer from the Crossley family, was liquidated in 1862. The Church has had ten pastors, the most notable ministry being that of Rev. James Parker, M.A. (1871-91). He was succeeded by Revs. H. Davies (1892-1900); W. G. Scroggie (1902-5), and R. C. Sloan (1908—). Trinity Road has had the common experience of prosperity and adversity, but, under its present pastor, the work is being diligently pressed forward. The progress of the membership is not without interest. At the close of its first decade of history (1861) the original fifty-five had

increased to 271 ; in 1876, to 287 ; in 1886, to 320 ; in 1896, to 330. The present membership numbers 245.

The Lydgate Church, Todmorden, arose out of a secession of members from the Lineholme Church, in **Lydgate,** 1859. The new endeavour numbered some **Todmorden.** fifty people. Beginning in a cottage, they removed to Newgate Bottom, where they rented the top room of a disused mill. Here, consumed by the heat in summer and congealed by the winter frosts, they at last registered a resolve that they would not "winter another summer" under such conditions. They removed in 1860 to a room at Arch View, rented from one of their number for "£10 per annum, to include gas." Here they won their first converts in the baptism of five persons in a neighbouring stream. In 1861 they invited the Rev. James Dearden to their ministry, which he accepted and maintained for twenty-two years. On Whit Tuesday, 1865, they commenced chapel building, the digging out of the soil being the willing work of the members. Mr. Dearden resigned in 1883, and the Rev. W. L. Stevenson was appointed his successor. He continued until 1906, and was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. W. T. Garling, in 1907.

The Norland Church, Sowerby Bridge, began in the house of Mr. John Jowett, where a small company **Norland.** gathered together in 1862. The majority was composed of Methodists who had seceded from their Church owing to doctrinal divergencies. In 1863 Mr. Standeven, a member of Steep Lane, and a farmer at Pickwood Scar, offered his barn, where the hayloft was furnished as a meeting place. A Church numbering eleven members was constituted on March 25th, 1864 ; ten of the eleven were baptised on that day. Building operations were soon undertaken, and a chapel opened in October of that year. With the exception of a brief period (1886-7)—when the Church united with Sowerby Bridge under the pastorate of Rev. H. Hughes—the pulpit has been supplied by lay preachers. In 1897, alterations in the school premises were carried out ; as also was an extensive scheme of renovation in

1904. At the present time a scheme for improved school accommodation has been provisionally accepted. Norland reports that its prospects are brighter than at any previous period in its history.

The West Vale Church had its rise in 1863, when Jonathan Horsfall, coming from Birch-cliffe, joined the Church at North Parade, on the condition that a cause should be begun at West Vale. A room was opened on August 16th, 1863, which soon became too small. The school and chapel were completed in 1869, at a cost of £2400. In 1871 the Church assumed its own responsibilities, bidding farewell to the mother Church at North Parade with many expressions of gratitude for her fostering care. During the following twenty years the pastors were:—Thomas Gill (1871-3); W. Jarrom (1874-5); J. T. Roberts (1878-83); C. Waterton (1886-88), and G. Needham (1888-92). The present minister is Rev. D. R. Lewis, who is in his seventeenth year of service at West Vale. During his pastorate the Church has steadily risen in strength and fruitfulness, and abounds in vigorous life and service.

At Nazebottom, the Baptists first instituted worship in a cottage at Spa Hall, in the year 1836. An enlarging congregation led to their removal to some rooms in a mill. This situation again proving too strait for them, a chapel was opened on June 24th, 1846, having cost £1600. A separate Church was not established until 1872, when fourteen members were transferred from the mother Church at Heptonstall Slack. The Rev. J. R. Godfrey became pastor, in 1872, and remained for seven years. The debt having been completely met in the jubilee year, 1896, the Church then faced the problem of its disadvantageous position on the hill. A committee was appointed, in 1902, to consider a site in the valley, nearer to the population. The result, after some years of anxiety, was the opening of the present building, in 1909, at a cost of £2200. With the help of neighbouring Churches and the Association,

Nazebottom is now entirely free from debt. Its pastor is Rev. Wm. Hughes.

The Sowerby Bridge Church was born through the prayerful interest of members of other **Sowerby Bridge**. Churches—especially of Rishworth—who had come to live in the town. Finding themselves at a great distance from their spiritual homes, they met for consideration of their duty. Encouraged by the Rishworth pastor, they rented a room, and sent delegates to seek counsel of the District Committee. The tenancy of a room in the Town Hall was then secured, and services commenced in April, 1878. The site of the present premises was purchased in 1884, and the chapel built in 1885. The Church now united itself with the Hope Church, Hebden Bridge. On January 23rd, 1887, the Rev. H. Hughes became pastor of Norland and Sowerby and ministered there for two years. In 1892 the cause freed itself from debt, and on August 3rd, a separate Church of nineteen members was formed. In 1896 Mr. John Fox, of the Manchester City Mission, settled as evangelist-in-charge, the Church being assisted by the funds of the County. This work was attended with good results; new schools and alterations in the premises became imperative, and these efforts were concluded in 1900, at an outlay of £1000. The Church reports difficulties in its present work, owing to so many young people removing to the larger centres of industry.

The Lee Mount Church, Halifax, is the outcome of work undertaken at Ovenden in the year 1844.

Lee Mount, A Church was formed here in 1846, but was
Halifax. dissolved in 1857. The Sunday School was continued, and became a branch school of North Parade in 1866. Three years later a movement was made towards the erection of a school-chapel. In 1892, a Church was again formed—with the warm approval of North Parade—and numbered 134 members. This progressive step was followed by the inauguration of a settled pastorate, the Rev. J. H. Robinson receiving a call in 1893. He was succeeded by Rev. D. B. Davies in 1899, who was

followed by the present pastor, Rev. F. W. Duncombe, in 1906. The Church, encouraged by a promise of £500 from the Twentieth Century Fund, applied itself to a great building undertaking, which resulted in the opening of a new chapel on May 30th, 1908. The new sanctuary seats 760 worshippers, and at its dedication service the welcome announcement was made that £2701 had been already received towards the total cost of £4400.

The Pellon Church, Halifax, the youngest Church of the District, was not established as a separate **Pellon.** cause until 1901. The work, however, must be dated back to 1837, when the Sion Congregational Church transferred to the Pellon Lane Baptists their little cause at Pellon. The present building was opened in 1877. In 1891 a committee was appointed to undertake the care of the cause, and the Lord's Supper was first observed here on July 12th, 1891, followed by the first baptism on November 30th, 1893. On January 17th, 1901, seventy-seven members were dismissed from Pellon Lane to form the Pellon Church. Mr. Alec Charlton, of Rawdon College, became its first pastor in 1904. The cause prospering, plans were accepted, in 1910, for a new Church building at a cost of £3000; and, during the autumn of 1911, the Baptist Churches of the town made a united and most successful effort by a bazaar, which realised £1280 towards the Pellon necessities.





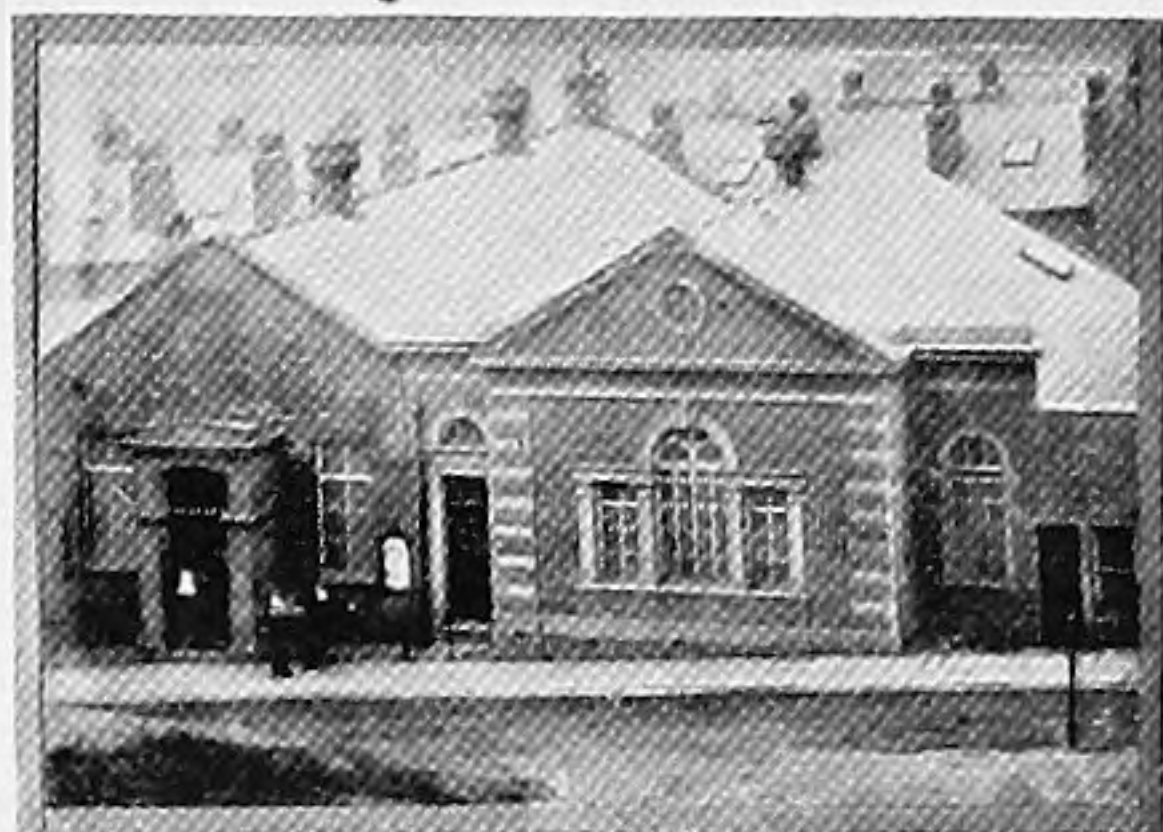
LYDGATE, TODMORDEN



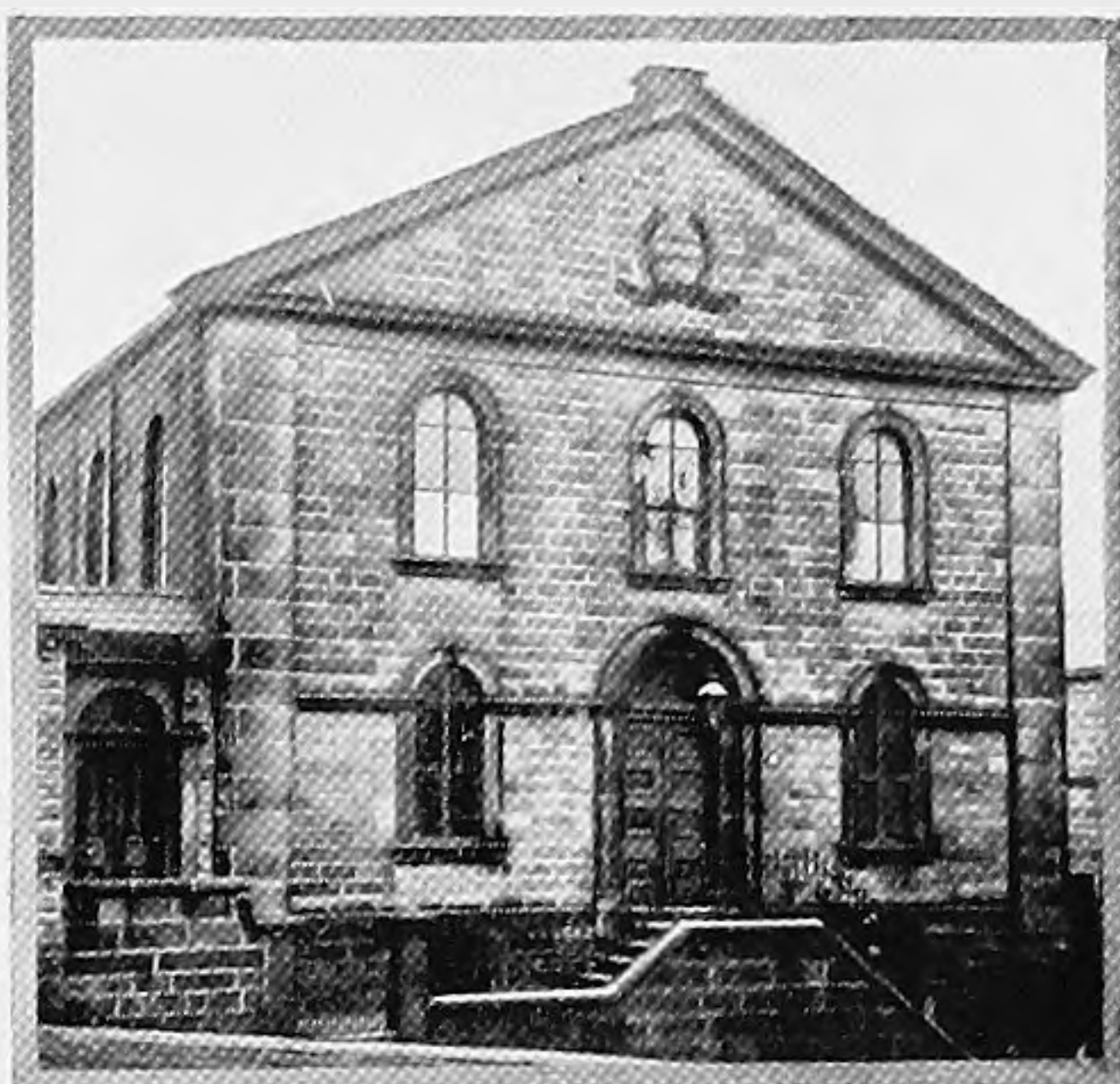
STEEP LANE, HALIFAX.



ROOMFIELD, TODMORDEN.



SOVERBY BRIDGE.



WELLINGTON ROAD, TODMORDEN



RISHWORTH.

HALIFAX DISTRICT.



MIRFIELD.



ELLAND EDGE.



NEW NORTH RD, HUDDERSFIELD.



MILNSBRIDGE.



GOLCAR.

**THE CHURCHES OF THE HUDDERSFIELD
DISTRICT.**

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.

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In writing the story of the Churches in the Huddersfield District we shall review them, as in other **Salendine Nook.** chapters, according to their chronological order. The oldest cause is that at Salendine Nook. There is probably no Yorkshire Baptist Church more widely known. To the uninitiated its name suggests some pleasant valley

“ Where low the little hamlets lie,
Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars.”

But “ The Nook ” is 800ft. above sea level, standing on the edge of Lindley Moor. Although now a suburb of Huddersfield, its distance of two miles and a half from the town centre would make it, in the old days, a solitary place. Here through the long years Salendine Nook has borne a wonderful witness to our faith. It may well be said “ this and that man was born in her ”, for, as a mother of Churches, she has no rival in the county. Of the fifteen other Churches in the District all—with perhaps the exception of Mirfield—may be traced directly or indirectly to the influence of Salendine Nook. The early history of the Church has been already told by Principal Blomfield, and I shall only be required to trace its career through the nineteenth century. In 1795, the Rev. Robt. Hyde became pastor. Humble and poor, but studious, he was a close friend of Dr. Boothroyd, the commentator, then pastor of the Huddersfield Congregational Church. The congregation increasing, a new chapel was built in 1803, and towards the close of his long ministry a great revival took place, adding more than sixty members to the Church. Mr. Hyde died in 1838, being in the eighty-

second year of his age, and the forty-third of his ministry. He was followed by Revs. James Macpherson (1839-44) and T. Lomas (1845-7). The next minister was Rev. John Stock, LL.D., who, coming in 1848, remained until 1857, when ill-health compelled his removal. There followed Revs. D. Crumpton (1858-65) and James Parker (1866-70). In 1872, Dr. Stock returned, and remained until his death in 1884. He was widely known as a scholar, an author, and an acknowledged leader in the Denomination. In 1886, came Rev. John Thomas, M.A., a student from Bangor University, whose preaching gifts were highly appreciated at "The Nook"; he left in 1893, for Myrtle Street, Liverpool. During the interregnum that followed, the chapel was altered at a cost of £5000. In 1895, Rev. D. Witton Jenkins commenced a ministry which still continues. The Church full of years still flourishes and brings forth "fruit in old age." Its membership is greater than at any previous period, and its three schools number 600 scholars. Salendine Nook has been marked throughout her history by a strong Calvinism, and has been blessed by some splendid personalities produced by that stern doctrine. For many years it has been the custom to subject the morning sermon to a most careful criticism, in the hours between the morning and afternoon service, by the members who stayed at "The Nook" for dinner, but this is now somewhat modified by an evening service which has displaced the afternoon session. The Church has been enriched through the years by the presence of a number of men who, unspoiled by temporal prosperity, have given of their wealth and service to the cause at Salendine Nook. Amongst these the family name of Shaw stands out conspicuously. In words written by her present pastor Salendine Nook "is old but not infirm, wrinkled but not decayed, alive with the everlasting life of God."

Pole Moor, which even to-day is a place of scattered dwellings and sparse population, must **Pole Moor.** have been a wild and primeval spot when, towards the close of the 18th century, the Baptists first found their way there. In 1788 they

came to Slaithwaite, but, as the whole of the village was the property of the Earl of Dartmouth, no land could be obtained. They were compelled to go two miles further, to the freeholders of Scammondon, who consented to their building a chapel on some waste land, in 1790. Some trouble ensued with the Lord of the Manor, to whom they had to pay a ground-rent until the land was finally purchased in 1817. Mr. Bruce first ministered to the Church (1790-2), although he does not appear to have been ordained as pastor. The Rev. C. Bamford followed, from 1793 to 1804, and fifty were baptised during his ministry, which was terminated by death. He was succeeded, in 1808, by Mr. Abraham Webster, who found a Church so much divided on matters of doctrine that a secession took place. He however, was not left without seals to his ministry, ere he removed, in 1818, to Hebden Bridge. His salary at Pole Moor was £48 per annum, but he kept a day school, and his people made an annual collection for the support of the pastor's cow. Mr. Lawrence Shaw, who followed, had a troubled pastorate of five years, his views being more liberal than Pole Moor could appreciate, but he baptised fifty converts before removing to Steep Lane. The Church then invited Mr. Webster to return, which he did, but, after four years of happy ministry, he passed away in 1828. The Rev. H. W. Holmes accepted the pastorate in 1829, and found here a work that engaged him for forty-five years. Of his long and honourable life among his people space permits but little to be said. Amongst the happenings of these forty-five years the old chapel was freed from debt and a school was built, and in 1849 a school was opened at Scape Goat Hill. In 1859, the present Pole Moor chapel was completed, having cost £1800. In 1871, twenty-one members of Pole Moor founded the Church at Scape Goat Hill. Mr. Holmes through all the years not only ministered to his own Church, but was the friend and spiritual adviser of the whole countryside. He resigned in 1874, and three months after passed to his rest. His successor, Rev. J. Evans (1875-93), reaped much of the harvest which Mr. Holmes had so faithfully sown, forty-four

persons confessing Christ in the first year of his ministry. Rev. T. Isles (1897-1901), was followed by Rev. H. Rolfe (1902-09). The present minister is Rev. W. Turpitt, B.A.

The story of the Blackley Church is an inviting theme to the writer. We are told that a Mr. **Blackley**. James Cartledge, who was developing the coal mines in the neighbourhood, made a vow that if God prospered him he would build Him a house. In this way the first chapel at Blackley was secured, with its vestries and burial-ground, and the Church formed, in 1789. Mr. Cartledge appears to have made another and less happy vow, for owing to a dispute in the neighbouring Church of which he was a member, he vowed "he would never sit down in the chapel again." He fulfilled his pledge — *ipsissima verba* — by ever after standing throughout the service. The first two pastors at Blackley were John Hindle (1791-3) and J. Rowlands (1796-8). In 1798, the Rev. J. Rigby took charge of what was evidently a difficult task, for it was found necessary to dissolve the Church, and, a new Covenant having been agreed upon, it was subscribed by about twenty members. Henceforward, during a pastorate of forty-one years, Mr. Rigby enjoyed the unbroken confidence and affection of his people. He was succeeded by Rev. J. Hirst, who was richly blessed in his work. The chapel was remodelled, the school enlarged, and their pastor kept his station for twenty-eight years. Mr. Roger Briggs, of Manchester College, commenced his ministry in August, 1874, and at once entered with zeal into a new building scheme. In 1876, an enterprise, entailing an outlay of £4000, was undertaken, but the church does not appear to have possessed the £200 purchase money required for the land. The proceedings that followed are not without an element of humour. Although gifts were steadily flowing in, they did not keep pace with the needs, and clamorous contractors, finding the money exhausted, ceased their work. An attempt to raise a mortgage precipitated the discovery that the land upon which they were building had once been conveyed for burial purposes, and it was necessary to



POLE MOOR.



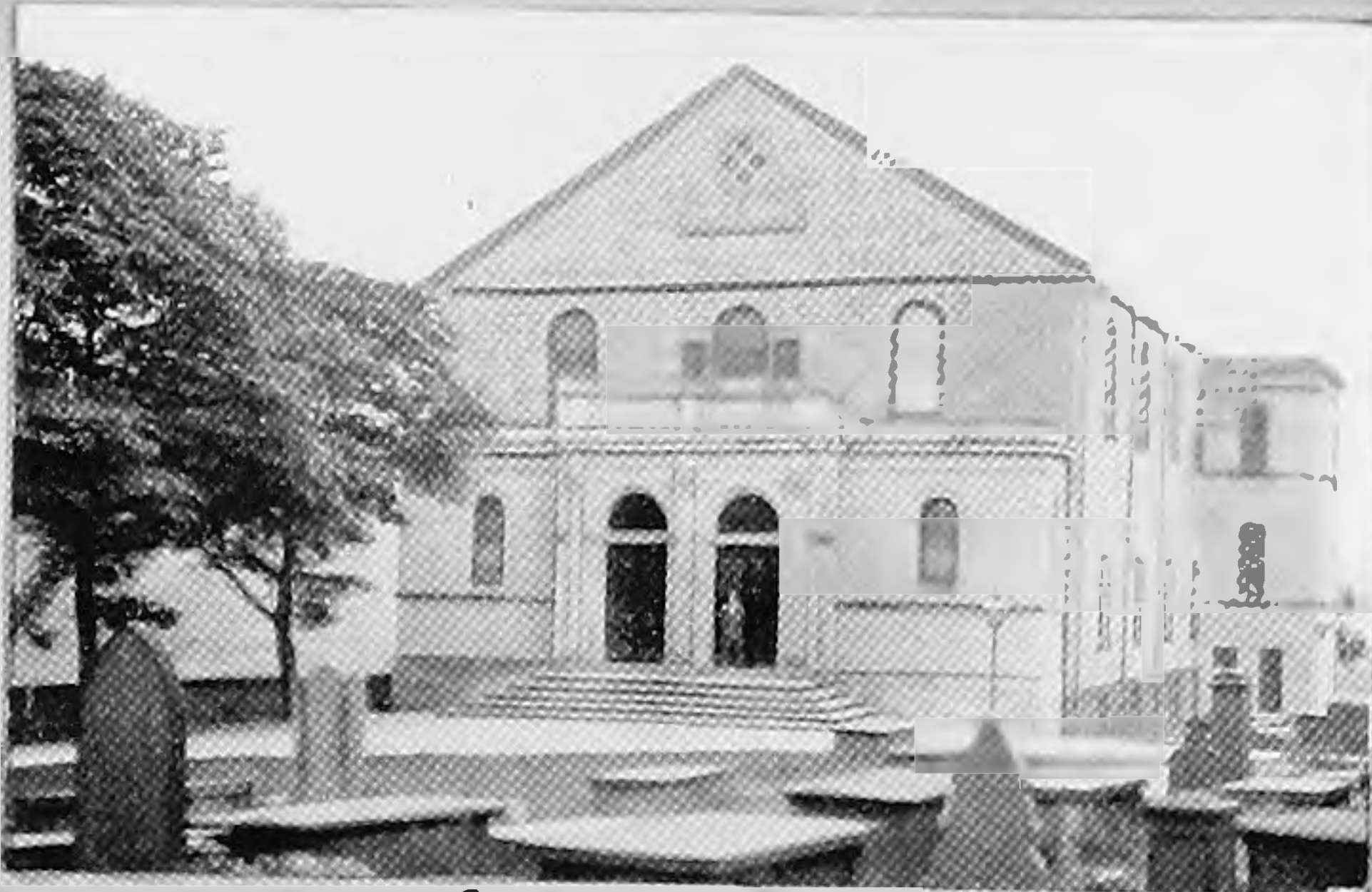
LOCKWOOD.



BLACKLEY.



MELTHAM.



SALENDINE NOOK.

HUDDERSFIELD

DISTRICT.



PRIMROSE HILL, HUDDERSFIELD.



SCAPEGOAT HILL.



BIRKBY, HUDDERSFIELD.



SLAITHWAITE.



SUNNY BANK, GOLCAR.



OAKES, HUDDERSFIELD.

institute a friendly action in Chancery. 'This having been successfully pursued, our Building Fund and Loan Society came to Blackley's aid, and the completed buildings were at last opened on September 3rd, 1879, with a remaining debt of £2900; for the friendly law-suit had swallowed up the whole of the opening collections. The interest required for this debt they floated in shares, and so relieved themselves, for the time being, of an overburdening responsibility. During the last decade of the century they installed an organ, renovated the chapel, rebuilt the old school, and purchased a field. There seems to have been no end to their exertions, the pastor always in the van of the Church's endeavour, and becoming celebrated as the greatest "beggar" in the district. Mr. Briggs did not confine his labours to the Church, but served for many years on the School Board and Board of Guardians. When he resigned his charge in 1910, he was the recipient of many gifts, amongst others an address from the Elland District Council, which entertained him at a banquet at the public offices. Mr. Briggs has left his life memorial in a vigorous Church, whose premises, costing upwards of £7000, are freed from debt. He has been succeeded by Rev. F. T. Such.

Lockwood, a hundred years ago, was a small village separated by a mile of green fields from **Lockwood.** Huddersfield, of which it now forms a suburb. In 1790, Benjamin Ingham, a member of Salendine Nook, opened his barn for worship and afterwards built a chapel at his own expense. This was opened on Christmas Day, 1792, and the property conveyed to trustees for the Baptist Denomination. The Church was formed on January 1st, 1795, of thirteen members. Mr. Wm. Hartley was invited to be its first pastor (1795-1804). His faithful ministry was attended with many difficulties, through the inroads of death, and divisions among his flock :—"The members few and scattered, our prospects were dark indeed." He was succeeded by Rev. James Aston (1805-30). A period of prosperity followed, discord gave place to unity, and in six years 120 were added

to the fellowship. But the times were difficult; the effects of wars, bad trade, dear food, and heavy taxes were heavily felt at Lockwood, where many were brought to the brink of starvation. In 1817 a baptistry was provided in the chapel yard, previous baptisms having been administered in the river. In 1821 a school was built, but was removed on the rebuilding of the chapel in 1849. Mr. Aston died in 1830, at the age of 74. His removal was followed by trouble in the Church, for in 1832, a secession of members—by a doctrinal dispute—built another chapel—"Rehoboth." The Rev. F. W. Dyer accepted the Church's call in 1832, remaining for eight years. In the early "forties" the Church experienced a most gracious revival. In 1846, fifteen members were dismissed to form a Church in Huddersfield. The Rev. John Barker, of Horton College, entered the pastorate on January 1st, 1847, commencing a union which lasted for thirty-one years. In 1848, a new school was erected at a cost of £1500, to be enlarged in 1864, at an additional expense of £1100. The chapel was rebuilt in 1851, at an outlay of £1700, Mr. Godfrey Berry contributing a third of the cost. In 1869 the chapel was again enlarged, and further school improvements made at a cost of £2000. In 1874, the Primrose Hill cause was undertaken. Mr. Barker, having retired in 1878, was succeeded by Mr. J. Porteous, of Rawdon College, who maintained a happy pastorate of ten years. In 1893, Rev. G. Archer settled at Lockwood and he still continues his ministry there. In 1900, a new organ was installed, the old instrument being presented to the daughter Church at Primrose Hill. Among many happy recollections at Lockwood is the fact that she has been able to send five of her young men into the ministry of the Gospel.

The Meltham Church was constituted in 1813, when five persons were baptised in a neighbouring stream, and were united, with three members from Lockwood, in Church fellowship. This was the result of work undertaken two years before by Salendine Nook, where a house had been licensed for

worship. For three years their home was a cottage, until a gift of land inspired them to build and open a chapel in 1817. In 1820, Mr. Abraham Webster took the pastorate of the Church, then numbering twelve members, and continued for four and a half years. After two brief ministries, Mr. Thomas Thomas settled here in 1829, remaining to the fortieth year of his ministry and the eightieth of his age. His coming marked a new era in the Church's life. A school-room was built in 1832, and enlarged in 1846. On August 10th, 1864, the new chapel, costing £2000, was opened, unencumbered by debt. Amongst its early supporters the Church lovingly cherishes the names of John Broadbent and Benjamin Wood. In 1873, Mr. James Alderson, of Brighton Grove College, began a happy pastorate of thirteen years, during the course of which the Manse was built at an outlay of nearly £1000. In 1889, Mr. Henry Davies, of Brighton Grove College, became pastor, but removed to Halifax in 1892. Successive pastors were Revs. F. Oliver (1893-6); J. Jackson (1897-9); W. K. Still (1902-9). In 1895, a school improvement fund was inaugurated, and, steadily accumulating, led to the erection of excellent school premises, which were opened on May 13th, 1911. Of the cost, amounting to £2100, only about £500 remains to be raised. The Church records its great indebtedness to the succession of faithful men who have served on its diaconate, and in the offices of the Church and School.

The Mirfield Church was commenced in 1816, and owes its inception to Mrs. Ingham and Mr. C. **Mirfield.** Thompson. Mrs. Ingham was a daughter of Dr. Evans, of the Bristol College, and her brother-in-law, Benjamin Ingham, built the first chapel at Lockwood. Mr. Thompson, who was a Horton student, having conducted services at Thornhill was invited by the Ingham family to preach at their residence, Blake Hall. These meetings continued until Mrs. Ingham's death in 1819, when the congregation obtained a temporary use of the town barn until it should be required for the harvest. They removed, in 1820, to Little Moor Barn, and from thence to

the schoolroom of the Knowle Grammar School where they remained three years, and formed, on July 25th, 1825, a Church of fourteen members. A curate having succeeded to the mastership of the school, the Baptists were speedily evicted, but one of the deacons opened his house to the homeless company, and here the services were continued for four years. In 1830 they had the joy of possessing a chapel of their own, and the next year Mr. Albrecht—a German gentleman and a convert of the Hon Baptist Noel—came from Horton College as pastor. Here he found his life work, ministering to the people until his death in 1877, and leaving behind him a well-established Church. In 1855 the school was built; in 1873 the present fine chapel was opened without debt, and stands as a worthy monument to the zeal of Dr. Albrecht, and the liberality of many friends. The pastorate has since been held by the Revs. W. Cushing (1879-81); R. Evans (1882-6), and J. Kitchener (1887-1909). The present pastor, Rev. H. Motley, began his ministry in July, 1910. Mirfield regards herself as the only Church in the Huddersfield District whose origin may not be traced, directly or indirectly, to the Church at Salendine Nook.

The Golcar Church was formed in December, 1835. Mr. Thos. Sykes, a member of Salendine Nook, had bequeathed £100 for the erection of a chapel at Golcar, and Mr. Wm. Shaw presented the site. When opened in April, 1835, it had no debt. Rev. G. H. Davis—afterwards Dr. Davis, of the Religious Tract Society—was the first pastor (1835-7), and was followed by Revs. Wm. Colcroft (1837-43); Joseph Green (1843-4); John Ash (1845-6); John Whitaker (1847-52); Edward Franklin (1852-8); Henry Watts (1858-65); Thomas Bury (1866-81); Wm. Gay (1882-1908); G. Evans, B.A. (1909—). The first chapel did good service for thirty-four years, when a larger sanctuary became an imperative necessity. The present building, seating 1200, was opened in August, 1869, having cost with its furnishing £5000. The old chapel was then converted into

school accommodation. In the jubilee year a renovation scheme was carried out, and a large addition of land secured to the graveyard. Still continuing to expand, a new school was erected on the site of the old chapel at an outlay of £2736, which was paid in about five years. That this did not impoverish the Church is seen by the fact that Golcar raised £1000 for the Twentieth Century Fund. In 1901, the purchase of an organ, and improvements to the chapel interior, cost nearly £2000. There is now at Golcar freehold property and premises covering nearly three acres; they have cost more than £13,000, and the whole is unencumbered by debt. In 1905, fearing that threatened building operations might be to the Church's disadvantage, a large space in front of the chapel property was purchased and laid out in ornamental grounds, forming a park-like approach to the chapel. Golcar has sent three of her number into the ministry—Revs. A. Walker (Bradford); Joseph Gay (London); George Hirst (London); and she continues to support a mission cause at Ley Moor.

The Milnsbridge Church had its first home in an upper room, and building its first sanctuary

Milnsbridge. on the banks of a river, called it "Ænon." Its Church roll commences on May 28th, 1843, when it received the signatures of twenty members who, residing in the locality, were transferred from Salendine Nook. Although the neighbourhood was but thinly populated, they at once proceeded to build, opening their chapel on April 25th, 1844. The Rev. John Hanson became pastor in 1846, and for ten years led the Church's progress. He was followed by Rev. Edward Parker, who was ordained here on August 19th, 1857, and remained two years. He was afterwards more widely known as Dr. Parker, President of Manchester Baptist College. Rev. J. T. Jones served the Church from 1861 to 1864. Brief pastorates appear to have been the general experience of the Church:—John Chadwick (1866-70); H. Dunn (1871-4); Robert Speed (1877-81); and H. C. Field (1883-8). During Mr. Field's ministry the new schools were built at a cost of £3700, and were for some

years used for day school and Sunday school purposes, until the erection of new Board School premises rendered the day school unnecessary. Rev. A. J. Davies settled at Milnsbridge in 1892. He laboured for eight years with much success, and, at its jubilee, the Church raised £1000 for chapel alterations. Rev. E. R. Lewis followed Mr. Davies in the New Year of 1901, and is the present pastor. Additional classrooms were added to the school, and, assisted by the generous gift of a site, the Church proceeded to build a manse. Mr. G. H. Hanson, and his sister, Mrs. T. Lockwood, who presented the site, added to it a gift of £450. The Church property is valued at £12,000, and its history has been one of steady progress and increasing service.

The New North Road Church, Huddersfield, was constituted on February 15th, 1846, and **New North Road, Huddersfield.** numbered fifteen members from Lockwood, four from Salendine Nook, and one from a Manchester Church. It was not the first effort made to establish a Church in the centre of the town, two previous attempts having proved but fugitive. For four years the Itinerant Society supplied the pulpit in the Spring Street schoolroom, which was the Church's home. In 1850 they removed to a larger room in King Street, but, at the close of the year, an unfortunate division led to the withdrawal of sixteen members, nearly all of whom in the course of time returned to the fellowship. The Rev. W. K. Armstrong took the oversight of the Church from 1851 to 1853, and the growing necessity for a chapel led to the purchase of the chapel in Bath Buildings, which, having been built by the Socialists in 1839, was then leased to the Unitarians. After some necessary alterations it was opened on April 18th, 1855. The Rev. John Hanson accepted the pastorate in 1856, and remained for nineteen years, supported by the unbroken affection of his people. Towards the close of his ministry a project for the building of a new chapel took definite shape, the foundation stone of the New North Road chapel being laid a few months before Mr. Hanson left. The building was opened on April 16th, 1878, its

total cost having been £12,716. In September, 1877, the Rev. E. T. Scammell commenced his pastorate in the old chapel, which after the removal to New North Road was used for school purposes, but in 1882 new school premises were erected, costing £3400. In 1881 an extremely fine organ was presented to the Church by Mr. John Shaw, of Botham Hall. Mr. Scammell, who resigned in 1882, was followed by Rev. F. J. Benskin, in 1884, who maintained a devoted and successful pastorate until his removal, in 1901, to Bath. Here, after a brief ministry, his health failed, and he retired from active service to pass away at the close of 1905. "Diligent and faithful, he had the secret of a loving heart, and has left behind him a very fragrant memory." The present pastor, Rev. R. C. Ford, M.A., commenced his ministry in December, 1902. In the following year the premises were subjected to a complete renovation, the cost of over £600 being at once met. In 1909 the debt on the entire premises was liquidated. In 1907, sixteen members were dismissed to form a separate Church at Birkby, and in 1908 the services of a deaconess were engaged for helpful work amongst the people of the immediate neighbourhood. New North Road expresses her thankfulness "for all that is being done by the Church to maintain the tone of clear, exalted piety, and to build up calm, consistent righteousness in an age when there is much to allure to indifference, and not a little in some quarters to bring the foundations of religion into jeopardy, if not into contempt."

The Elland Upper Edge Church was composed, at its inauguration in 1863, of seventeen members **Elland Edge.** from Salendine Nook, and five from Blackley. Elland likens herself to the Church at Jerusalem in that she met in an "upper room," until, in 1869, the use of the Elland Edge Sunday School was obtained for preaching services. Here they remained ten years, enlarging the premises at their own cost of £200. In 1890 they laid the foundation stones of a chapel on the Dewsbury Road, and opened it on May 28th, 1891. For

three years they battled with the debt until only £800 remained, when, on December 22nd, 1894, the building, which stood in an exposed position, was partially destroyed in a great gale. Such was the general sympathy that the Mayor of Brighouse opened a public subscription, which met with so generous a response that £1300 had been raised towards its re-erection, when once again it was ready for worship. The first pastor of the Church was Rev. T. R. Lewis, who settled in 1897, and continued during nine prosperous years. In 1898 a new school was opened, the total cost of the Church's property being £5000, upon which no debt remains. The present minister is the Rev. G. B. Combe.

The Oakes Church, Lindley, is another of the many children of Salendine Nook, and was **Oakes, Lindley.** formally constituted on December 29th, 1864, with thirty-six members who were originally in fellowship at "The Nook." They met in the meeting house at Quarmby, their early baptisms being held in a mill reservoir, and in a pond. Mr. E. Cameron, of Rawdon College, was invited to the pastorate in January 1867, but illness—the result of an accident—terminated in the following June a life of much promise. In June, 1868, Rev. S. C. Burn settled as minister, and the new chapel was opened in December of that year, a substantial structure, seating 700 persons. It may interest the reader to know that the gallery front of iron tracery work is a reproduction of the gallery front in the first Metropolitan Tabernacle. Mr. Burn resigned at the close of 1872, and was followed by Rev. D. Davies (1873-8). During this period the school premises were erected, and opened in 1878. The total cost of the chapel and schools was £11,000, but the debt was entirely removed by the year 1885. In April, 1879, Rev. George Duncan accepted the pastorate, which he resigned in 1887, to be followed by Rev. W. H. Ibberson (1888-94), under whose strenuous ministry the cause made excellent progress, and an organ was purchased at a cost of £1200. In 1895, Rev. W. H. Holdsworth, M.A., was invited

to the pastorate, but ill-health compelled his removal to Australia in 1897. Rev. J. H. Robinson was minister from 1898 to 1901, and in 1903 Rev. Evan Williams undertook the charge, which he held for three years. The present pastor, Rev. N. Bosworth, followed in 1907.

The Scapegoat Hill Church began its independent history in 1871, but was the result of efforts **Scapegoat Hill.** made at a much earlier date. Meetings had been regularly held in houses on the Hill, the Rev. H. W. Holmes, pastor of Pole Moor, giving much assistance to the work. In 1850, a spacious school-house was built, which was enlarged in 1863, and in 1871 was converted into a chapel. On August 9th, 1871, a Church was constituted of twenty-eight members—twenty-one from Pole Moor, four from Golcar, and three from Salendine Nook—to whom nineteen were added by baptism during the first year. In 1874, a new day and Sunday school was opened, and Rev. D. Lewis became the first pastor, staying with the Church for three and a half years. He was succeeded by Rev. A. Harrison (1879-87), and a manse was built in 1880. The Rev. T. R. Lewis commenced, in August, 1889, a pastorate of eight years in which the Church received much blessing. After him came Rev. S. J. Robins for a brief period of eighteen months, during which time the building of a new chapel was commenced, the premises being opened on March 29th, 1900. Rev. B. Williams settled here in 1901, and during the Welsh revival of 1905, Scapegoat Hill experienced a great spiritual awakening. Mr. Williams having left in 1906, the present pastor, Rev. H. R. Jenkins, began his ministry in October, 1906. Of its six pastors, five have been Welshmen, and during its history the Church has raised about £7000 for building purposes, and received 430 members into its fellowship.

The Sunny Bank Church, Golcar, is the outcome of a secession of thirty members from Pole **Sunny Bank.** Moor, owing to their objection to the use of fermented wine at the Lord's Table. They first held services in a cottage at Hart's Hill, in January,

1883, but in the following spring occupied a carpenter's shop, using the adjoining cottage for school premises. On March 13th, 1889, they opened their new chapel, upon which they had spent £1200, and in a short time dealt successfully with the debt. The Church was, from 1889 to 1905, under the pastoral care of Rev. James Evans, but since his removal has been supplied by the lay preachers, to whom it acknowledges a great indebtedness.

The Zion Church, Slaithwaite, has resulted from the gathering together of a company of Baptists
Slaithwaite. residing in the village, who belonged to Pole Moor and other Churches. Beginning in a house at Crimble, their work was so appreciated that they were compelled to rent a chamber for the purposes of regular worship. In two years after this humble venture they rented the hall of the Liberal Club, and opened a Sunday School (1885). The Church was instituted in October, 1886, with twenty-five members; twenty from Pole Moor, three from Golcar, and two from Rishworth. The Rev. E. Evans was called to its pastoral charge. In 1891, it opened its school-chapel, and in three years raised the whole cost of £2500. Mr. Evans having left in 1903, the Church turned to the Association for counsel, and, in 1906, Rev. W. A. Livingstone accepted the call of the Church, and remained until 1911. Slaithwaite is looking forward to the time when it can erect its much-needed chapel.

The Primrose Hill Church, Huddersfield, has a brief but inspiring history. It owes its inception
Primrose Hill. to the enterprise of the Lockwood Church, which, in 1872, at its own charges, appointed Mr. Joseph Stead to labour in the district as an evangelist. He prosecuted his task with much zeal, and a room was opened in 1874 for worship and a Sunday school; at the close of the year a school-chapel was erected costing £1300. Mr. Stead having left in 1875, an invitation was given to Rev. Wm. Gay, (who as the first pastor) remained for three years, adding forty members to the Church. He was succeeded by Rev. T.

Dowding (1878-81), during whose ministry the Lockwood Church earnestly promoted a building scheme, which resulted in the opening of a chapel on November 17th, 1881. Rev. John Longson became pastor in 1883, and six years later 110 members were dismissed from Lockwood to Primrose Hill, only six of whom, however, are in its present membership. Mr. Longson having left in 1891, was followed by Rev. J. Dyer (1893-9). Upon his resignation the Church placed itself in the hands of the Association, and the Rev. J. F. Porteous was asked to give himself to the work. For the first five years of his ministry the Church received financial aid from Lockwood and the County Home Mission, but eventually became self-supporting, when it placed on record its great indebtedness to Lockwood, as also to the County Association. In April, 1908, the Church suffered a great sorrow in the sudden death of its pastor. He had devoted himself with a splendid consecration to his work and had won the affection of many friends. He was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. T. R. Lewis, and the Church has in hand a fund for the extension of its school premises, which now amounts to £500.

The Birkby Church, the youngest of our Huddersfield Churches, is the consummation of work undertaken more than fifty years ago by Salendine Nook. For some years a congregation was gathered at Hillhouse, in "an open timber-raftered building," a phrase which we may regard as an euphuistic description of a barn. A small building of two stories was erected in 1859. The cause made slow progress, and, in 1879, then consisting of eighteen members, was taken under the care of one of the larger Huddersfield Churches, help being received from the Home Mission from 1881 to 1889, and lay preachers supplying the pulpit. The Birkby district increasing in population, a committee was appointed in 1902, in co-operation with the New North Road Church, to consider the needs of extension. A site was purchased in 1906, and, on July 10th, 1907, Birkby was formed into a separate Church. A building

scheme was inaugurated, and on July 2nd, 1910, the present beautiful chapel was opened, and declared free from debt, although it had cost £5000. This splendid result was achieved, first by the devotion of the Birkby congregation, which raised nearly £1000; by a grant of £750 from the "Twentieth Century Fund"; by very generous local gifts, and by a successful bazaar held by the united Baptist Churches, which added the splendid contribution of £1186 to the fund. The Rev. H. Townsend, M.A., accepted a call to the pastorate, and commenced his ministry on July 17th, 1910.



**THE CHURCHES OF THE SHEFFIELD
DISTRICT.**

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.

SHEFFIELD BAPTISTS.

It is to be regretted that more is not known of the General Baptist Church at Sheffield, which, in 1703, chose Edward Howard for its pastor. After many enquiries, I have been unable to trace the Lincolnshire Association Book which gives the account of the formation of this Church. Adam Taylor, in his "History of the General Baptists" (1818), says, "The first meeting in the Association Book, *now before us*, assembled July 16th, 1695." The loss of a book containing such early records is exceedingly unfortunate.

THE CHURCHES OF THE SHEFFIELD DISTRICT.

BY

Rev. C. E. SHIPLEY.

The Baptists of Sheffield are neither numerous nor wealthy, their ten Churches within the city boundary forming but a small contingent of the Free Church host. Their history is, however, not without inspiration and impressiveness, for, during the years in which they have slowly advanced from their humble beginnings, they have borne a faithful witness and exercised a healthy and considerable influence upon the life of the largest city in the county. The earliest notice of Baptist life in Sheffield which the present writer can discover is in the Lincolnshire Association Book, where it appears that, in 1700, the Baptists of Sheffield applied for counsel and assistance. Joseph Hooke, of Hackenby,* went to set in order what was wanting among them, and several other ministers visited the town. This help was continued until 1703, when they chose Edward Howard for their pastor.† The expenses of this assistance were probably met from the Association's chest, to which the following resolution of the Association refers:—"August 9th, 1698. Resolved—'It would be a good improvement of earthly blessings, a comfortable discharge of our duty to

* Joseph Hooke was baptised at Peterborough in 1676; died 1736, in his 80th year. He was once pastor at Spalding, and was a messenger of the Lincolnshire Association for forty years.

† There is no record of the beginnings of this cause, but it is of interest to know—from papers preserved at the Public Record office—that Rowland Hancock obtained an Indulgence to preach at his own house at Shercliffe (Sbiercliffe) as a Presbyterian, and a second Indulgence for the same house as an Anabaptist (1672). He was imprisoned at York in 1668. Thomas Hollis, the founder of the Hollis Hospital, Sheffield (born 1634; died 1718) "was a dissenter of the Baptist denomination."

God, and profitable for men's souls, seeing we are delivered from persecution, to raise a common stock for necessary uses.' " The chest was kept at the Lincoln meeting-house. It had four locks, the keys were entrusted to four brethren, and the box opened only on the occasion of the Association's meetings. After this brief appearance, the future history of this early effort is unknown; but, in 1786, we find a small Church worshipping in a rented room in Milk Street. Its first five members had been baptised by Mr. Hopper, pastor of the Particular Baptist Church, Nottingham. This infant community survived only seven years, yet was not without seals to its ministry, for fifty converts were baptised. An epitaphian document records that "the Baptist Church being composed of poor people only, and but few in all, and not being able to carry on divine worship creditably, gave up public preaching in 1793, having struggled with troubles more than seven years, and never having a pastor ordained over it." It is interesting to read in the life of Joseph Kinghorn, of Norwich, that when a student at Bristol, in 1787, Mr. Crabtree (of Bradford) enquired "whether he were engaged with any people", and proposed his going to Sheffield on probation, which Kinghorn consented to do. Had Sheffield claimed him instead of Norwich, it is possible that the Yorkshire metropolis might have become a great Baptist city. Upon the disbanding of the Milk Street Church, twelve of its members joined the Church at Masborough, and when the Townhead cause was founded, in 1804, three of them returned to the fellowship of the Sheffield Church.

This new venture of faith numbered only twelve members, but from this little nucleus—apostolic in number and in spirit—Wm. Downs was chosen pastor. He was a brother of humble gifts, but sustained his office for eleven years. The Church, having no settled habitation, at first hired a small premise in Coalpit Lane, but, in 1814, opened the Townhead Street Chapel. Part of the site had been given, and the remainder purchased upon moderate terms. Mr. Isaac Senior, an American merchant, appears to have

been the chief promoter of the enterprise. In the same year five young men of the Church commenced a Sunday School ; an effort regarded with some suspicion. One of the five was Charles Larom, who, having been sent to the Horton Baptist Academy for ministerial training, returned to fulfil the most notable ministry that Townhead has enjoyed. During his pastorate of forty-five years he became a familiar figure in the Churches of the county, and the leader of extension work in the Sheffield district. His own Church sent seven of her sons into the ministry. He was a scholarly and diligent student, having "by almost daily effort acquired a somewhat accurate and intimate knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek." The Townhead Church, after a century of toil, is placed in difficult circumstances. The local changes inevitable in the centre of an expanding city have greatly restricted her opportunities of service. A Bill empowering the trustees to sell the property has received the consent of the House of Lords, and the Church has regretfully decided to disband. But, should its doors be closed its site will long remain sacred. Here many faithful pastors have broken the bread of life, and here also the voices of the most famous Baptist preachers of last century have been heard. Townhead has been a fruitful bough "whose branches run over the wall." She has contributed largely to Home and Foreign Missionary funds, and—as will be seen in the related history of the district—has been the mother, or foster-mother, of Churches not a few. Her ministers have been : Wm. Downs (1804-15) ; John Jones (1816-21) ; Charles Larom (1821-65) ; Charles Short, M.A. (1865-70) ; M. J. Stephens, B.A. (1871) ; Richard Green (1871-87) ; Isaac Ward (1887-1903) ; Ashford Smith 1904-1910).

Portmahon, our second Sheffield Church, resulted from a secession of fifty members from Townhead, in 1833. Their separation arose out of a private dispute in the Church, and Mr. Larom charges the blame "to human imperfection, which will sometimes spoil the working of even divine arrangements." The new community first met in a private

house, from thence removing to the Assembly Rooms, and afterwards to Eldon Street. Their first minister was Rev. A. M. Stalker, and under the pastorate of Rev. D. Rees they erected the Portmahon Chapel in 1839. That there was no serious division between the two Churches is evident from the facts that Mr. Larom travelled through the northern Churches on behalf of the debt on the new chapel; and that, in 1839, Portmahon and Townhead united in an evangelistic effort which added a hundred members to the latter Church. The best known of the Portmahon ministers was Rev. J. E. Giles, a man of considerable eloquence and power, and the author of the hymn "Hast thou said, exalted Jesus?" During his ministry of fourteen years (1846-60) the cause prospered exceedingly. Among other ministries much blessed to the Church were those of Revs. T. L. Stockley and H. Trotman. In 1905, a work of extension was undertaken in the building of new classrooms, at a cost of £2300, and in the same year Rev. Chas. Deal undertook the pastorate.

The Cemetery Road Church, which appears next in order of time, represents the incoming **Cemetery Road** of a stream of Baptist life other than that which flowed so richly from Townhead. During the years, several General Baptists had come to reside in Sheffield. The difference between the two communities is thus defined by Mr. Larom:—"they are Low Arminians, those of our body High Calvinists." In 1837, a young man—Cornelius Atkinson—came from the ancient General Baptist Church at Retford. Retford hesitated to grant a transfer to Townhead, and Townhead was equally hesitant about receiving him. Discovering others like-minded with himself, they gathered together for worship in a house in Rockingham Street, from thence removing to the Assembly Rooms, where, in 1839, eleven of them united in Church fellowship. In 1841, they called as their pastor Rev. T. H. Hudson, and, rapidly progressing, purposed immediately "to build a house unto the name of the Lord." The next year saw them in their own chapel at Eyre Street, but soon to be deprived of their pastor, who departed for



ATTERCLIFFE.



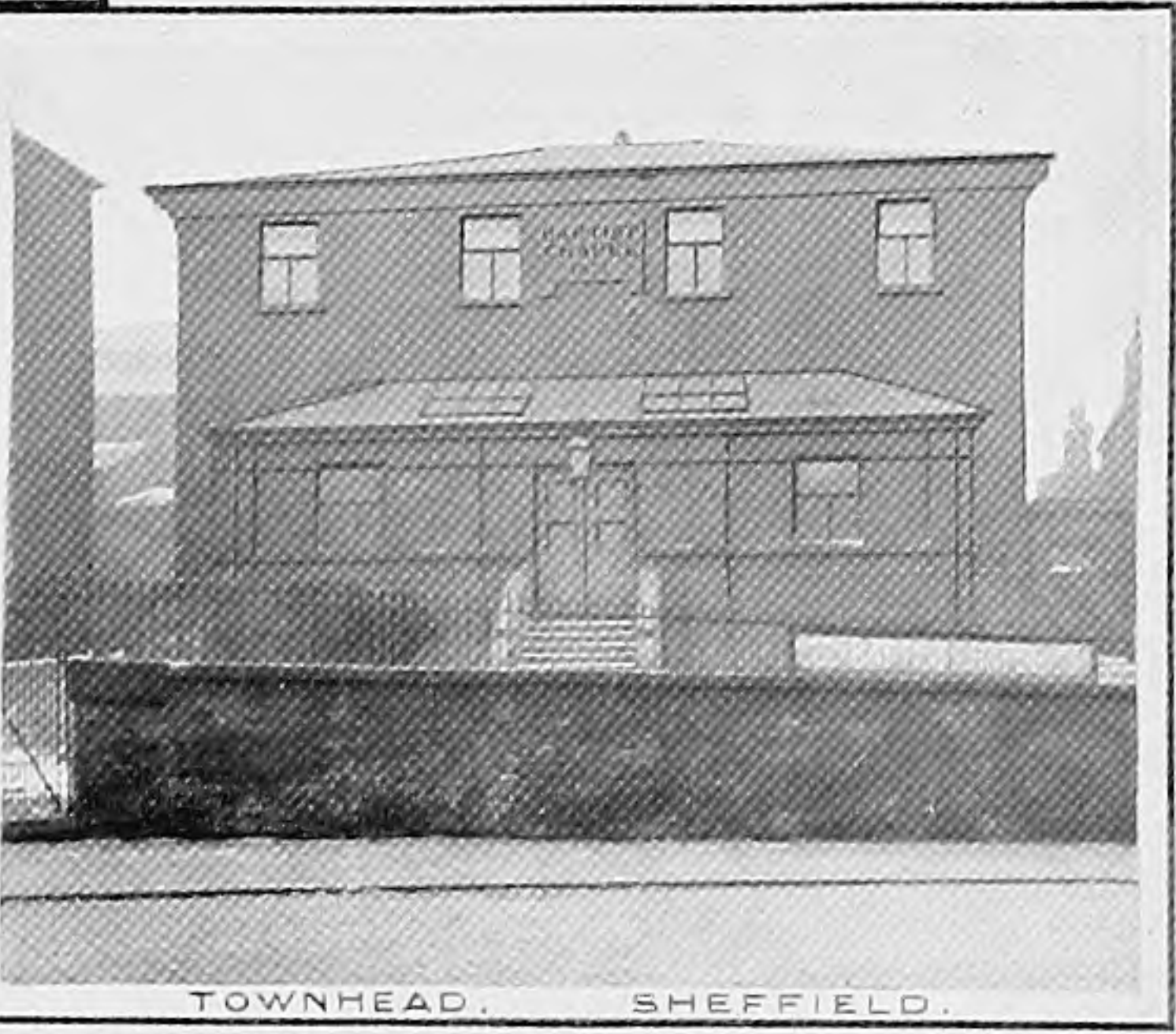
CEMETERY ROAD, SHEFFIELD.



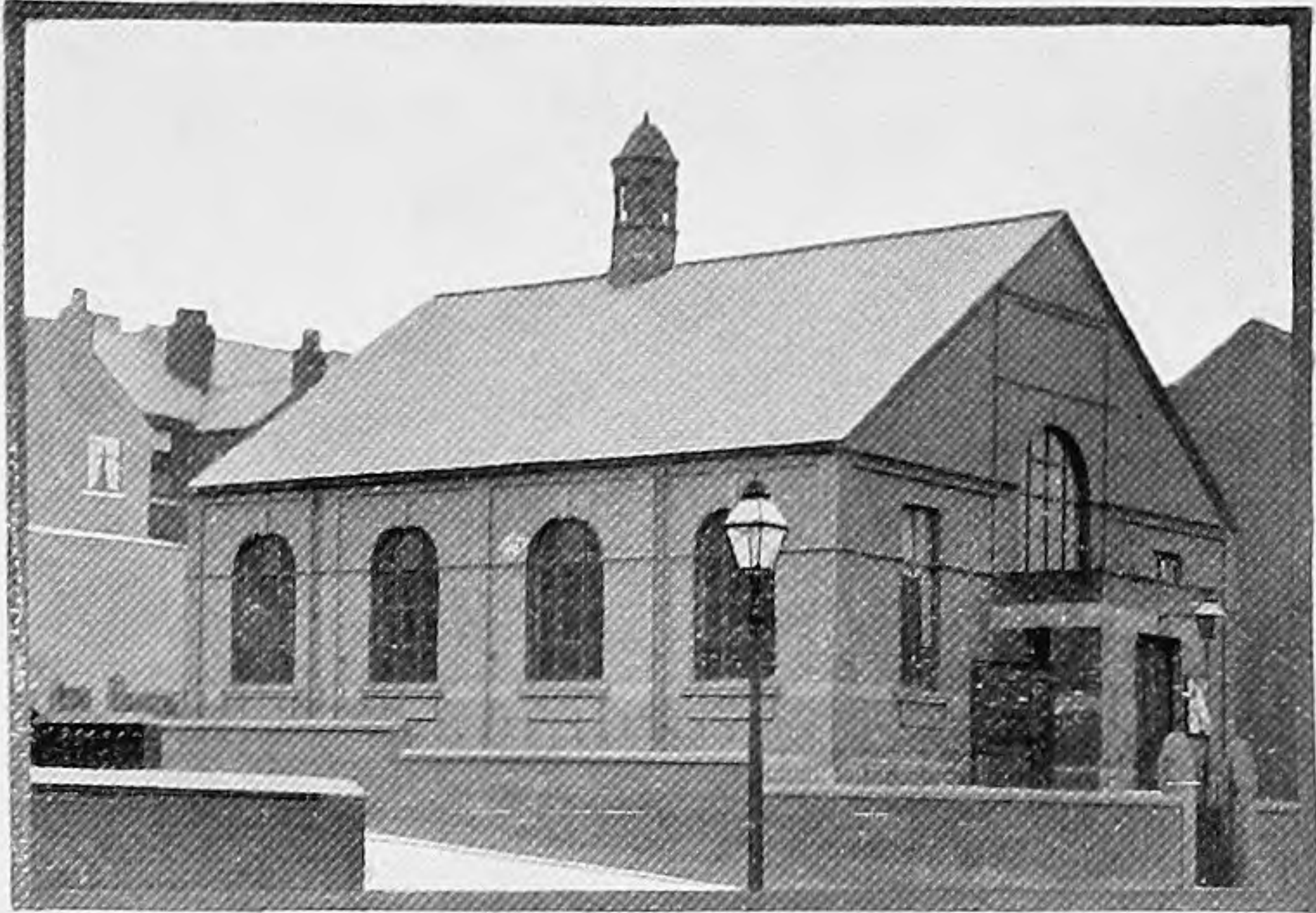
PORT MAHON, SHEFFIELD.



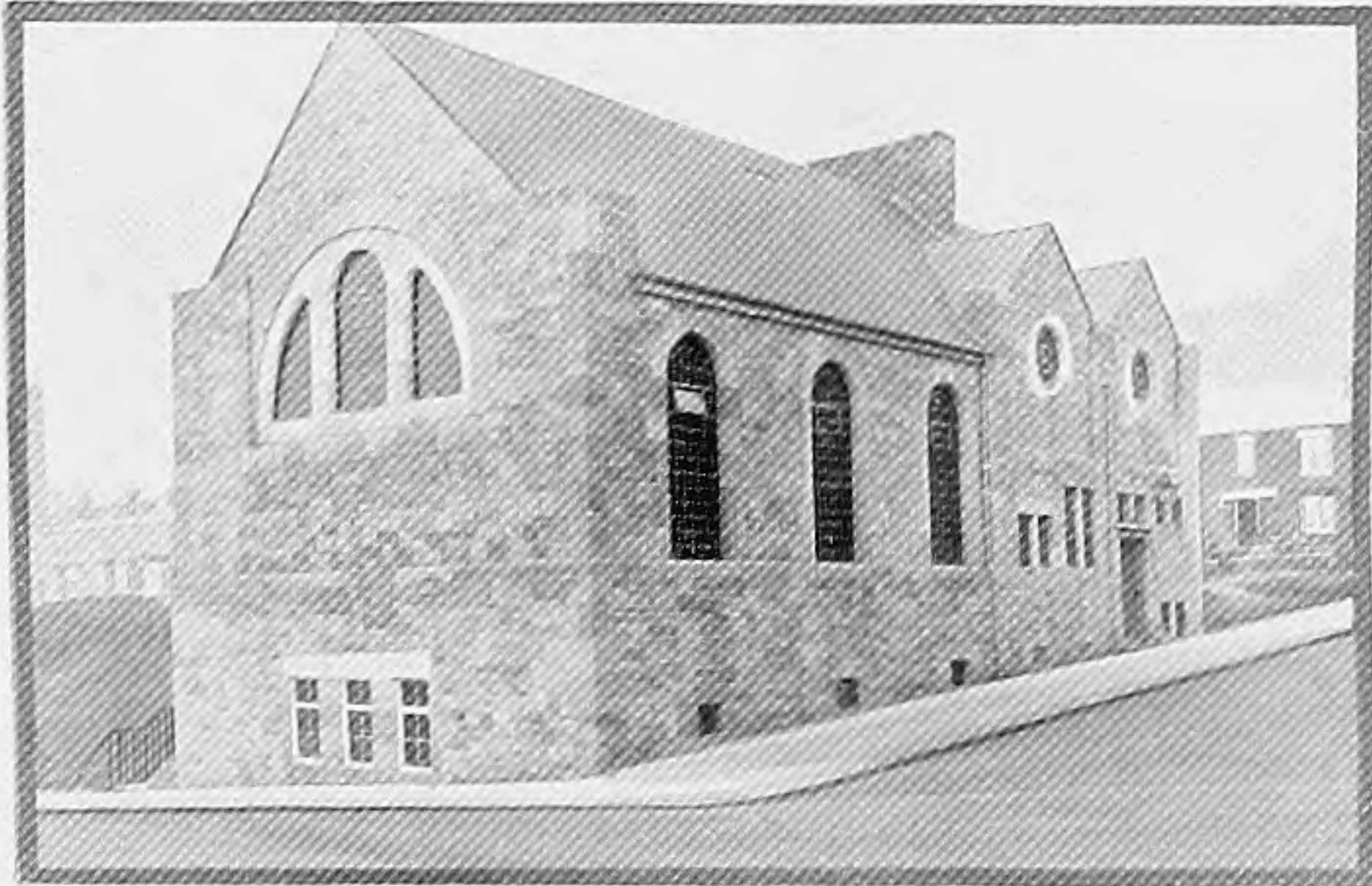
GLOSSOP ROAD, SHEFFIELD.



TOWNHEAD, SHEFFIELD.



DARNALL ROAD.



WOODSEATS.



HILLSBORO.



CROOKES.



WALKLEY.

missionary work in China. During the following ministry serious trouble arose over the use of fermented wine at the Lord's Supper. In the Rev. Henry Ashbery's ministry (1851-64), they found their chapel too strait for them. The property was sold, and the Church removed to its present home. Here they had wisely acquired ground sufficient for future wide extensions. The building, opened on May 12th, 1859, was speedily justified by the increasing prosperity of the cause. In the advent of Rev. Giles Hester (1865-79) the Church found itself possessed of a man of exceptional ability. Of wide culture, and varied interests, he exerted a powerful influence in the city; his removal, owing to enfeebled health, was recognised as a great loss. In 1883, the Rev. E. Carrington began a ministry which continued for twenty-two years. In its jubilee year the Church emancipated itself from debt, and almost immediately began the erection of new schools at a cost of £4150. This was entirely defrayed in 1909. The Rev. E. Price, B.A., B.D., succeeded Mr. Carrington, and in a brief but strenuous ministry of four-and-a-half years led his people successfully into several new fields of service. He resigned, in 1910, to undertake the Principalship of Calabar College, Jamaica, and was succeeded by Rev. C. E. Shipley.

The Glossop Road Church possesses our only Sheffield Chapel which can lay claim to any **Glossop Road.** architectural distinction. Its remarkably fine group of buildings had their beginning at Townhead, in a meeting called "to consider the recommendation of the deacons, that an additional Church be built in the neighbourhood of Glossop Road; and to gather a stronger cause than is possible at Townhead Street." The suggestion was unanimously adopted; the site was selected and foundation stones were laid on October 12th, 1869; the opening sermon was preached by Dr. McLaren, May 11th, 1871. The outlay of £10,500 was met in a few years. The mother Church transferred its pastor, Rev. J. M. Stephens, B.A., with sixty-seven members, to undertake the new work. It met this weakening of its forces in a splendidly progressive

spirit—"We express our high Christian regard for all our dear friends, with our earnest prayer that the smile of God may rest upon the two Churches." The Rev. John Bailey, B.A., became pastor in 1877, during whose service of seventeen years the schools were built at a cost of £4500. He was succeeded by Rev. W. H. Ibberson (1896-1900), and Rev. J. Wolfenden, D.D. (1901-08). Glossop Road has given two sons to the missionary cause—Revs. Frank Darling and Richard Beedham, both of whom were faithful unto death in our great missionary crusade on the Congo. Its present minister is Rev. J. F. Matthews.

The Attercliffe Church next invites our attention. Its first meeting place was an auction room, **Attercliffe.** which was rented by a few Baptists not directly connected with any one particular Church. In 1874, they built a schoolroom, and two years later were formed into a Church numbering thirty-six, with Rev. R. Ensoll as pastor. In 1883, a lecture hall was erected, and the fact that the youthful Church established mission stations at Woodhouse Hill, Swallownest, and Treeton, sufficiently testifies to the ardour of its workers. Mr. Ensoll was followed by Rev. J. G. Williams (1887-1902), under whose ministry the present chapel was built and the entire cost quickly secured. Mr. Williams' ministry was terminated by his election to the important Secretaryship of the County Association. He was succeeded by Rev. W. Walker (1903-09), who removed to Lincoln. The church is at the present time busy with extensive alterations to its school premises, and is under the pastoral care of Rev. L. E. Smith.

Freedom Street Church, Walkley, owed its inception, in 1875, to the opening of a preaching **Walkley.** station by friends who were, for the most part, members of Townhead. After some months, the work was definitely undertaken under the guidance of Rev. R. Green, of Townhead. Thirteen persons were baptised in 1880, and in the next year it became a branch Church of twenty members. In November, 1883,

“ the District ” appointed a building committee, whose work resulted in the opening of the chapel, in April, 1885. In 1888, the Church suffered a secession of some of its members, but—after five years—a reunion was effected and a call given to Rev. A. G. Haste. Prosperity attended his ministry, and, in 1897, the building debt was cancelled and a scheme for the extension of its insufficient premises successfully carried through, at a cost of £1500. After thirteen years' work Mr. Haste removed to Leeds; he was succeeded by Revs. D. J. Lawrence (1907-11), and G. A. James, B.A. (1911).

The Hillsborough Church occupies an excellent position in a growing working-class suburb.

Hillsborough. Some members of Townhead and Portmahon, resident in the district, gathered for worship, in 1885, in a room in Taplin Road. They reaped their first fruits in 1887, in a baptism of seven converts. Formed into a Church in 1892, and having united with Walkley, they shared the ministry of its pastor, Rev. A. G. Haste. Finding that Walkley required the whole services of its minister, the Hillsborough Church called Rev. A. McKittrick, and, with a prospering cause, built a school-chapel in 1895. For some years following, the Church was in troubled waters owing to the removal of its pastor, who, with a number of its members, commenced a mission in the immediate vicinity. In 1900, the committees of the District and the County became interested in the Church's condition, and, by their assistance, the Rev. C. J. Rendell undertook the pastorate. This union of interests was so happily successful that, in 1905, the Church became self-supporting; in 1906 it erected schools at a cost of £1450. In a rapidly-increasing neighbourhood excellent progress has been made, and the church is now anticipating the inauguration of a new chapel scheme.

Darnall Road Church, situated in a needy, industrial district, was commenced by several members who left the Attercliffe Church in 1894. At first these assembled in a mission room on Attercliffe Common. The present freehold

site was secured in 1898, and a school-chapel, to accommodate 350 worshipers, was built. The work being attended with promise of success, Mr. E. Cawdron, of Rotherham, a devoted and enthusiastic layman, was invited to undertake the pastorate. For the last eleven years he has freely given his unstinted services to the cause. In 1904, new vestries were added; the site still awaits the building of school premises, to enable the present chapel to be used entirely for the public worship of the Church.

Norton Woodseats Church, formerly known as Meersbrook, is advantageously located in one of the most progressive of the city's outskirts. It is the offspring of the Cemetery Road Church. Certain members residing at Meersbrook, feeling a concern for the needs and possibilities of the new district, began a cause in Derbyshire Lane. In 1905, Rev. E. Carrington, at their request, formed them into a separate Church. They were unable to sustain a pastor, but under an arrangement with Cemetery Road, during the ministry of Rev. E. Price, Mr. L. G. Hughes of Bristol College, was invited (1909) to serve the Church at Meersbrook while acting as assistant pastor to the mother Church. A site was secured fronting the main road, and a school-chapel erected, at a cost of more than £2000. Mr. Hughes was ordained to the pastorate, and—although some years must pass before the entire scheme attains its completion—the rapid growth of the congregation leads us to believe that there has been well and truly laid the foundation of a Church which, in the future, will occupy a commanding position in the Baptist life of the city.

The Crookes Church, the youngest of our city Churches, represents the one extension effort undertaken by the Sheffield District in its official capacity. After desultory conversations and suggestions in the District meetings, a Crookes committee was formed, in 1907, with Mr. W. H. Barnes as its leader, and a site secured. The funds being inadequate for a permanent structure, an iron building, seating 320

worshippers was substituted, and opened on May 21st, 1908. The Rev. F. D. Tranter, of Barnsley, was invited to the pastorate, and, in the following September, a Church of twenty-five members was formed. Crookes is situated in an enlarging district, and the Church has before it the task—which cannot be entered upon too soon—of replacing its iron chapel with a more enduring edifice.

Penistone Road Mission Church also claims a place in this history. It had its beginning, **Penistone Road.** in 1906, in a room adjoining some large manufacturing works in Penistone Road. The district is an extremely needy one in every sense. The work is now under the care of "the District", and the Lay Preachers' Association. It is accompanied by most hopeful signs of success. The preaching services are well attended, and 160 scholars are enrolled in the school. It is hoped that the Mission may secure a building of its own.

As we pass to the Churches of the District beyond the city boundary, the Crowle Church at **Crowle.** once attracts our interest. The story of its beginning is lost in obscurity, its Church book—which a hundred years ago was described as "tattered remains"—having been irrevocably lost. Some leaves brought to light in 1866—alleging the existence of a Church here in 1599—have been declared, after investigation, to be a forgery. Crowle was originally part of the Isle of Axholme Church, which gathered its members from Epworth, Butterwick, and Crowle; the "Isle" was the firm ground among the fen lands where the Trent, the Idle and the Humber join. The Rev. W. T. Whitley, LL.D., of the Baptist Historical Society, has kindly supplied the following information: "John Smyth, in about the year 1606 organised a church at Gainsborough, and that it included members from this district the original records at Amsterdam show.* But the emigration of 1608 took away so many, that those left behind—obviously the weak-kneed—are heard

* The Piggott family were from "Axen," or Axholme, and Thomas Piggott wrote "The confession of fayth by the remaynders of Mr. Smithe's company."—C. E. S.

of no more. A study of the archives of York and Lincoln might yield much to a patient investigator. The Declaration of Indulgence gave the Church confidence, for it began to keep records, and reported 126 members in 1675, with John Shaw and John Norfolk as elders. The fact that Norfolk's signature is found in 1660 entitles us to say that the Church existed at that date." From Hooke's Apology, we learn that, in 1700, the river Torn in the Isle of Axholme was "famous for dipping." In 1699, land was given to the Society for a burial ground; and the Axholme Church was amongst those that united in forming the Lincolnshire Association, on July 16th, 1695. In 1738, the affairs of the Church appear to have been in confusion, for a meeting was held for its reorganisation. Trustees and deacons were appointed for Epworth and Butterwick, and Israel Cotton came to be elder. In 1750 many members were excluded for joining the Methodists, and, ten years later, a building was erected at Epworth. But the Church appears to have suffered a decline, "the most interesting doctrines of the gospel being seldom introduced", a phrase which suggests an incoming of the widespread Socinianism of the time. The first mention of Crowle is in 1789, and in 1804 a Crowle member was made a trustee; a building does not appear to have been erected at Crowle until 1820. It will be seen that the history of Crowle is entirely bound up with the Axholme Church, of which it formed a part. This Church in 1817, numbered fifty members, with one pastor and three assistant preachers. My attempt to complete a record of the Axholme pastors gives the following fragmentary and uncertain list:—John Norfolk (1660-1678); John Shaw (——-1705); John Grant (1718-28); Israel Cotton (1738, died March 5th, 1764); Edward Foster (1765, died 1813); David Cheeseman (pastor for 19 years, died August 25th, 1832); Joseph Chamberlain (pastor for 40 years, died February 27th, 1857); S. Watson (very brief); R. Heaton (1834-41); D. D. Billings (1841-49); George Rodgers (1854-56); W. Sharman (1856-58); — Lovekin (1859-61); — Allen (1861-63); W. Saunders (1863-64); Jabez Stutterd (1866-84); F. Norwood (1885-87); W. R.



ROTHERHAM.



CROWLE.



NEW WHITTINGTON.



BARNSELY, SHEFFIELD ROAD.

SHEFFIELD

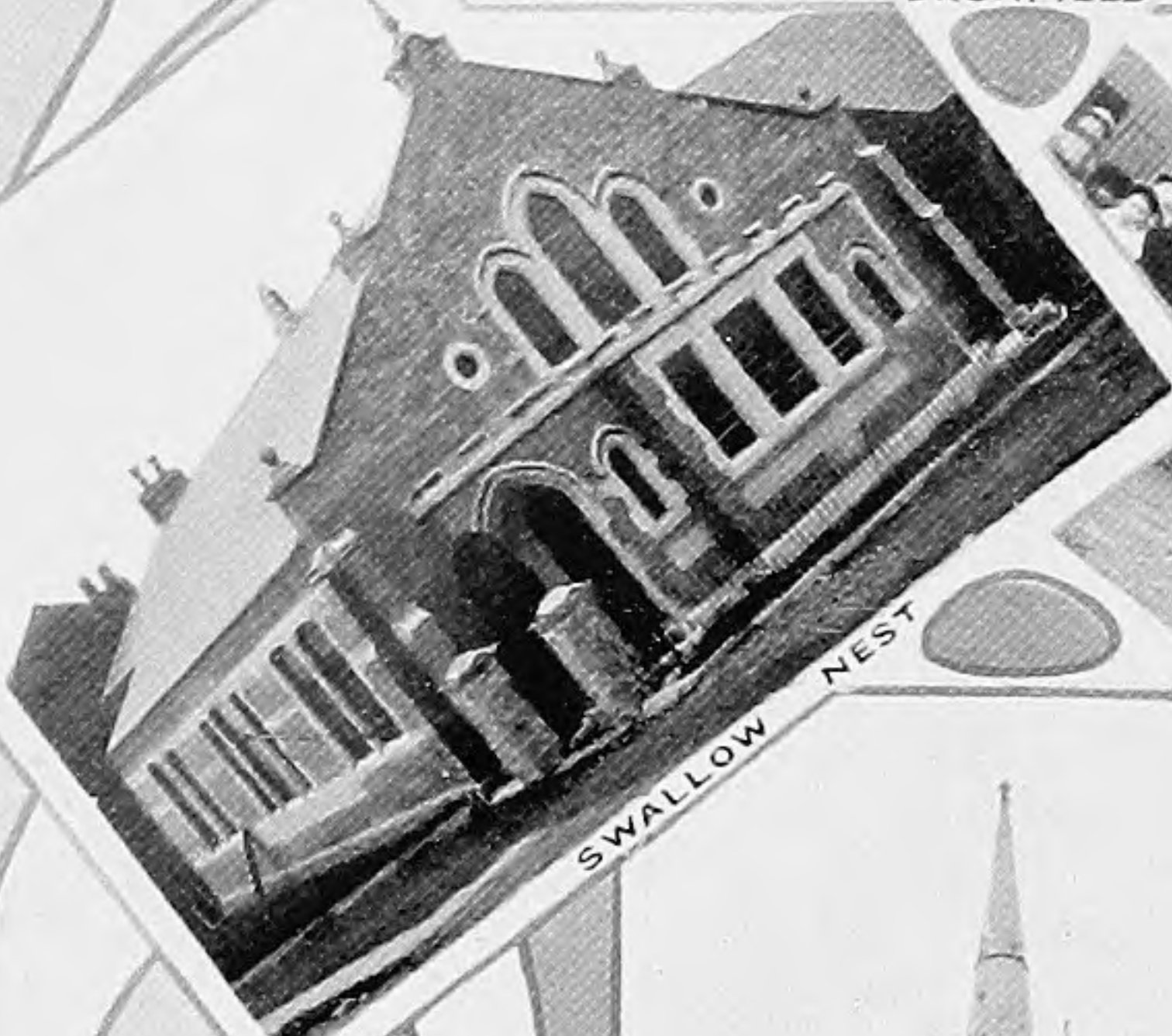
DISTRICT



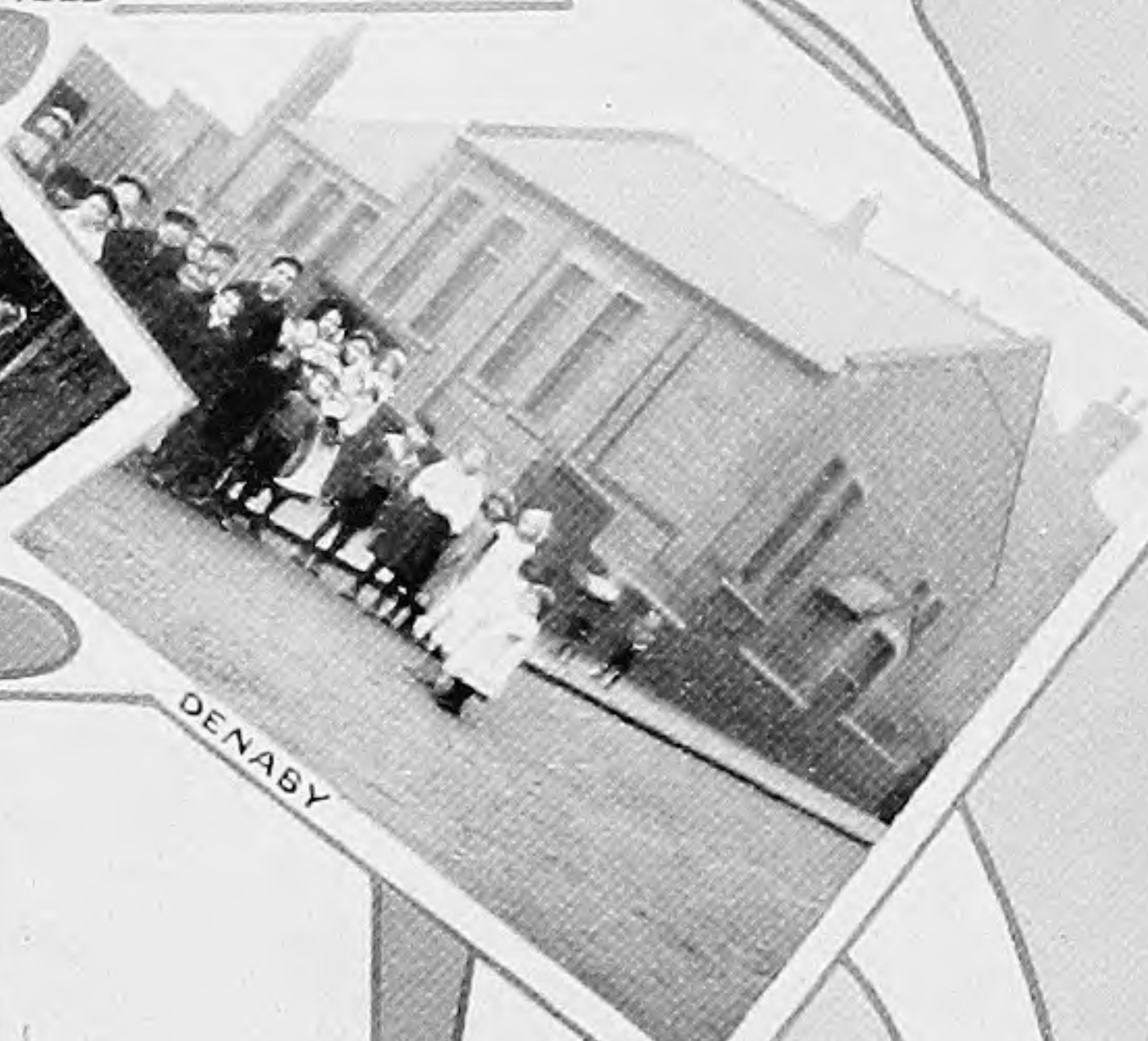
BARNSELY, RACE COMMON ROAD.



DRONFIELD



SWALLOW NEST



DENABY



DONCASTER



CONISBRO

Parker (1887-1904); J. Pope Smith (1904, the present pastor).

The Rotherham Church, next in order of seniority, was founded in 1789, and worshipped in a **Rotherham.** building on Masborough Common. The site may still be distinguished by the graveyard which adjoined the sanctuary, where reposes the dust of its first worshippers. For nearly fifty years the Church seems to have made but little progress. In 1835, Mr. Wm. Matthews—an excise officer—was pastor, and in that year Rev. Chas. Larom was instrumental in securing the present Westgate site, the reconstituted Church occupying its new home in 1837. It numbered only twenty-six members, but invited Rev. James Buck to its ministry. He remained only three years, probably finding the debt of £700 a burden grievous to be borne. During the pastorate of Rev. A. Dyson (1848-56) this encumbrance was removed. The Rev. J. Ashmead succeeded Mr. Dyson, having come from Horton College. In 1859, he directed a movement to complete the original design of the chapel and to add much-needed accommodation for the schools. Its completion was made memorable by a visit from Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. Mr. Ashmead, who removed in 1863, was succeeded by the Revs. J. Arnold, G. Whitehead, and Henry Bonner; the last named left for Birmingham in 1876. The Church now sought counsel of the Home Mission Committee, which introduced the Rev. J. Harper. Having resigned in 1880, he was followed in a helpful ministry of five years by Mr. Benjamin Lee, of Sheffield. During his presence we read of “Mr. John Whitehead, who has entered Rawdon College, and intends to offer himself for work on the Congo.” The Rev. J. Collinson succeeded Mr. Lee, the Home Mission giving generous assistance to his support; but the Church had many difficulties, and he resigned in 1903, after seven years earnest service. The Church now remained pastorless, but received oversight from the minister at Doncaster, under whose guidance £1250 was spent in necessary building. Having accomplished these responsible concerns, the Church extended a call, in 1908, to Rev. J. T. Heselton.

The Sheffield Road Church, Barnsley, provides an interesting history, the first page of **Barnsley.** which was written in 1845. In that year Mr. John Wood, a glass manufacturer of Barnsley, attended the Association meetings at Farsley and urged the needs of his town. This resulted in the coming of Rev. J. Burton, of Huddersfield, who brought with him a student—John Law—from Horton College. They provided themselves with a tent for their pioneering task, and Mr. Law preached in the town and on Worsbro' Common—a notoriously godless locality. The only christian family on the Common opened its cottage for services. When the student returned to College, lay preachers from Sheffield, led by a Mr. Eady, continued the good work. Mr. Eady baptised nine converts in the river at Worsbro' Bridge, eight of whom met for Church fellowship in a room in New Street. This was in 1846, and in the next year a building fund was opened. Mr. Wood presented them with the necessary land, upon which, in 1849, they began to build. Rev. W. Cathcart who became, in 1850, their first pastor, enjoyed a successful though brief ministry of three-and-a-half years. After three equally short pastorates the Church called, in 1861, the Rev. John Compston, who had the joy of celebrating the extinction of the debt in 1865, and of seeing the cause become self-supporting. He was followed (1871) by Rev. H. Watts, and (1873) by Rev. B. W. Osler. In 1881 the Rev. J. Young commenced the longest⁷ pastorate the Church has known, one of seventeen years; he was followed by Rev. D. Lindsay (1899-1904) and by Rev. J. E. Rowe, M.A., who resigned in 1907, and was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. A. Stock, B.A., B.D.

Zion Church, Barnsley, is the child of Sheffield Road. Preaching services had been held in this **Zion, Barnsley.** part of the town from the year 1861, but it was not until 1882 that the Sheffield Road Church appointed a committee to establish permanent work. A chapel in Parker Street was opened in 1885. In 1894, the new cause entered upon an independent career; twenty-

seven members were dismissed from the parent Church to carry on the work, with Rev. W. R. Ponton as pastor. In 1896, it was necessary to build a larger chapel, and land was purchased on Racecommon Road. Mr. Ponton, who left in 1897, was succeeded by Rev. F. J. Tranter. The new school chapel was opened in 1900, the Parker Street building having been sold for £400. Mr. Tranter removed to Sheffield, and the Church, together with the County Association, called Mr. W. Palmer, of Rawdon College, to its ministry. Zion has just completed a great effort to extinguish the remaining liabilities of her building fund, and is rejoicing in the fact that she is now—for the first time in her history—liberated from the burden of debt.

Dronfield Church dates from 1846, but its beginnings may be found in 1830, when Rev. David
Dronfield. Clark, then pastor of the Independent Church—"a very excellent man, and a gentleman of fortune"—was baptised at Townhead. He continued his Dronfield pastorate until 1846. Not a few of his people entertained their pastor's convictions on baptism, and at the coming of a new minister this difficulty was naturally accentuated. Ten members withdrew, and were received into the Church at Townhead, Sheffield. They were formed into a branch Church under the oversight of Rev. Chas. Larom, and met for worship in the house of widow Clough, at Dronfield. Their next advances were the renting of a room and the beginning of a Sunday school. They then erected a chapel, afterwards sold to the Midland Railway Company. The present building dates from 1872. Dronfield remained connected with Townhead until 1890, its pulpit being supplied by lay preachers; but in 1892 Rev. C. J. Rendell undertook the pastorate. During his service of eight years many additions were made to the church, and galleries added to the chapel. He was followed by Revs. F. O. Darvell, A. E. Cawdron, and E. B. Warren. The Church is at present without a minister.

The cause at New Whittington is another evidence of the vitality of the Sheffield Church at **New Whittington.** Townhead. Rev. Chas. Larom's diary records that he gave an address on the laying of the foundation stone of the chapel at Whittington, in 1862. The new enterprise remained for fifteen years under the oversight of the mother Church at Townhead, but, in 1877, became a separate cause with Mr. Lewis as pastor. Memories of his life and service are still cherished with much affection. Since 1890, the pulpit has been regularly supplied by the Baptist lay preachers of the Sheffield District. Notwithstanding the growth of the village, the cause has made little progress during recent years, the present membership being thirty-two.

The Swallownest Church began in humble fashion with cottage meetings, which were first held in **Swallownest.** 1875. A few friends, under the supervision of the Rotherham Church, built and opened a school-chapel in 1877. In 1907, the pastor of Portmahon, Sheffield, undertook the oversight of the cause, and in the following year the foundation stones of the present building were laid, and the chapel opened for worship on Sept. 3rd, 1908.

At Treeton, the Baptist cause began in a room over a stable, the workers coming from the **Treeton.** Attercliffe Church. An iron chapel was erected in 1890, on ground rented from a colliery company. The building had afterwards to be transferred to another site, the land being required for a new railway. For several years Attercliffe continued to direct and sustain the work, but the Church at Glossop Road has recently become responsible for its oversight.

The Doncaster Church of to-day originated in 1885, when a small company of Baptists established **Doncaster.** a mission by holding services in a hired hall. It is not the first Baptist effort in the town, for there had been an earlier chapel which is still standing in Spring Gardens. This having become dilapidated, the Church appears to have been divided in feeling con-

cerning its future, with the result that it was disbanded in 1871. The only information obtainable relating to the old chapel, is that the trustees sold the furnishings, and there appears to be some doubt as to present ownership. The new cause made slow progress until, in 1890, Rev. J. F. Porteous—who had just left College—accepted the call of the little remnant and formed a Church of twelve members. Success quickly followed his coming, and in 1893 a site was purchased, upon which a school-chapel was built. Mr. Porteous removed to Huddersfield in 1899; he left a Church which had increased to 176 members and was unencumbered by debt. Rev. A. C. Carter succeeded him (1900-08), and by the help of the "Twentieth Century Fund" and the Association, the present chapel was opened in 1906, providing sittings for 630 worshippers and costing £3500. At the present time Rev. H. Rolfe sustains the pastorate, and Doncaster is attracting the attention of the denomination as being at the centre of the new South Yorkshire coalfield.

The Conisboro' cause originated in an offer of £100 to the "Sheffield District", by the late F. E. **Conisboro'**. Smith, of Sheffield, towards the undertaking of work in the town. A first effort was made in the Board School, services being conducted by Sheffield ministers and laymen. From thence a removal was made to the Co-operative Hall, and a colporteur engaged. The present iron buildings were erected in 1903, largely through the generosity of Mr. R. H. Sharp. Its first minister was Rev. R. Martin (1898-1900), who was followed by Rev. W. S. Maxey (1901-06). Since then the services have been chiefly sustained by lay preachers, and for the last two years pastoral oversight has been given by the minister of the Doncaster Church.

Denaby has an admirable little chapel, erected in 1902, at the expense of Mr. R. H. Sharp, **Denaby.** of Conisboro'. The attention of the county was at that time aroused by certain newspaper articles on the spiritual destitution of this mining village. The work has been sustained thus far by the Conisbro' Church, with the assistance of lay preachers.

**THE YORKSHIRE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION.**

BY

Rev. JOHN HASLAM, D.D., F.R. Hist.S.

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The origin and history of our Association illustrate and enforce many important lessons. We learn how the renewed heart seeks fellowship with those who have experienced the Divine change. We see the difficulty of maintaining independency under a policy of federation. We discover that it is impossible to form a satisfactory and abiding union on a merely theological basis, and we see that a union springing from love to Jesus Christ is fruitful in manifold ways, and abideth.

Other writers will tell of the formation of the early Baptist Churches, of the risk, and sacrifices, and difficulties involved in maintaining Christian fellowship. "The Act of Toleration" was welcomed with abundant thanksgivings to God. The emancipated leaders resolved to make the most of their privileges, and, rejoicing in their liberty, used it to endeavour to secure the "communion of Churches", as well as the "fellowship of saints". But, alas, "there were many adversaries", and Ivimey, writing on those early days, says it "is mortifying to find that their well-meant efforts to unite the Churches in a compact body, by means of an annual general assembly composed of the pastors and messengers of the Churches, failed because the decisions of the assembly, however wise, could not be enforced by any authority." "Our history serves to warrant the conclusion that our independent principles will always prevent any general union of the Churches, and render nugatory any concentrated plan

of co-operation." "The measures recommended to the attention of the Churches by the general assemblies were highly commendable. To procure a learned education for the gifted brethren who had been called to the ministry—to assist those ministers with pecuniary help whose incomes were insufficient, and to encourage their pastors to visit other Churches and to preach the gospel in the destitute parts of the kingdom, were noble designs and generally approved by the Churches as desirable objects."*

ORIGIN OF ASSOCIATIONS.

But Ivimey proceeds to show that "the lack of organisation and absence of the spirit of brotherhood, which teaches the strong to bear the burdens of the weak, rendered the measures recommended by the assembly abortive, and finally produced the destruction of the assembly itself." Such was the state of things in 1702; happily, old things have passed away, never to return. The spirit of Jesus has leavened His Church, and the story we have to tell is full of inspiration and encouragement.

Firstly, as to our origin. There is some obscurity hanging over the origin of local associations. That they sprang up during the Commonwealth and that they rapidly multiplied, when once the idea was broached, are facts abundantly attested; but as to which Association can rightly claim to be the first, there is no small difficulty in determining. The Confession of "The Seven Churches in London", published in 1664, hints at the idea of association in the forty-seventh article. Although "distinct and several bodies," yet "they are to walk by one rule," and are "*to have counsel and help one of another.*" The desire for association was deepened by a letter sent from the Churches in Ireland commending their representatives, and asking for "a perfect account of the Churches of Christ in communion with them, and for brotherly correspondence every three months to be maintained." After a day of fasting and prayer, the London Churches adopted

* Ivimey, p. 32.

the suggestions of the letter. Churches throughout the kingdom, so far as known, were communicated with, and their response led to communication not only with the Churches in London but with each other. As the consequence, they "speedily adopted other means of periodical association with each other." In November, 1653, an association was formed as the result of this decision, as well as another in the west of England, in September, 1654. The latter was found to be so profitable to the Churches generally that it met again two months after. The next meeting was at Bridgwater, in February, 1655; it was chiefly remarkable for an outspoken letter to the Baptist Churches in Ireland, protesting against receiving "large allowance from the State", which, it was alleged, had drawn unworthy men into the ministry. In 1655, the Midland Association was formed at Warwick; but it is not easy to ascertain how many associations existed at the time of the Commonwealth, since new ones were constantly being formed and old ones dissolved. There is, however, good ground for affirming that they were found in every part of the country.* London, evidently, was regarded as the Metropolis, and "The Seven Churches of London", as is proved by fragments found here and there in Church records, sent messengers all over the country to report as to the spiritual condition of the Churches, to stimulate them to aggressive work, and to endeavour to form something like a combination of Churches, or a "Baptist Union". Care was always taken to assure the Churches that there "was no intention to infringe upon your liberties as voluntary societies, possessed of full power to manage all your affairs within yourselves."

THE FIRST BAPTIST GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

In 1691, a General Assembly was held in London, when a report was presented giving a list of the local Associations and the names of the associated Churches. The northern Association was composed of six, one in Yorkshire, two in Lancashire, one in Durham, and two in Cumberland. The

* By-paths in Baptist History, p. 191.

first meeting of which we have any minutes was in 1699, at Newton Cap, a farmhouse on the Wear. Afterwards, meetings were held annually at Bitchburn, at the house of Henry Blackel, a generous layman, who acted as pastor. Interesting letters which were sent to these gatherings have been preserved. Questions were raised concerning the spiritual condition and general work of the Churches. Disputes and divisions were referred to the delegates for arbitration and settlement. Dr. Owen wrote a pamphlet on "the true nature of a Gospel Church", to justify the exercise of this authority, and the decisions were generally accepted as binding on all parties.

But it must be remembered that the Churches at that time, almost without exception, were obscure, isolated communities, badly organised, and generally without pastors or leaders, "composed mostly of men of limited education, narrow culture, with little of this world's goods at their disposal, harassed by a dominant Church, the Pariahs of the social state." Religion, speaking generally, was never at so low an ebb in the Church of England. The wealthier livings were held by absentees, and the poorer by indolent and uneducated men. A shrewd observer brands the clergy as "the most lifeless in Europe, the most remiss of their labours in private, and the least severe in their lives." There was a revolt against religion and against Churches. In the higher circles "everyone laughs," (said Montesquieu on his visit to England) "if one talks of religion." The decay of the great dissenting bodies went hand in hand with that of the Church and they declined in numbers as well as in energy.*

THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL.

The declension was arrested to some extent by the determination of a few earnest Nonconformists in London (possibly with Baptists amongst them) to form the Northern Education Society, for the purpose of "dispelling the cloud of Socinian darkness then spreading over the northern counties

* Green's Short History of the English People, Vol. iii.

1. The 10th September 1698

The names of many to the house of the Brethren called a house out of the world
 into himself in a year about Bridlington. They were former only of Church state being
 & was added by welcoming the same. nothing to stir up themselves by the birth
 Paper. & humbly of Church members. by the way of spirit speaking the same to give
 assistance to his fellow Brethren. & by moving up themselves, and to making to me
 another in the following of Major at Lofos Richard Jukes Henry Blackwell.

The Ward Clerk of the Church usually meeting in the County of Durham

Richard Pymon.	Edward Pymon	Philippe Howard.
John C. ...	John C. ...	
Robert ...	John C. ...	
Michael ...	Richard ...	
Michael ...	Richard ...	
Thomas ...	John ...	
John ...	John ...	
Richard ...	Richard ...	
James ...	Richard ...	
	Richard ...	
	Richard ...	
	Richard ...	

THE FIRST ENTRY IN CHURCH-BOOK. 1698.

The 10 of November 1698

Then agreed upon by all the Members present, that for the future the
 that day in every month be solemnly & seriously observed in all
 as the Lord by the help of his Holy Spirit, shall enable us to perform
 the Meeting to begin between nine & ten a Clock: & upon special occasions
 be turned into a Fasting Day.

It was further agreed that that day for the future be appointed
 collections; and that the Money at the concluding of the
 goes into the hands of the Deacon, as the Lord shall open their hearts
 by him to be distributed to the poor, & other uses that the Church shall see

FASTING AND FELLOWSHIP.

At a Church meeting held this day, having
 examined into the conduct of John Gurney Deacon
 of this Church. it is agreed on by us that he is become
 worthy after taking offence at a Bre. of Jam. Slumber
 in not proceeding according to the rule but telling
 it to others, and dissenting from his duty, and
 refusing to be accountable to the Church after
 repeated admonition. So Gantroger post

**DISCIPLINE
BRIDLINGTON.**

of England, and by which many congregations might be blessed with godly preachers, sound in the faith and exemplary in their lives." (May 24th, 1756). An academy was established at "Millbridge", Heckmondwike, and officers were appointed. The "rational Nonconformists", as they styled themselves, led by Dr. Priestley of Birstall, whose high character and eminence as a scientist gave him great influence, established an academy at Warrington, the influence of which is seen to-day in many towns. On the other hand, "Scott's students" from Heckmondwike gathered large evangelical congregations, brought the fresh air of gospel truth to communities which had become lifeless and corrupt, and laid the foundation of many of the strongest Churches of to-day in the West Riding. Whilst the Independents were thus organising for more effective and permanent evangelistic work, Mr. Fawcett of Waingate and a few kindred spirits, were endeavouring to weld together the feeble Churches in the north. The Baptist cause being in its infancy in this part of the country, recourse was had to the Churches of the same denomination in London and the vicinity, "that their hands might be strengthened, and that, by becoming better acquainted with the faith and order of those which were considered as sister Churches, they might benefit by their direction and assistance."

The most prominent leaders of that time were Mr. Brine, Mr. Wallin, and Dr. Gill. All were Calvinists of the High Calvinistic type, and produced several treatises, which were more likely to lead to endless disputations than to brotherly union and earnest evangelistic efforts. The most prominent then, and for many years after, was Dr. Gill, a man of great ability and learning, a skilful organiser, and a man of strong (if not domineering) personality. He published a "Body of Divinity", and an exposition of the Bible in 9 volumes. These were considered an essential part of the minister's library, and we have evidence that, in some cases, they were purchased by the Churches, "to be lent to the pastor to assist him in his work." As Fawcett's biographer says, "the consequence was that a taste for polemic divinity was

acquired, which was eventually found to be highly injurious to the peace and comfort of religious societies." In connection with the influence which the extensive perusal of these works had, and the high and almost oracular authority which they maintained, there may be mentioned the object of the associations as then established. The object seems to have been to secure sound doctrine and healthy discipline rather than the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom by the federation of the Churches in evangelistic efforts. " Besides sermons and lectures and an enquiry into the state of the Churches, questions on theological subjects were proposed, to which written answers were expected to be given at the next annual meeting, and the secretary was required to transmit to the Churches a written report of the proceedings. Many of these questions were of a doctrinal nature, others related to cases of conscience; discussion followed, and, as diversity of opinions occurred, it was found difficult to preserve peace and harmony and to come to decisions which would not violate the independence of Christian societies, so that for this and other reasons, the Association was dissolved."*

EARLY ASSOCIATIONS.

We find that an Association consisting of seven Churches was formed in 1719, and we have references to Association meetings held in connection with the Churches in Lancashire and Yorkshire; but there does not seem to have been anything like a recognised organisation, or any record of business done. In 1764, a Baptist meeting was held at Halifax, when a letter (which is still preserved) was read from the Church at Wainsgate, referring to the death of their pastor. That letter also states that an invitation had been accepted by a young preacher from Bradford, whose labours had given universal satisfaction. This was the introduction of John Fawcett, whose biography shows how from his earliest days God had been girding him for his work as a Christian pastor, organiser, theological writer, and tutor. On this we shall not dwell,

* Life of Fawcett, pp. 98-99.

but in reviewing his life and its environment, we read God's "love in every page, in every line His praise."

DR. FAWCETT'S LEADERSHIP.

The whole district where he laboured was throbbing with a new life through the influence of Grimshaw, Whitfield, and Wesley. Fawcett saw that the connexional system founded by the labours and genius of that great ecclesiastical statesman, John Wesley, was not only reaching the residents of villages and hamlets which hitherto had "sat in darkness", but, by uniting the weak with the strong, was securing efficiency and permanence. He determined to bring together the scattered Baptist elements, and to form a brotherhood for spiritual communion and aggressive work. Two years after 67 Churches united in association, and the first meeting was held at "Coln", in Lancashire (May 30th and 31st, 1787). The following Churches were represented, viz.: Leeds, Rawdon, Gildersome, Halifax, Salendine Nook, Hebden Bridge, Wainsgate, Rochdale, Bacup, Cloughfold, Cowling Hill, Sutton, Barnoldswick, Colne, Accrington, Blackburn, and Preston. John Fawcett read a letter on "the Duties of Gospel Churches". The letter was a vindication of Baptist Church Polity, contrasting the present privileges with the bitter days of persecution; it is full of gratitude, of jubilation, of confidence, of enthusiasm. "Perhaps England never saw a happier period than the present", he writes. He pointed to the influence of "established Churches" in earlier times, and the establishment of the first Dissenting Church in England in 1572, by men who withdrew from the national Church for conscientious reasons and the "tranquillity of their own minds". He referred to Baptist Associations in different parts of England, and added, "Our annual lecture, which has been carried on in this circuit for a number of years, we hope and trust has been of some service, through a Divine blessing, for the promotion of the good cause, but it is now proposed that we should unite in a Christian association for the promotion of the communion of Churches, and be

addressed by a circular letter." In explanation of this, he writes: "We do not mean any the remotest attempt to exercise dominion over your faith or consciences. But we trust our only aim is to be serviceable, as far as we may, to promote the glory of God, the welfare of immortal souls, and the edification of the Churches of Jesus Christ. In proportion as these ends are answered, our wishes will be accomplished."

Ten Churches in Yorkshire, out of a list of probably two or three and twenty, and *seven* Churches in Lancashire, out of from fifteen to twenty which were then established, ventured to respond, and following the example already set in six or seven counties in different parts of England by their Baptist brethren, constituted the Association, which was soon known as the Yorkshire and Lancashire Association of Baptist Churches. It is noticeable that, amidst all the changes of the century, the redistribution of populations over the wide area of these two noble northern counties, and the rise and fall of many Churches, in every one of the seventeen places represented at the beginning the Baptist Church still exists, and exists in association. At Rochdale, Bacup, Cloughfold, Colne, Accrington, Blackburn, Preston, in Lancashire, and at Leeds, Rawdon, Gildersome, Halifax, Salendine Nook, Hebden Bridge, Waingate, Barnoldswick, and Sutton, in Yorkshire, our Churches still maintain their witness. The Lord has not moved the candlestick out of its place. The Light still shines,—if in some cases with diminished brightness, in many more with added and multiplied radiance. At the commencement of the *first quarter of the century* the most conspicuous names which meet us are Fawcett of Waingate, Littlewood of Rochdale, Hirst of Bacup, Langdon of Leeds, Wood of Salendine Nook, and Ashworth of Gildersome. These were evidently the leaders of the Associated Churches in their united work and worship. They are but names to most of us—names held in high and loving repute; but to their contemporaries, they were like some others whom God has graciously given to our Associated Churches since. Their brethren never tired of hearing them, and were

ill content to let even a year pass away without enjoying that privilege. For, during the five and twenty years which we are now sketching, we have the record of fourteen Association Sermons and five Circular Letters by Dr. Fawcett, ten Sermons and five Circular Letters by Mr. Littlewood ; while the names of the others recur with a frequency which tells of the hold they had upon the hearts, and the ears, of the men of their generation. Of *non-ministerial helpers and leaders*, it is not so easy to recall the memory. The brief Minutes, for many years, contain no references to them at all. The fact has perhaps been overlooked that the Circular Letter was at first, and for some time, properly a "Pastoral Epistle." It is described as emanating from "the ministers of the denomination called Particular Baptists to the several Churches named." A certain episcopal or authoritative tone, not altogether to be expected, marks their letters in some cases, and dwells in a singularly emphatic "we", with which they abound.

"But whatever the style of their letters, the style of the men themselves who were the early leaders of the Association soon made itself apparent. Their devotion to the work of the Churches was intense. Their spirit was devout, almost to solemnity. Their unselfishness was conspicuous. They gave to the Churches the most "abounding sermons" for length, frequency, and excellency too ; and took in return the smallest salaries known since apostolic days. Their theology and their sympathies too were, for the days in which they lived, marked by considerable breadth. Andrew Fuller's teaching and spirit may be clearly traced in them. The advertisement of his works appeared on the outer page of several of the early Letters. That in itself would then have barred their entrance in some quarters. For those who might slight Fuller as somewhat behind our times would still admit that he was ahead of theirs. Yet his moderate Calvinism, his gospel fervour, and his missionary zeal were plainly to the taste of Fawcett, and Littlewood, and Langdon, and Hirst, and Wood."*

* Centenary Memorial.

This advanced position of the men who led the Associated Churches explains the reluctance and caution with which they were joined by some, and the way in which they were shunned by others, especially by the Hyper-Calvinistic and "William Gadsby-ite" Churches. Some of these united, but afterwards withdrew, and they remain unassociated with us to the present day,

NEW DEPARTURES.

Their withdrawal clearly indicates that the Churches generally were realizing more and more their responsibility as "witnesses for Jesus Christ". The leaders, earnest, godly men, with a passion for "scriptural holiness" amongst the "elect", the salvation of precious souls, and the leavening of society with the teachings and spirit of Jesus Christ, devoted the valuable hours of the annual gathering to the enforcement of practical Christianity. They conferred on the following topics, viz.: Christian experience, the "declining state of godliness in some of our societies, which deeply affect us", the "necessity for days of humiliation and prayers for the revival of religion", repentance, Christian benevolence, "means of advancing vital religion", "the evidence and blessedness of the Lord's presence with His people", the life of faith, the moral law and Christian obedience, family religion, love for the word of God, Christian watchfulness, Gospel liberty, the obligations of Church membership, the work of the Holy Spirit. Many letters were read on "Christian doctrines". The Churches evidently began to realise their obligations to the outside world.

MISSIONS TO THE HEATHEN.

In 1791, Langdon (of Leeds) read a letter on Christian Benevolence, "an affection," he said, "which embraces all mankind." "The Christian who is governed by the principles of his religion feels an affectionate regard for his fellow men of

every complexion and of every clime. In man he can recognize his brother." From that he proceeds in scathing language to denounce "those professors of religion who stand forth as the defenders and patrons of the most horrid and diabolical practice that ever disgraced the conduct of mankind" (*i.e.*, Negro slavery).

It is significant that the founding of our Foreign Missionary Society in 1792 gave an impetus to Association work. Wm. Carey's question, "Is it not our incumbent duty to attempt to do something towards spreading the Gospel in the heathen world?", excited in the mind of Mr. Fawcett the most lively interest. He caught the holy flame, and, in 1793, published a pamphlet entitled, "Considerations relative to sending Missionaries among the Heathen." £200 was raised and forwarded to Mr. Fuller, and was introductory to a regular correspondence.

Mr. Thomas, who had resided in Bengal for some years, returned to England, and introduced himself to Wm. Carey. It was resolved to ordain these brethren for Mission work. The farewell meeting was a Pentecostal visitation. Andrew Fuller gave them the charge, from the words, "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." The traditional policy of the East India Company made it impossible to obtain a berth in a British ship; in order that a Christian Englishman might reach British possessions, in the year 1793, it was necessary to embark in a Danish ship. At the Association meetings held at Hebden Bridge, 1794, Dr. Fawcett read a letter from Mr. Thomas (June 18th), which stated "Mr. Carey and all the rest of the company are now well", also a letter from the captain of the ship (July 12th), informing him that he landed Mr. Thomas, Mr. Carey, and his family, at Calcutta in perfect health. "Mr. Carey studied the Bengal language during the voyage and appeared to make a proficiency in it. In regard to funds I imagine they are well supplied. Had it been otherwise they knew that by applying to me they might have been furnished with any sum they should be in need of, but no application was made." A letter from Mr. Carey was also read, and is of interest to-day. He says:

“ Both Moors and Hindoos are very industrious, and in many branches of manufacture excellent workmen ; they are universally very attentive to the Gospel and hear with that seriousness which you will seldom see in an English auditory. When told we have come from England it interests them ; they have given every demonstration of joy. . . . When we inform them of the way of salvation they are surprised with the fulness of the divine remedy.” Other letters state “ they left their merchandise immediately and listened for three hours with great attention ” ; “ they listened with great eagerness, and several followed us to make further inquiries about the way to heaven.” The difficulties, perils, and sacrifices of the missionaries are referred to, but, throughout, there is evidence of confidence in ultimate success. An earnest appeal was made to Christians of every denomination to send their subscriptions to Brother Fawcett (Brearley Hill), who would keep an exact account of receipts and disbursements, &c.

When Carey landed in India, with “ the glorious Gospel of the blessed God ”, the world was appreciably nearer to “ the one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves.” The resolve to carry the glad tidings to the ends of the earth transformed the home Churches, and they were awakened to new life and earnestness. Fawcett’s memoirs contain many letters from Andrew Fuller, and the Minutes of the Association gatherings show that the leaders assiduously cultivated the missionary spirit. “ For several years ”, it is said, “ Lancashire has been the premier county on the list of the Baptist Missionary Society, testifying to its excellent missionary organization, and still more excellent missionary spirit.” The happy effect of the spirit which had thus gone forth, and had acquired renewed energy and vigour in its progress, was evident by a general revival of religion and by earnest desire to extend the Redeemer’s kingdom. But, whilst the harvest was great, the labourers were few. An attempt was made in 1773 to establish a college for the training of young men for the ministry, but it proved abortive. Mr. Fawcett commenced a seminary

at Brearley Hall, where candidates were received and prepared for their future work, in which some of them were very successful. The most eminent, perhaps, was Mr. Ward, who afterwards became associated with Carey and Marshman in their work in India.

MINISTERIAL TRAINING.

The Church at Waingate, of which Mr. Fawcett was pastor, is spoken of as a veritable Mecca of Yorkshire Baptists. Around Mr. Fawcett as the central figure stand John Foster, the essayist, Crabtree (afterwards pastor of Westgate, Bradford), Hartley of Haworth, and, especially, John Sutcliffe of Olney, intimate friend and associate of Carey and Fuller—all of them poor Waingate lads. When Sutcliffe, with his inborn passion for learning, felt the call to the ministry powerfully appeal to him, Fawcett, his pastor, looked round in vain for any prospect of educational preparation; but Sutcliffe himself, though of a weakly constitution, made his way undeterred to Bristol (where the first Baptist College had been founded in 1680). He travelled on foot, almost penniless, in the depth of winter, from Waingate to Bristol, a distance of more than two hundred miles, the journey occupying about seven days. His course at the Bristol Academy was most satisfactory, as is evident from the letters sent to Mr. Fawcett by the President, Hugh Evans. But this ardour only emphasised the need for a Ministerial Academy in the North, and the new spirit, the stirrings of the new life, found expression in this direction. At the death of Dr. Caleb Evans, in 1792, Dr. Fawcett was invited to become president of the Bristol Academy. He greatly appreciated the honour, but he felt that his work in the North was not completed, and determined not to leave it until called to his reward. His magnanimity in declining this request only increased the high regard generally entertained for him amongst his own people, and increased the willingness of the leaders to co-operate in providing a similar*

* Origin of the "Northern Academy" or "Education Society".

Academy. A Mr. James Bury, of Pendle Hill, near Blackburn, heartily took up the scheme, and pressed it forward in spite of indifference and opposition. He generously offered £500 in support of it, at the next Association meeting (Hebden Bridge, 1804). Mr. Langdon, the honoured pastor of South Parade, Leeds, preached on "the importance of a trained Ministry". The sermon produced a profound impression, and, at its close, several favourable resolutions were adopted. In the following August, a meeting of friends was held at Rochdale. A committee was appointed, the Rev. Thos. Littlewood being elected secretary, and Mr. James Bury treasurer. An inaugural sermon was preached by the Rev. Robert Hall, and was "one of his best and greatest, full of evangelical doctrine and of the most powerful inducements to every good work." Subscriptions were promised amounting to about £160 per year, and a capital sum of £1,200 was collected.

The Churches now began to realize that a well-trained ministry was a necessity, and that the Churches, in their own interests, might be called upon to give this subject the prominence its importance demanded. Many friends gave donations. Mr. Sutcliffe, who had been dismissed from Waingate to Olney, where he was ordained by Mr. Fawcett, showed his deep interest in the work of ministerial training by bequeathing his valuable library (1814). In the following year, on the death of Dr. Fawcett, a resolution was adopted recognizing him as the "Father of the Society, to whom it is indebted for its very existence." Steps were taken to carry on and develop the work which he had begun, by obtaining a permanent building, and "a solid and judicious tutor". This was not easy. After waiting in prayerful expectancy the leaders were directed to Wm. Steadman, pastor of the church at Devonport. This decision, unquestionably, was "of the Lord", and proved the most important event in the Association's history. William Steadman was pre-eminently fitted in character, culture, and training for the work he had to do. At the request of a few earnest Baptists in London, he, along with the Rev. J. P. Saffrey,

had conducted the first evangelistic tour through the whole of Cornwall, preaching three times on each Sunday and every evening during the week, in chapels, town halls, market halls, private houses, or in the streets, a tour lasting eight weeks. The success was so great that a Home Mission Society was founded for the distinct purpose of sending the Gospel to the rural districts of England. Wm. Steadman was now strongly urged to settle in the North, and after hesitating some time he came on a preliminary visit of inspection in 1805. This is his report: "Most of the ministers are illiterate, their talents small, their manner dull and uninteresting, their systems of divinity contracted, their maxims of Church government rigid, and their exertions scarcely any at all." He spent about two months preaching in the district, and taking sagacious note of the whole situation and outlook. He decided to come, evidently attracted by the deep need, and we hear of his family travelling to Yorkshire in a chaise, whilst he rode on horseback. In October, 1805, he succeeded to the pastorate so long occupied at Westgate by Wm. Crabtree, and commenced his work as tutor in hired premises with one student. Thus was the foundation of the College laid by a gifted and devoted man, who faced the opposition to an educated ministry, and silenced, if he did not convince, the fanatics who maintained the old tradition.

The prejudice against an educated ministry was with the Baptists "a very old and dominant tradition", as the late Rev. William Medley pointed out, in his "Centenary Memorial" of Rawdon College. "In 1644, Samuel How, an eloquent Baptist preacher, whose eloquence provoked the scorn, but at the same time emptied the chapels, of his Presbyterian neighbours, published a treatise on 'The Sufficiency of the Spirit's Teaching without Human Learning.'" "Both Presbyterians and Independents, shut out from the Universities, had opened Academies for the education of their ministers, but the Baptists of the North cherished a horror of what they roughly termed 'man-made ministers.'" In the reports of the Society frequent reference is made to the fallacy that

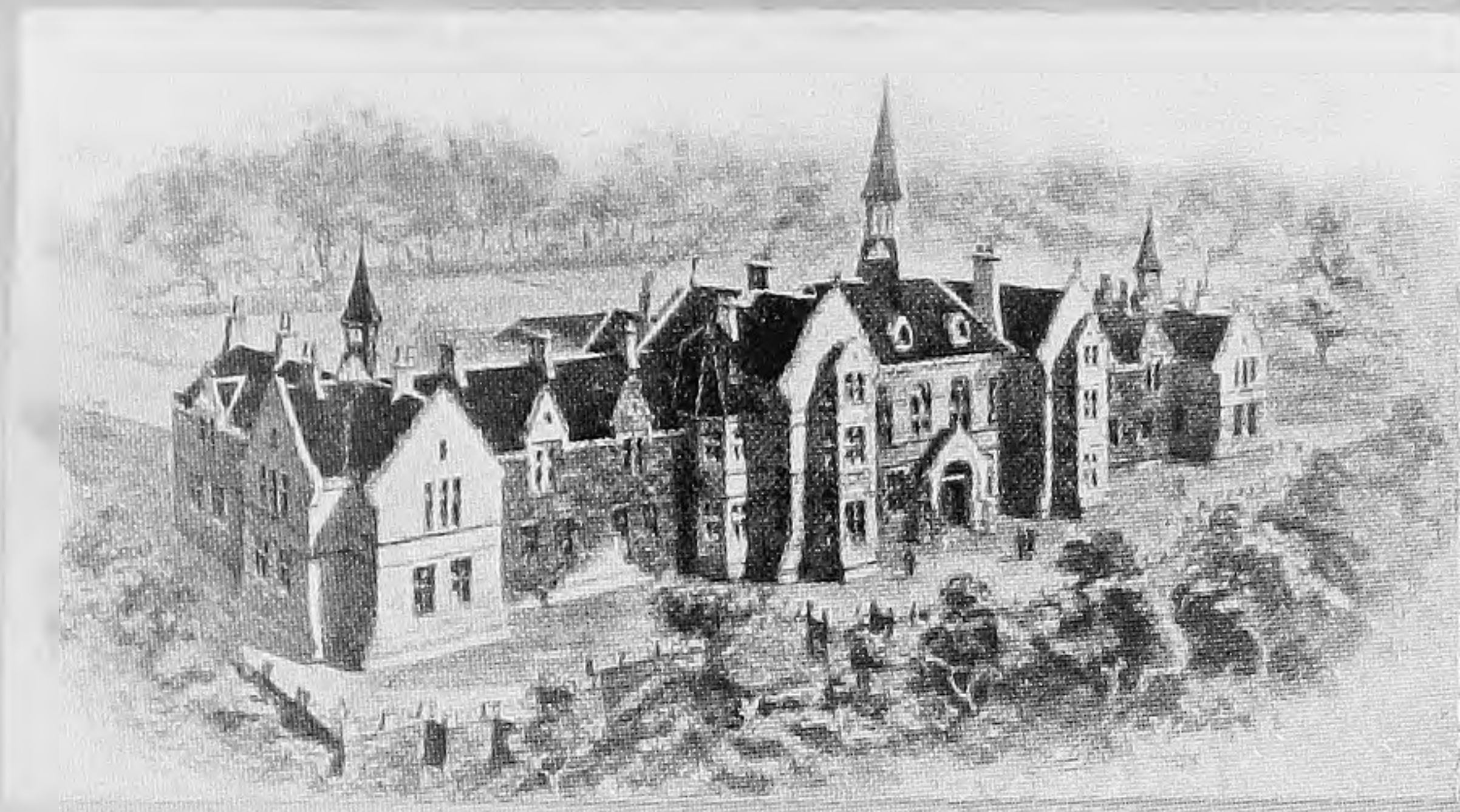
“Ignorance is the Mother of Piety,” and it is said that the “Baptists were behind the Independents, who had ten respectable seminaries.” The Churches are censured for their objection to an educated ministry, and for encouraging unfit men to enter the ministry. Mr. Medley states that pathetic pleading for education runs through all these ancient records ; but it was difficult to obtain funds for the carrying on of work which was noiseless and gradual, not fitted to excite the imagination or appeal to the feelings as did “the thrilling tales of hazard and adventure in distant lands”, told by missionaries.

HORTON AND RAWDON COLLEGES.

It is most gratifying to notice the gradual change which came over our Churches in regard to an educated ministry. Doubtless it was the personal influence of Dr. Steadman which wrought this change. The students under his care above all things were preachers, and their frequent visits to the Churches under his itinerary not only benefited the Churches, but awakened practical sympathy with the President, and with the Institution which sent them forth. At the annual meetings of the Association this invariably found expression. In 1854, the jubilee year of the College, the Association expressed its deep sense of obligation to that kind and gracious Providence which had watched over and crowned with success the work of the Society, and, convinced of the growing necessity for a well-trained and thoroughly efficient ministry, commended the claims of the College to the Churches, and expressed the desire that “special services might be held in celebration of the jubilee of the Institution.” In the following year the Association “offered its devout thanksgiving to the source of all good for the gratifying character of the commemorative services held at the fiftieth annual meeting, rejoiced to learn of the encouraging amount of success which had already attended the proposal then made for removing the Institution to a more healthy locality, and for bringing its operations into more perfect unison with the growing wants of the



THE HORTON ACADEMY.



RAWDON

COLLEGE.



When the certificate of request of John Moore Jonas Marshall Esquire
 Marshall John Marshall Ezekiel Suffer John Hardaker & Jeremiah Hosking
 It is ordered that the House be assigned to John in Rawdon in the said
 Rudings be recorded as a place for religious worship pursuant to
 a Statute of Great Brittain an Act to exempt their Majesty's Protestan
 Subjects dissenting from the Church of England from their being
 penalized
 Wm. Mitchell Esquire
 of York the 20th of May 1709

1.

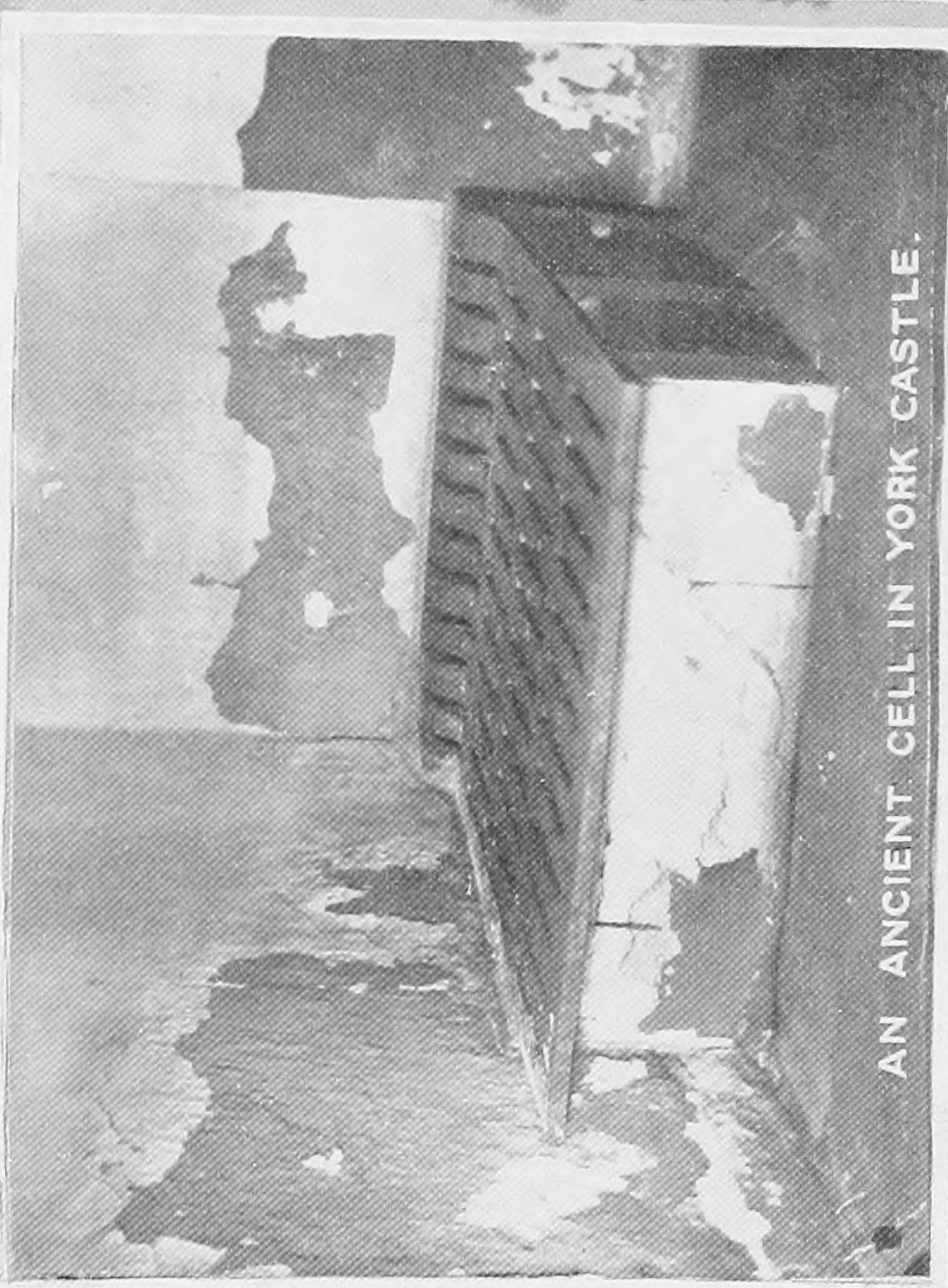
When the certificate and request of John Simpson Martin Sikeson
 John Simpson Esquire Esquire It is ordered that the
 same be assigned to the said John Simpson in Rawdon
 be recorded as a place for religious worship pursuant to a Statute
 of Great Brittain an Act to exempt their Majesty's Protestan
 dissenting Subjects dissenting from the Church of England from
 being penalized

3.

1. Committal of Wm. Mitchell. Wakefield, Jan. 13th, 1686.
2. Registration Order, Rawdon. Wakefield, Jan. 16th, 1689.
3. Registration Order, Barnolds-wick, Wetherby Sessions, Jan. 14th, 1689.

Westgate, Bradford. Centenary Medal, with Portraits of Wm. Crabtree and Dr. Steadman.

4.



AN ANCIENT CELL IN YORK CASTLE.

denomination, and again commended it to the generosity of the Churches."

In 1858, the Association warmly congratulated the College Committee on the completion of the new building, reminded the Churches that the larger scale on which the Institution will henceforth be carried on will necessitate a great and immediate augmentation of revenue, "and again expressed its confident reliance on the generosity of the Churches." In 1862, the Association again suggested the necessity of greatly increased contributions. In 1863, the Churches were "urged to make public collections," and this recommendation was repeated in subsequent years. It is evident, therefore, that to the Association and its leaders must be awarded the honour of originating this Institution, and they in return have reaped the benefit in the changed tone and spirit of the denomination in the North of England.

The Horton College has been described as an old weaving shop and warehouse, with the tutor's house adjoining. The studies were cramped, uncomfortable pens, five or six feet square, ill-lighted, separated from each other by flimsy partitions, and the students, wrapped in coats and cloaks, shivered in these fireless rooms. The dormitories in the loft above contained seven or eight beds or couches. The "dining room" was the only room that contained a fireplace, and there in the evening the students would gather round the President. But hearts cherished these scenes, and, years afterwards, one writer records, "The dingy Academy was the dwelling place of wisdom, of manly piety, of zeal, and learning. Days spent within the walls of the old building rise up in retrospect with light, beauty, and power."

The new college at Rawdon, "clasped in nature's arms, its fine gabled frontage to the valley of the Aire, surrounded by wooded depths, green winding walks, moss-grown rocks bracken clothed, where anemones and hyacinths find the home they love," was opened on the 4th of September, 1859. Dr. Acworth made a statement explaining why the building had been erected. The cost was over £12,000, and a debt of

about £2,000 remained. After an earnest appeal to the influential gentlemen present, some £1,300 was at once promised. Dr. Godwin offered the dedicatory prayer, and a sermon was preached by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel. The college was now in full working order. We hear no more of the "Academy", and within four years Dr. Acworth, "rich in the possession of the esteem, affection, and gratitude of all with whom he had for so many years associated and worked, more especially of the students who had shared his instruction, his fatherly counsels, his sympathy, and not infrequently his kindly, generous help, retired after eight and twenty years' service." He was succeeded as President by Dr. Green, "for many years his colleague in tutorial work," who resigned in 1876. The Rev. T. Geo. Rooke, B.A., held the office from 1876 to 1890; Rev. T. Vincent Tymms, 1891 to 1904; and Rev. W. E. Blomfield, B.A., B.D., was appointed in 1904.*

THE ITINERANT SOCIETY.

William Steadman's acceptance of the pastorate of the Westgate Church, Bradford, and of the Presidency of "the Academy", at once gave him a position of influence in the Association. His success as an evangelist in the South of England encouraged him to believe that a similar agency, inspired by the spirit of God and sustained by the prayers and contributions of the "Associated Churches", would be followed by similar results amongst the sturdy men of the North. He mused until the fire burned. His holy fervour and enthusiastic passion for souls kindled a sacred flame at the first Association he attended. The year after his settlement the members and delegates resolved that the next circular letter should be on "the utility of association among Churches", and that he should be the writer. In that letter (presented at Rochdale) he points out "the advantages which flow from the fellowship of kindred spirits,

* Abridged from "Centenary Memorial of Rawdon College," by the late Rev. W. Medley, M.A.

from Churches becoming acquainted with each other's condition, from united prayer, and the increase of brotherly love, the mutual exchange of ideas, and the imparting of experience." Without such association, he argues, we cannot conceive of any effectual means by which ministers and Churches may unite their endeavours, and concentrate their strength, for the further advancement of the interests of Christ in the world. Individual efforts, though laudable, are generally weak and ineffectual, but what one or a few cannot do many may accomplish. By the united efforts of many the Gospel may be carried into the several towns, villages, and hamlets which are nearly, if not wholly, destitute of the means of grace. But to accomplish such objects opportunities must be afforded of mutual consultation, and these are furnished by association. An earnest appeal, culminating in the admonition, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest", resulted in the following minute:—

"From a consideration of the very destitute state of some parts of this county, and the depressed condition of many of our Churches, the Association were unanimously of opinion—that it is highly desirable to employ an Itinerant, could a suitable one be obtained; and that, were it practicable, a fund should be raised for his support, as well as to answer many other important purposes, either by weekly contributions in the Churches, or by an annual public collection. They therefore warmly recommend the subject to the consideration of the Churches, requesting them to express in their letters to the next Association their sentiments upon its expediency, and the most suitable methods of carrying it into effect."*

The following year the Association met at Sheffield, and it was "resolved that the Fund be kept in mind and brought forward when a more favourable opportunity offers." This opportunity came at Byron Street, Liverpool, in 1809, when after a very earnest letter by Littlewood of Rochdale, on "Duties incumbent on the members of Churches towards

* The Churches represented at this Meeting were—in *Yorkshire*: Barnoldswick, Bradford, Bramley, Cowling Hill, Gildersome, Halifax, Hebden Bridge, Leeds, Masborough, Rawdon, Rushworth, Salendine Nook, Sheffield, Sutton, Wainsgate; in *Lancashire*: Accrington, Bacup, Blackburn, Clough Fold, Colne, Liverpool Manchester, Ogden, Pendle Hill, Preston, Rochdale.

the Brethren of their own community", it was resolved to open a subscription list for the support of an itineracy, and £53 9s. od. was promised. Dr. Steadman gave an address, in which he appealed to the Churches as "composed of men and women redeemed, made kings and priests by Him who took divine delight and spilt the last drop of His blood in seeking the salvation of precious souls." He said, "Towns and villages are enlarging; new villages as populous as towns in other parts of the kingdom are springing up, until the whole country is, as it were, overspread with habitations"; and looking upon these with the eye of Him who on Olivet's slope wept over Jerusalem, and with His commission (Matthew xxviii., 19, 20) thrilling his whole being, he proceeded, "We have distinguished ourselves from the main body of professing Christians by our attempt to restore the order and discipline of the Church of Christ—and especially the ordinance of Christian baptism—to their primitive purity. This is an object of great importance—the first consideration is the conversion of sinners—but our aim is to bring those happy souls we may be the means of converting to those views and practices of religion which appear best to accord with the primitive standard." He then referred to the "attempts made by Whitfield, Wesley, Grimshaw and others in the South and West, and to the glorious success which loudly proclaimed the divine approbation of their exertions".

This address was widely distributed, and, in 1810, a committee was appointed at Bradford "for conducting that business". Dr. Steadman was elected Treasurer, and the work of Itineracy was begun in towns and villages throughout the two counties. "The preachers were students and gifted laymen", their work being to visit congregations destitute of pastors, and towns and villages in which no Baptist Church existed. The labours of these brethren extended over a large area and were very economically conducted, facts to which Dr. Steadman's Treasurer's Book, still preserved, gives curious testimony. Thus, opening it at random, we find, as the account for half-a-year—"Paid

Students for supplying at Wakefield, Boroughbridge, Thornhill, Poole, Meltham, Elland, Scholes, Oldham, and several other places occasionally, with travelling expenses, £30 16s. 5d."— (June, 1819.) The amount suggests much hard work, self-denial, and great pedestrian powers. Several congregations were thus gradually gathered, and as some of the above-mentioned names suggest, Churches were established, which remain to this day. Such efforts for progress were always most congenial to the venerable Treasurer, who lived and laboured to the last for the growth of Christ's kingdom among us. In 1825, immediately after his retirement from this office, we find the circular letter again written by his hand, and it reiterates the same appeal. The topic is "The obligations under which the Churches in the Yorkshire and Lancashire Association are laid to promote the spread of the Gospel, and to establish New Churches within the limits of the Association."

In 1813, the Churches were recommended to form "penny-a-week" Societies for the furtherance of the Gospel. Upon Dr. Steadman seems to have rested the responsibility for raising the necessary funds; beyond an occasional reference by him at the annual meetings little seems to have been done. In 1818, Mr. Fisher, of Liverpool, read a letter, in which he pleaded for the more extensive spread of the Gospel at home. He urged "private brethren to gather together their neighbours and converse on sacred subjects, and pastors to add the work of an evangelist", pointing out its influence for good. The Churches might regret the absences of pastors but "would not eventually be losers by the temporary privation they might suffer." He urged that itinerant ministers should be employed, "because there are many districts destitute of the Gospel which are too remote from Churches to be visited, and can only be evangelised by itinerant preachers. The Itinerant Society has existed in credit and usefulness for nine years, but to make it really effective more generous gifts are needed. The perishing condition of men urges upon us the necessity of attempting the more extensive spread of the Gospel at home. Multitudes are destitute of

religion, they are infidel in principle, they profane the Sabbath, they reject the Gospel, and insult the Saviour. The place where we live has a stronger claim upon us than any other spot on the face of the globe; the counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire have an imperious claim on our regards. If we examine a map of the globe we shall not find a spot under the sun which has equal claims. Lancashire alone contains a population of 800,000 souls [the census of 1912 showed 4,825,739]. To administer spiritual instruction to the inhabitants would require at least 800 ministers. The ignorance and depravity of multitudes are obvious, and the atrocities that are committed are truly lamentable. No assize in any county in the kingdom has perhaps ever exhibited so black a catalogue of crimes as the year 1817 presented at Lancaster. The instances of murder which occurred were some of them so cruel, unnatural, and unprovoked, that they appear to belong rather to the annals of a savage and barbarous people than to those of England in the XIXth century. The county of Lancaster has long been famous for supremacy in wickedness, but it has of late even transcended its former enormities. The population of Yorkshire exceeds 900,000 souls [now 3,969,151], and it is perhaps no breach of charity to say that the moral and religious state of its inhabitants is generally not far superior to that of Lancashire. He goes on to account for this deplorable state of things, and complains that "the exertions to counteract these evils have not been proportioned to the increase of the inhabitants. In a county long distinguished by its civil and religious privileges so large a proportion of its inhabitants should not be destitute of an evangelical ministry." He strengthened his appeal by calling attention to the statistics of crime. There were in England 2,150,000 vagrants, rogues, vagabonds, prostitutes, or others supported by criminal delinquency; 56,308 criminals had been committed to gaols, and 584 executed during the preceding seven years. He pointed out that "the Gospel is the only remedy for the evils deplored, and that to delay efforts to spread the Gospel is at great peril, for we are chargeable with the evils which we might have

prevented." He closes his appeal, the effect of which must have been far-reaching, by pointing out that in the days of persecution our fathers sacrificed much more annually than was now required. He pleaded for generous and systematic gifts, and for the personal co-operation of pastors.

It is well to recall these appeals, which show how much England owes to the consecrated lives of the evangelists of that day. It is difficult now to realize the practical irreligion which characterized the English people before the revival of religion in the 18th century. The historian Green reminds us that "the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival." From the Evangelical Movement sprang the practical philanthropy of the 18th century. Nor was the evangelical spirit confined to Whitfield and Wesley. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy, and at last made impossible the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector.

Grimshaw (the rector of Haworth) shared in the enthusiasm and converted many, who became the leaders and ministers of our Churches, *e.g.*, Crabtree and Dan Taylor. The profligacy which disgraced the upper classes, and the obscenity which had infested literature ever since the Restoration, now passed away. To the awakening of this new religious life in the mass of the people may be partly due the fact that England was saved from a cataclysm like that which, at the close of the eighteenth century, overwhelmed alike all institutions of Church and State in France.

"A yet nobler result was the steady attempt which has never ceased (and which has reached a high-water mark to-day) to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and poor." In referring to the past and contrasting it with the present, we gratefully acknowledge our national indebtedness to the men who kindled the Home Mission spirit, and taught the Churches that "their Mission was to preach the Gospel to every creature." The work of itinerating, which, considering the limited resources available, was most successful, was

followed by a work of equal importance, viz. : that of grants in aid to ministers. The Rev. W. Lister, in a circular letter, appealed to the Churches to arise to the support of the Ministry. "In vain are seminaries established for the instruction of young men for the Ministry, if they are not comfortably supported afterwards. If the pastor is not supported, his mind will be oppressed, his powers cannot be brought fully to bear upon his work, and his temporal burdens will often sink him when he should arise and labour for God and immortal souls. Because adequate support was not forthcoming they who preach the Gospel, instead of living from the Gospel, enter into some business, starve their families or run into debt, or acquire little habits of meanness which sink respectability of character and prevent usefulness."

GRANTS TO CHURCHES.

Nine years after (1827), an Association Fund was provided which then, and ever since, has made annual grants in aid to needy pastors. This plan, while not intended in any degree to supersede itineracy, nevertheless commends itself as a practical illustration of the law that the strong should help the weak ; and the aid has always, it is believed, been both dispensed and received in a true brotherly spirit, with no claim to superiority on the one side, or sense of humiliation on the other. Moreover, the assistance thus afforded is adapted to accomplish, and in many cases has most successfully accomplished, the speedy independence of the Churches aided ; enabling them to secure ministers who, at least in populous districts, are soon able to maintain their ground without extraneous help. A decisive proof of this is seen in the fact that of the Churches aided thirty years ago not one now remains upon our list ; of those aided twenty years ago, not one ; and of those aided ten, only one. The stability and strength of many Churches which are now among the heartiest helpers of others have sprung,

through the divine blessing, from the assistance which they themselves received in the past.*

The Association was divided into two parts in the year 1837, *vide infra*, p. 299, and the first separate meeting of the West Riding Churches was held at Leeds, in 1838; the North and East Ridings had formed a separate Association some nine years earlier, and continued to maintain their distinct organization until 1847. After the separation of the Yorkshire from the Lancashire Churches, the Report of the Itinerant Society was presented at the annual meeting of the Yorkshire Association, and printed in the circular letter, and ever since has been regarded as the chief work of the Association.

In 1837, Dr. Steadman passed to the higher service. He had been appointed for the seventh time to read the circular letter that year, and Dr. Acworth, who took his place, referred to the "venerable Saint", and thanked God for the service which he had returned. Herein is that saying true "one soweth and another reapeth." The results of Steadman's labours were seen after many days. In 1842, seventeen resolutions were adopted which became really the constitution of the Society. Dr. Acworth's statesmanship and enthusiasm are evident in the report which was adopted. "It was agreed to appoint an Evangelist or a discreet and energetic minister as Secretary and Superintendent of the agents of the Society."

CONSTITUTION OF THE HOME MISSION.

"That all agents who receive grants of money are required to afford in return for such grants an adequate amount of itinerant labours, and furnish periodically accounts of their work in writing."

"That these shall be examined and reported upon."

"That a book of reference shall be kept containing a report of the state of things spiritually in the West Riding, and that the Secretary shall by personal visits confirm or

* Sketch of the "Itinerant Society."

alter the reports as rapidly as is found consistent with statistical accuracy, so that the committee may be enabled the better to regulate their proceedings."

To prevent too hasty adoption of any station or the abandonment of any, a sub-committee was required to visit and report. It was decided "that every Church and station shall be periodically visited, and that when a Church is formed proper scriptural officers shall be appointed." It was further resolved "that the evening of the second day of the association shall be exclusively devoted to the objects of the Society." The Rev. J. Burton was appointed to the office of Secretary, and for ten years evangelised, from different centres, with great success. He was remarkably gifted, devoted and successful. Several Churches were founded and his work has left imperishable memorials. After his death, others were appointed as collectors and secretaries of the Society. Amongst them should be specially mentioned the unwearied and devoted John Barker of Lockwood, who served for twelve years. On the retirement of Dr. Steadman from the Treasurership, in 1824, Mr. Thos. Aked was appointed, and for forty years continued to serve with gracefulness, sympathy and devotion. He was followed by Ald. Crowther, J.P. (of Lockwood), one of the most reliable and honoured laymen the association has ever known, whose worth was recognized by his appointment to the Presidential chair in 1880. In quietness and confidence was his strength. But the man entitled to the greatest honour, whose acceptance of the Treasurership proved most fruitful, was Mr. Joseph Brooke, J.P. (of Huddersfield). In 1870, the association meetings were held at Lockwood (the home of John Barker and Alfred Crowther). At the annual meeting of the Itinerant Society the speakers were the Rev. C. Kirkland of London (Secretary of the Baptist Union Home Mission), Mursell of Bradford, Ald. Barran of Leeds, and Joseph Brooke. The income ranged from £400 to £600 per year, and Mr. Brooke suggested that a reported membership of 10,000 ought to subscribe at least £1,000 per year for Itinerant and Home Mission work. He undertook the work of Treasurer, and,

along with the Secretary, and the late Dr. Edward Parker, visited the Churches throughout the county. Public meetings were held, subscribers canvassed, and, as the result, the income was doubled, and a real missionary spirit was created which is still operative. At the Centenary meetings in Rochdale, in 1887, Mr. Brooke, who presided, said that "this association had always regarded the prosecution of home missionary labour as an imperative obligation. In 1838, the first year after the friendly severance of the two county associations of Yorkshire and Lancashire, the Yorkshire Association raised £103 in connection with its Itinerant Society. Next year £236 was obtained, and this was annually increased to some extent till 1871. The average income during the thirty-three years was £282, and the aggregate amounted to £9,330. In 1872, the revenue advanced at a bound to £688, and there was a continued increase till 1876, when the amount received was £1,187. For the seventeen years from 1872 to 1887 the income averaged £1,100. For the fifty years a total of £28,250 was received and devoted to the purposes of the society. Nor was this all. The North and East Riding Itinerant Society, formed in 1817, was in existence till 1865, when it was merged into the Yorkshire Society. That society had an income of about £60 a year, and it did good work by evangelist effort, chiefly carried on by the pastors of the Churches. A similar society was also formed in Halifax in 1847, for the purpose of aiding weak Churches in that town and neighbourhood. By it about £40 was usefully disbursed annually up to its amalgamation with the Yorkshire Society, some years before. From this time every Church in the Association had owned allegiance with unswerving loyalty to the Yorkshire Home Mission. The aggregate raised by the North and East Ridings Society was £1,620, and by the Halifax Society £1,136. These sums added to the £28,250 raised by the Yorkshire Society, showed that during the fifty years just closing £31,200 had been spent in home mission work. Each of the six Yorkshire districts was a self-administrative province, having the conduct and responsibility of home mission work within its

boundaries. All subscriptions were voluntarily collected. At present aid was extended to twenty-nine Churches and stations. The Home Missionary Society had gained the good-will and confidence of the Churches, it received their united support, and it was a tower of strength to the denomination in the county."

Mr. Brooke's resignation in 1894 was received with great regret, and, at the Association meetings in 1894, a presentation was made to him, consisting of his portrait in oils, and an album containing views of the Home Mission stations, &c. He was succeeded by Mr. Wm. Best who continued in office until 1904, when a resolution was carried expressing grateful appreciation of the "able, devoted and self-sacrificing services rendered, the wisdom, insight, courage and enterprise" manifested. He was succeeded by a most efficient and devoted Treasurer Mr. John Holmes, who unfortunately, owing to ill health, was obliged to resign in 1909, the present Treasurer Mr. W. H. Spice, taking his place.*

The Association in this Centenary Year may be regarded as an organization of practically all the Churches in the work of evangelization and Church extension. Formerly, the love of an isolated independence, the dread of the infringement of liberty, the self-centred and parochial spirit, weakened our forces. There was a Home Missionary Society of the North and East Ridings until 1865, a "Kirkstall Village Mission", a Huddersfield Local Union and a "Halifax Itinerant Society", which after rendering valuable help to Churches in the Halifax and Hebden Bridge districts, united with the general Society in 1878. Gradually a spirit of *esprit de corps* has been created. The strong have learned to bear the burdens of the weak, and the Churches are realising that the advantages accruing from associated fellowship involve joint responsibility in doing associational work.

* In the Centenary year, out of the 142 Churches in the Association, 72 have been aided since 1872, and £39,000 has been expended by the Home Mission, as follows:—In Agricultural Districts, £10,950; Manufacturing Villages, £8,750; Watering Places and Visiting Centres, £4,000; Large Cities and Towns, £15,300. The contributions average about 10½d. per member per year.

ASSOCIATION RE-ORGANISED.

This new spirit necessitated re-organisation of the association. Hitherto the moderator had been appointed annually (generally the pastor of the Church entertaining the association), and a circular letter upon a selected subject was distributed. In 1872, a President for the year was appointed, and he commenced his duties by giving an inaugural address. A minister was also appointed (as salaried General Secretary), to serve the association and supervise the whole work of the Home Mission. The county was divided into districts, each district having its own committee and officers, associated with the general Secretary and forming the committee for the whole county. The writer served as Secretary from 1872 to 1880, the Revs. Upton, Hill, Cossey, Fayers, and Howarth, from 1881 to 1901. In 1902, the present Secretary, the Rev. J. G. Williams, was appointed, and several detailed arrangements were made to secure greater efficiency and more perfect solidarity.

SPECIAL FUNDS.

In 1838, a special committee on chapel cases reported the existence of chapel debts to the amount of £5,000, and it was resolved, in addition to the strenuous exertions to be made by the indebted Churches, that a collection be solicited from all Churches. A spirited effort was then made, and large sums promised "on condition that £2,500 be raised." A committee was also appointed to give advice to Churches intending to erect chapels, and, particularly, to make the Itinerant work more effective. The annual meetings of the Society were henceforth to be identified with the annual Association meetings. In 1839, the desirability of forming a Provident Fund for the relief of infirm and aged members and their families was considered, the subject referred to the District meetings, and the fund "founded" in the following year. At the same time, it was resolved if possible to erect one new chapel

annually, and to provide a suitable place for the reception of deeds, and to commence a newspaper as the accredited organ of the Denomination. In 1845, the Association persuaded the Baptist Union Committee to hold its annual meeting at Leeds.

CHAPEL LOAN FUND INAUGURATED.

In 1860, it was decided to call the attention of the Churches to the claims of the Loan Fund, showing the immense advantage which a considerable increase of its resources would secure, in the erection of chapels, as well as in the removal and reduction of debts, and to print annually with the circular letter the report of aid given. In 1861, an assurance was given (to the Baptist Union Mission, London) of willingness to co-operate in establishing a Church in York, and it was resolved to commemorate the Bi-centenary of 1662, by a large increase of the associational funds. In 1875, Mr. Wm. Stead, a layman whose service to the association in every department was unparalleled, having removed from Yorkshire, resigned the Treasurership of the Loan Fund which he had held since its commencement in 1852, and was cordially thanked for his services. Mr. D. J. Crossley was appointed in his place, and it was resolved to augment the capital to £10,000. This was accomplished in 1889. On the completion of twenty-one years' service the committee presented Mr. Crossley with an album containing sketches of all the chapels to which loans had been granted, and of his home, portraits of the committee, and an illuminated address expressing the indebtedness of the Association for the work, unsensational but fruitful, which he had done with so much patience and care. Nearly £33,000 had been advanced to sixty-three Churches, not a penny had been lost, and the contributions from Churches aided had more than covered all expenses. Mr. Crossley continued to serve until 1906, when Mr. W. Dale Shaw, J.P., was appointed President, and Ald. Sir John C. Horsfall, J.P., Treasurer.

CHAPEL BUILDING AND CHURCH EXTENSION FUND
FOUNDED.

The plan adopted up to that time was to recommend one or two chapel cases every year, and give permission to the pastor and Church officers to solicit subscriptions, but the result was not satisfactory. Much time and money were expended in travelling, and only a few friends in each Church were reached. No organised effort to plant new Churches had been considered until the annual meetings at Trinity Road, Halifax, in 1875, when a friend, speaking about the growth of the large towns of Yorkshire, said to the writer, "We shall never do extension work satisfactorily until we have a central fund to which all the Churches contribute, managed by an elected committee, who shall regard the needs of the whole county. If nine others will give £100 per year for ten years, I will make the tenth." This was heartily taken up, and in 1876 an income of £1,877 2s. 8d. was reported, thirteen friends having subscribed £100 each. At the previous Association meeting a resolution was carried that "in place of recommending chapel cases an effort be made to raise a fund, by requesting each member of the associated Churches to subscribe not less than sixpence per annum." This is now known as the "Chapel Building and Church Extension Fund," and its aim is to unite all the Churches in aggressive work.

New chapels or schools have been built (or grants made towards the building) at Harrogate, Bedale, Normanton, Batley, Bridlington, Hull (Trafalgar Street and Boulevard), Northallerton, Brompton, Pudsey, Morley, Ossett (Central), Scapegoat Hill (Golcar), Slaithwaite (Zion), Ilkley, and Salterforth, Nazebottom, Leeds, Pontefract, Sheffield, Crookes, Birkby (Huddersfield), (East Park) Hull, Beverley, and Scarborough.

Building schemes have been assisted at Boroughbridge, Cononley, Sheffield (Hillsbro'), Barnsley (Parker Street), Armley, Elland Edge, Heaton, Bradford (Ripley Street), Driffield, Eccleshill, Dishforth, Staincliffe, Blackley, Hull,

Denaby Main, Rishworth, Charlestown, and other places. Altogether, over £25,000 has been raised and disbursed. Many Churches have been aided by counsel, and new causes have (directly or indirectly) been founded through the Association committee.

AGED MINISTERS' FUND.

In 1840, the Association decided to form a society for the benefit of aged and infirm ministers of the denomination in Yorkshire, and of their widows and orphans. In 1852, this society was dissolved in favour of another originated by the ministers themselves, under the capable management mainly of the Bilbroughs, who "worked the Society almost for nothing," the total expense not reaching £5 per year. "As no more than income could be expended annually, the Society could never become bankrupt." It secured the sympathy of the Churches, until the capital reached £6,000 and the income about £400 per annum, when it was decided, in the interests of denominational "Solidarity", to amalgamate with the Baptist Union Society.

FORMATION OF THE LAY PREACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

During a visit to the East Riding in 1878, the writer was impressed with the painful fact that in several villages where we once had flourishing Churches, the chapels had been closed, or, as in one case, sold to the Wesleyans for a Sunday school. The Primitive Methodists (originated by Wm. Clowes, in 1821 in Yorks.) had over 30 chapels, with 75 local preachers, and services were regularly conducted. Here young people were trained, and on leaving for York, Driffield, Scarborough, and Hull, found a home amongst their own people. Our own Churches, having no such feeders, in all these cities had become weaker. The only Church which seemed to be evangelising the villages was that at Beverley. Here there were a number of earnest men who devoted their time to the regular supply of several pulpits. After conference with the Rev. W. C. Upton, it was resolved

to call the attention of the Association to this invaluable, but hitherto neglected agency. In 1879, at the annual meetings, much time was devoted to it, Mr. Upton ably pleading on its behalf, and it was resolved "publicly to recognise the Lay Preachers' Association, with a view to consolidate and increase its usefulness." A committee was appointed, rules were adopted, officers elected, and arrangements made for the presentation of an annual report, during the meetings of the Association. A stimulus was thereby given to an organisation which is destined to be of increasing service in maintaining village Churches and evangelistic work.

RELATIONS OF THE YORKSHIRE AND LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATIONS.

The Churches having become too numerous for any town conveniently to accommodate the ministers and messengers, it was resolved, at Hebden Bridge, in 1837, to form a separate association for Lancashire and Yorkshire respectively. The spirit of comradeship was not lessened by this division, and arrangements were made and continued until 1851 "to meet biennially." After this it was decided to "meet periodically." The spirit of fraternity was maintained by representatives reciprocally appointed, and in 1887, centenary meetings were held at Rochdale.

Dr. Maclaren preached a sermon on "The better things we have, than our fathers had" and "the best things reserved for our successors." (Heb. XI., 39, 40.) The venerable John Aldis gave some interesting reminiscences. The Rev. W. C. Upton presented an "Historical Sketch", and the other speakers and preachers were Revs. T. George Rooke, B.A., S. W. Bowser, B.A., J. W. Butcher, George Hill, M.A., A. P. Fayers, Charles Williams, J. Haslam, J. Baxandall, H. Hall, Robert Lewis, Edward Parker, D.D., F. J. Benskin, the Right Honourable John Bright, M.P., Ald. Brooke, J. W. Scholefield, J.P., W. P. Lockhart, R. Watson, and others.

In 1910, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 14th and 15th, a Home Missionary Centenary was held at Liverpool, which is too recent to need a detailed account in this place.*

POLITICAL WORK.

In the early days of the Association little interest was taken in political questions. Very few of the members of our Churches had a vote, and, as Mr. Upton says, they seemed quite satisfied with "the wise and benignant legislation" which gave them the Toleration Act. They sat under its shadow with thankfulness; likened it, of course, to "their own vine and fig tree"; and scarcely any political questions appear upon the Minutes, or imperilled the happy serenity of the Annual Assembly. But, as we approach the year 1830, the Pastors and Messengers show quite another disposition. Either politics had invaded the Church, or the Church was girding herself, as she ought, to take her share in politics. Frequent resolutions appear, intended to strengthen the hands of Lord John Russell and his colleagues in their conflict with religious disabilities, and chiefly in the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the results of which have been perhaps more favourable to our denomination in Yorkshire and Lancashire than in any other part of England. Our municipal magnates, mayors, and magistrates have given social status to our body, which it was a grievance for the law to prevent as long as it did. For the first time,

* The following was the order of the Meetings:—

Wednesday, September 14th.

Toxteth Tabernacle. Public Meeting. Chairman, J. W. Scholefield, Esq., J.P.
Speakers: Revs. John Haslam, D.D., Harrogate, and J. E. Roberts, M.A., B.D.,
Manchester. Music by Toxteth Tabernacle Choir.

Thursday, September 15th.

Morning Session at Byrom Hall, Byrom Street. Chairman, Sir George W. Macalpine,
President of the Baptist Union. Speakers: Revs. W. E. Blomfield, B.A., B.D.,
Principal of Rawdon College (President of the Yorkshire Association), and R. M.
Julian, Burnley (President of the Lancashire and Cheshire Association).

Afternoon Session at Prince's Gate Church. Chairman, A. Black, Esq. Speakers:
Revs. Morton Gledhill, Ansdell, and J. Brown Morgan, Bradford. Primary
Department Demonstration by Miss Amy Norbury.

Prince's Gate Church. Public Demonstration. Chairman, Sir John C. Horsfall, Bart.
Speakers: Rev. Charles Brown, of Ferme Park, London, and Mr. W. Brace, M.P.

in 1833, the Association entered on this debateable ground, in its Circular Letter, which was on "The Principles of Dissent", and was written by Mr. Saunders, of Liverpool. It was followed by a resolution affirming, "that the present is a favourable opportunity for calling the attention of the British Legislature to the grievances under which, as Dissenters, and especially as Baptists, we still labour"; and a petition was prepared and presented accordingly, drawn up by Messrs. Steadman, Stephens, Godwin, and Larom. As long ago as 1835 the assembly declared, "that the first step fairly to meet the claims of Dissenters should be the passing of a law for the civil registration of births, marriages, and burials, *applicable to all classes* of His Majesty's subjects."

The question of Negro Slavery was frequently discussed and strong resolutions adopted, expressing deep regret that it was not only allowed, but even practised, by members of American Baptist Churches. In 1841, the Association again protested against Slavery, declaring that it would not maintain communion with any professor of religion being either a slaveholder or an avowed advocate of slavery. This question was frequently referred to, until the American Civil War (1861-65) settled the matter. A resolution was then adopted, rejoicing in the happy termination of the war which had resulted in the emancipation of at least two millions of slaves. The resolution "commended the claims of the National Freedmen's Aid Society" to the generosity of the associated Churches.

In 1846, the two Associations held united meetings at Bradford, Mr. Acworth being the moderator for Yorkshire and Mr. Burchell for Lancashire. Mr. Clowes read a letter on "Consistent Dissent" which might fitly be reprinted to-day. He told the Churches that God had placed them in the very Thermopylæ of the country's ecclesiastical liberties, and possibly also of her civil liberties. "We are called upon to save the nation's liberties, and while we seek first the rights of our Lord, He may again add unto us the rights of man. We must never forget the two fundamental principles—

the exclusive supremacy of Christ in His Church, and the right, or rather the duty, of private judgment. We must point out the abuses connected with all State establishments. The State Church is our greatest national sin, and the parent of many others. Our *duty* is clear—to protest against the endowment and patronage of religion in any form. We are *men*, a component part of the legislature; our opinions are the weightiest part of the legislative power, and we are placed by God in this position, that we should, at the cost of much temporary contempt, misrepresentation, or even persecution, merit the lasting glory of consummating English liberty. Ours is the duty of an enlightened ministry; it is ours to instruct our fellow countrymen. You cannot escape contact with politicians in this holy war. Be not perplexed by the accusation of “political dissent.” Not politics, but duty towards God makes you dissenters, and must until perfect equality is secured. Be strong. Teaching of this character produced strong men. Dissent became a force to be reckoned with, and was acknowledged by British statesmen. “I know”, said Lord John Russell, “I know the Dissenters. They carried the Reform Bill, they carried the Abolition of Slavery, they carried Free Trade, and they’ll carry the Abolition of Church Rates.”

The relation of the Association to political and civil questions is indicated by the following declaration—“The Associated Baptist Churches consider it to be their duty as Christians to make their opinions extensively known on matters of civil right, so far as they affect the interests of morality and religion.” In accordance with this, at the annual assembly year by year, they seriously discussed the “relation of the British government to races subject to the British Crown”, demanding that “idolatrous practices should be suppressed”, and that “there should be established as the great and leading principle of Colonial government, *equality as to rights* in all ranks of society—a principle alike dear to every consistent Christian, every enlightened philosopher, and every upright statesman.” Not only were resolutions adopted, but strong deputations were appointed

to prepare memorials to the King, and personally wait upon members of Government to expound their views and to seek redress. The results of these presentations were reported to the assembly and carefully considered.

CONTINENTAL BAPTISTS.

Continental Baptists were harassed, persecuted, imprisoned, but they were annually assured of the sympathy of their brethren in England, and pressure was brought to bear upon European governments to grant liberty. These appeals and arguments proved in many cases effective. It may be safely said that no great questions relating to perfect civil and religious equality were ever before the Houses of Parliament without Yorkshire Baptist representatives passing, and forwarding from their Churches and county, instructive, virile, and uncompromising resolutions, *e.g.* on such questions as Catholic Emancipation, the Emancipation of the Jews, and marriage with a deceased wife's sister. In particular, the "Regium donum" (a gift to the Presbyterian clergy in Ireland) was consistently opposed, and although its rejection by the House of Commons when first proposed was supported by only three members, the agitation against it became so powerful in 1851 that the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced "that as the opposition to the continuance of the grant had so greatly increased among Dissenters, the Government would not again place it upon the votes."* Other subjects considered gave rise to the demand for fuller equality and liberty in regard to admittance to the ancient Universities, and to protest against the evils of drink and gambling, and the militant relations of nations.

Strongly worded resolutions were adopted against "the levying of church rates," sympathising with Mr. Wm. Baines of Leicester, John Thorogood and others, who were in prison, and with many who were "suffering for conscience sake", calling upon the "electors to vote for no candidate who would not pledge himself to vote in support of religious

* There were two Regium Donums,—one was Irish, beginning with William III., and did not cease until 1868, when the Presbyterians were paid out. The English Regium Donum began in 1723 and ended 1851.

equality." The Liberation Society, thus supported, gave momentum to forces already in action. Year by year vestry meetings became more excited until 1868, when an end came to this protracted conflict, waged for no less than thirty-four years, and Mr. Gladstone said, referring to the controversy and its successful result: "Nothing could be more loyal and considerate than the conduct of the abolitionists in and out of Parliament, throughout the proceedings of this Bill."

THE FREE-TRADE AGITATION.

In 1841, the following petition was forwarded to Parliament: "Your petitioners consider that all monopolies are injurious to the general interests of a commercial and manufacturing nation, and that they are pre-eminently oppressive and unjust when they interfere with the food of the poor. They have continually evidence that the Corn Laws affect prejudicially the commercial, moral, and religious interests of the people." This was the year Cobden entered Parliament, and commenced a propaganda which in 1846 resulted in their repeal. During the whole time the Baptist Churches cordially upheld his hands. It will be seen that in all those movements Baptists were impelled by strong religious convictions, and the same spirit animates the Churches to-day.

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

The question of "National Education" was frequently discussed, and the attitude which the Association consistently maintained was inspired by a love of liberty and a desire to maintain the rights of conscience. Our leaders always spoke with no faltering voice, although, perhaps, the position they took would not be maintained to-day. In 1847, they thanked John Bright for his "faithful statement of Dissenting principles in the House of Commons", and declared that the "education of the people was not within the province of Government." In 1851, "the extensive discussion of education at the present time renders it imperative that they should announce their conviction that the education of the people is not a proper

subject for legislative interference, that it is the essential duty and privilege of parents to provide for the education of their own offspring, and in case of their neglect Christian philanthropy should supply the destitution."

The trend of public opinion having become favourable to a national system of education "free, compulsory, and unsectarian", the Association, by memorials, presented the views of the Churches, and took a prominent part in the memorable struggle of 1870. The cardinal feature of Mr. Forster's Bill, introduced that year, was the creation of School Boards to supply deficiencies. But his Bill, admirable in many respects, was too favourable towards the Established Church's schools and ideals, and, therefore, was strongly objected to by Nonconformists. The Association, by constant protests, opposed any "Denominational instruction being given in schools supported by public funds" and greatly assisted in ultimately securing the adoption of a "time-table" conscience clause, the freedom of local boards in the matter of religious teaching, the exclusion of all formularies and catechisms distinctive of any denomination, the abolition of inspection in religious instruction, the cutting off from the rates of Denominational Schools, and (after a short interval) the withholding of Building Grants from the Treasury for "Voluntary Schools" and the election of "School Boards".

Although much was conceded, the Nonconformists felt that the Act was not fair—that the Established Church was unduly favoured, that the notorious "XXVth clause" practically subsidised sectarian instruction. Mr. Richard pointed all this out, and prophesied that the ignoring of the "just claims of Nonconformists would prove disastrous to the Liberal party." The great overthrow of the Gladstone Ministry in 1874 was the sequel.

But the Association was not content to resist the application of "public money to the furtherance of religious education." By frequent resolutions it emphasised the fact that whilst this training is entirely beyond the province of the State the responsibility is laid by God upon the family

and the Church, and, therefore, that the best attention should be given to the work of Christian education by the improvement and extension of Sunday Schools, &c.

The Balfourian Ministry showed its opposition to anything like an equitable system of National Education, and succeeded, by smart tactics, in practically abolishing School Board Elementary Education, and subsidising Denominational Schools. The feeling of the Association was expressed in 1901, when the Government were appealed to to nullify the effects of the Cockerton judgment, and the following resolution was carried :—

“ That, in the opinion of this meeting of the Yorkshire Association of Baptist Churches, the Education Bill now before Parliament fails to meet the educational needs of the country. It is also open to the strongest objection because it legalises the use of local rates, and loans raised by the rating authority, for schools in which sectarian creeds and catechisms are taught, in which religious liberty is denied to teachers, and over which there is no genuine popular control. The meeting protests against the way in which the Bill subordinates School Boards, elected by the people, to co-opted county committees. This conference denounces recent attempts to destroy the Higher Grade Schools, which have done so much to advance popular education, and strongly affirms that the maintenance and extension of such schools is imperatively necessary, for the industrial and commercial interests of the country. (2) This meeting condemns the recent policy of the Government for the following and other reasons : (a) Preferential grants have been made to schools under private and denominational management. (b) Mischievous powers have been conferred upon diocesan and other irresponsible associations. (c) School Boards have been inequitably treated as to grants and remission of local rates. (d) Applications for new School Boards have been unfairly refused. (e) Free education has often been ungrudgingly and harshly administered. (f) Violations of the spirit of the Cowper-Temple Clause have been encouraged or condoned. (3) The Conference is of opinion that the present system of sectarian training colleges is injurious to education, as well as grievously unjust to teachers, and that the time has arrived when powers should be given to educational authorities, singly or in combination, to establish training colleges under public management and free from sectarian tests.”

And again in 1902 :—

“That this meeting of Yorkshire Baptist Churches, in Bradford assembled, representing 133 Churches and upwards of 22,000 members, most earnestly protests against the Education Bill before the House of Commons as calculated to aggravate the religious difficulty, which has hitherto been the main obstacle to educational progress, (1) by encouraging the multiplication of denominational schools; (2) by throwing upon the rates schools in which the Catechisms and religious formularies of a sect may be taught during school hours; (3) by perpetuating the subjection of a State-paid profession to sectarian tests. Furthermore, this assembly, being convinced that the final settlement of the education question on the lines of the measure now before Parliament is impossible, would urge the Government to legislate on a basis which would provide for (1) the placing of all public schools under one local authority popularly elected *ad hoc*; (2) the payment of rent to denominational schools for the use of buildings during school hours; (3) the granting of facilities in denominational schools whereby out of school hours denominational religious instruction may be given, at which the attendance of scholars shall be regulated solely by the conscience of their parents. That a petition against the Bill be prepared and sent to all the Associated Churches, with the request that they will secure the signatures of their members and forward the same to their several Parliamentary representatives.”

Since then the question has frequently been considered, and the determination avowed to agitate until a satisfactory Education Act is the law of the land.

LADY HEWLEY'S CHARITY

The Association united in the successful attempt to wrest Lady Hewley's Charity from the Socinians, contributed towards the heavy legal costs, and along with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists has enjoyed the benefits of annual grants ever since.

LORD WHARTON'S BIBLE CHARITY.

More recently (1897) the Civil Rights Committee of the Association, in conjunction with the Secretary of the Yorkshire Congregational Union, wrested Lord Wharton's

Bible Charity (£50,000 intended for the instruction of Nonconformist children) from the monopoly of ecclesiastics, and devoted it to the objects contemplated by its founder. Half the income is now to be used in the way Lord Wharton intended, and four out of the nine Trustees are to be Nonconformists, a partial reversion to righteousness, secured by united action.

When the Baptist Union Twentieth Century Fund was launched by Mr. Shakespeare (1898-1904), the Association declared that its Churches generally "will have no hand in the formation or maintenance of Churches having what are termed 'mixed memberships'". As the result of its strong representation the scheme was modified so that donors might assign their contributions to "close" or "open" communion or membership Churches (1899).

The Association has frequently, by resolution, (whilst objecting to the Government paying out of national funds for religious teaching), urged the Churches not to make this a sectarian business, because "we have no right to build up sects under the pretence of caring for the people, and because our youth should be trained to habits of independent thinking" (1844).

THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING OF THE YOUNG.

It has also earnestly entreated the Churches to give due prominence to the scriptural teaching of the young, and to discharge an efficient ministry towards them in Sabbath schools. Robert Raikes is justly regarded as the founder of the Sunday school system, which has proved so important an influence in the Christianization of our population and the extension of our Churches.* But even before his time there were similar schools. The Evangelical Magazine, 1833, states that "Mr. Hudson of Gildersome, near Leeds, formed a school in the village long before Mr. Raikes brought them into notice", and that school has ever since been worked

* Amongst the earliest towns to follow Raikes' example were Leeds, Huddersfield, Halifax, and Dewsbury, about 2,000 being registered in 1784.—"Gentleman's Magazine" and "Evangelical Magazine," quoted by Myall in "Congregationalism in Yorkshire."

by the Baptist Church. But, for many years, the Churches did not fully realize the importance of this agency; hence came the prominence given to it by the Association. In the year 1857, the late Dr. Green (and no name is more honourably associated with the young than his) read a circular letter, showing that the position which the Sabbath school occupies in connection with the Church needed review and reform. He shows that the "Sabbath school was brought to the Church from without, not originated from within," and that the original separation in great measure remains, although a kind of unity is professed. Positive alienation and mistrust are by no means uncommon. The Church is jealous of the school, and the school suspicious of the Church. He points out the evils of this deplorable state of things—"the early promise of our schools is blasted." Where Sunday schools are largest the sanctuaries are neglected. He suggests many ways of altering this sad condition of things, and appeals to "the consecrated energies of a Church, thoroughly alive to its duty, giving diligence to understand the nature and to foster the growth of youthful piety, and in seeking to be filled with the Holy Ghost." More than fifty years have passed since this "letter" was circulated, and marvellous has been the transformation. Many of our ablest and most devoted men and women have been Sunday school teachers. Some of our handsomest denominational buildings have been erected for the Sunday school. Our most generous offerings have been devoted to the work. In 1877, we added to our statistical table a column for registering the number of members received into fellowship from the school. In connection with the great united centenary gathering at Rochdale (1887), the largest and most important meeting was the Sunday School Conference presided over by the Right Honourable John Bright, M.P., when valuable addresses were given by the venerable John Aldis, Rev. Charles Williams, Wm. Turner, Ald. Brooke, and Mr. J. R. Birkinshaw.

In recent years, and since the passing of the third Reform Bill in 1884, political and civil questions have not been so generally discussed. Before 1832, as has been already pointed

out, Baptists had little influence over legislation except by petitions and memorials. The entrance of the middle classes into the constitution secured by that Act made a great difference ; the entrance of the artisans by the Acts of 1867-8 made another difference. The Act of 1884, admitting the agricultural and mining classes, has further extended parliamentary reform and made the House of Commons in reality "the People's House." Recent legislation affecting the House of Lords has made representation a reality, and the will of the people clearly expressed on any question will ultimately become incarnated in law. Consequently there is less need for the representatives of our Churches in Annual Association to discuss questions which may be, and are, more fitly and successfully dealt with on public platforms, and in the daily press. But they have never lost their sense of citizenship, even in their Denominational gatherings, and when it has seemed necessary to give expression to this feeling they have not hesitated to do so. In 1898, the Association met at Scarborough. The nation was mourning the death of the greatest Christian statesman this country has ever produced. Before proceeding to business the whole assembly rose and adopted in silence the following resolution :—

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.

" This annual assembly of the ministers and representatives of the Baptist Churches of Yorkshire would not proceed to the business of the day without first recording its profound sorrow at the loss which the nation has sustained by the death of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, and its prayerful sympathy for and gratitude to the noble woman whose vigilant love lightened her husband's labours and lengthened the years of his life. Though Mr. Gladstone was far from sharing some of the convictions held by the Evangelical Free Churches, this assembly honours his memory as that of a peerless Christian statesman, and recalls with liveliest gratitude the eminent services he rendered to the cause of Christian progress and freedom, and in particular the many measures affecting education, a free Press, the opening of the Universities, religious equality in Ireland, the substitution of arbitration for war, liberty of burial, and the

abolition of unjust ecclesiastical imposts, which became law during his successive Administrations, and which owed so much to his support and influence. Finally, this assembly would express its reverent admiration of the example he set of courage and resignation in prolonged suffering, and its joy that as the time of his departure drew nigh "the eternal God was his refuge, and underneath were the everlasting arms."

Again when assembled at Barnsley under the shadow of the cloud cast by the death of King Edward the VIIth the following resolution was adopted :—

DEATH OF KING EDWARD VII. .

"That this assembly, representing 140 Baptist Churches, comprising 22,931 members, and more than 50,000 adherents in the County of York, resolves as its first business to record its deep sorrow at the irreparable loss which the kingdom and the world have sustained by the death of the beloved Sovereign, King Edward VII. It remembers the pledge given to the Privy Council on his accession to reign 'as a Constitutional Sovereign in the strictest sense,' and rejoices that he has held sincerely and steadfastly to the last moments of his life to his plighted word. It gratefully records that, in an unparalleled degree, he secured the confidence and affection of his own subjects and the people of other nations, by his political sagacity, humanity, and personal magnetism, and by establishing a European entente cordiale, earned the most Divine of all titles—'Edward the Peacemaker.' To His Majesty, George the Fifth, whom this Association welcomes as King, and to his Royal Consort, it offers sincere congratulations upon succeeding to a Throne more deeply established in the affections of the people than during any period of our nation's story, and mainly because high, unselfish, moral ideals, a palpitating sympathy, and a pure Court, were the characteristics of the reign of his grandmother, Victoria the Good, and his father. To Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Mother, Alexandra, in the loneliness of her grief, this assembly would tenderly express profound condolence, and as throughout her life she has ever shown a heart in close sympathy with the needy and the suffering, so now, in her own hour of direst need, it prays that she may realise the 'secret of His Presence' who has said, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.' In the confidence that these mighty forces will be maintained, it assures the King of its united and constant loyalty and prayers."

THE UNION OF GENERAL AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS.*

From the time of the formation of the New Connexion of General Baptists by the Rev. Dan. Taylor there was no fellowship between the General Baptist Churches and the Association. On account of Taylor's Arminianism he was not recognised by the Calvinistic Baptist Churches, and the alienation and estrangement remained. The General Baptist Churches formed their own Conference, maintained their own Home and Foreign Missions, their own Colleges, their own Magazine and their own Hymn-book. Divided counsels and operations, in the case of Churches maintaining practically the same polity and faith, were a hindrance to progress, and the desire for a closer union was keenly felt and frequently expressed. In 1886, the Baptist Union held its autumnal meetings at Huddersfield. After a welcome on behalf of the Yorkshire Association by the present writer, in which he expressed the regret that "whilst on that platform they were one body, in the country they were divided, and knew practically nothing of each other", he ventured to suggest that with Dr. Clifford as President, the time was favourable for launching a scheme which by uniting the two sections, should form one great Baptist Denomination for the whole country.

In response, Dr. Clifford cordially advocated the proposal, as "timely and practical", and the large gathering of delegates heartily sympathised with the suggestion. It was resolved to remit the question to the "Council of the Baptist Union." This was done, and a proposal for amalgamation forwarded to the Churches. Frequent meetings were held, and ultimately all reluctance to amalgamation was overcome. The General Baptist Conference was⁷¹ disbanded. At the Annual meeting held May 20th, 1891, the Association "invited to its fellowship and work the General Baptist Churches

* See p. 43 for the original meaning of this distinction.

in the county without reference to declarations of faith on either side." At the terminal Conference of the Lancashire and Yorkshire General Baptist Churches, held at Todmorden, January 20th, 1892, it was agreed to accept the invitation of the Yorkshire Association. At the Association held at Idle, in 1892, these Churches were received, and the strength of the Association increased from 99 Churches to 137, and the membership from 15,722 to 18,345.

"UNION CHURCHES."

Another gratifying result has followed from this deepening of the desire to unite more closely for aggressive work all who hold "one faith, one Lord, one baptism," namely the reception into the Association (as was done elsewhere) of what are called "Union Churches." In 1848, a Church was formed in Leeds which admitted to its fellowship unbaptised persons on equal terms. This was the first "Union Church", and when it applied to be received into the Association it was refused. Subsequent applications were also refused, and the refusals led to acrimonious discussion and division. But the question could not be put aside. It was found that the isolation of this Church made denominational arrangements exceedingly difficult, and led to friction. At last, a compromise suggested by the late Dr. Edward Parker and the writer, that "only the baptised members of the Church should be recognised" was accepted by the Committee, and in 1887 on this understanding the Church was welcomed into the Association and a long and bitter controversy ended.

MODEL TRUST DEED.

On the same basis it was decided to frame a model deed, securing all property to the Denomination, but leaving the question of communion to be decided by the "living Church," provided always that the Church should consist only of baptised believers. On this basis the "strict" and "open" Churches agreed to unite, and the agreement has been in-

violably kept, grants being made from the Home Mission, the "Building and Church Extension" and the "Loan Fund," without any reference to the question of communion or doctrine.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

The study of the history of a hundred years, and the perusal of the "letters," "excerpts," and "minutes" of our founders, have only increased the writer's admiration for their faithfulness, their clear conception of truth and duty, their loyalty to conscience and whole-hearted consecration to their Lord. Himself a worthy successor in every sense of these noble men, the late beloved and devoted W. Carey Upton wrote in his "Centenary Sketch,"—"Quaint men, quaint sanctuaries, quaint sayings and manners, come back to memory as we stretch back our thoughts over those years. Faces which some of us have known from boyhood, and which look down upon us out of ancient frames in vestries and halls of our ampler sanctuaries and colleges, invite us to look up into them again. As we do so, strength and beauty struggle through bad drawing and poor engraving, and the fading tints which time has dulled. Bands of worshippers pass before us, seeking in many cases meeting houses which, like hermits' cells, were sequestered among woods, or in the dreary precincts of the moor. They traverse roads which were merely tracts of rough lanes for rural communication. Pedestrians multiplied, and traffic, with saddle horses and carts and vehicles to us unknown, sprang up as Whitsuntide came round." The scanty records and dying memories show that they were "the messengers of the Churches and the glory of Christ." Their counsels, their characters, their prayers, laid a good and firm foundation for far wider usefulness. But, if we would build on that foundation an enduring structure, we must realise the changed condition of things generally, and work accordingly."

"Our fathers were theologians. The preaching was largely doctrinal. A summary of the Doctrines held by the Asso-

ciated Churches was, by a resolution in 1814, ordered to be affixed to the circular letter. That summary may by us be taken as read. But it was no mere formality. It was to be referred to in the letter from each Church; though, for the shortening of the letters, it was not deemed necessary that it should be copied out in each. And further, all applications from Churches for admission were to be made by letter "containing a short summary of their faith." The Churches were proclaimed as maintaining "*inviolably*" the doctrines stated—a strong adverb of assent, which did not sit easily on all. For, after a comparatively few years, the Minutes give evidence of a dissatisfied feeling respecting it. The statement is called "An Imperfect Summary of the Principles of the Association." Its discontinuance had been moved as "being an innovation, and unauthorized by the epistles addressed to the Churches in primitive times; but principally on account of its sectarian appearance, and the bar it is well known to present to persons of other denominations, from even reading the letters and making any further enquiry into the sentiments of the Baptists." But the matter remained undecided until the two counties separated. "The Eastern Church or Association (Yorkshire) changed the adverb, and went on believing 'generally.' The Western (Lancashire) changed the form, introduced passages of Scripture (not without note or comment), and has gone on believing *scripturally*."

A few years ago the Lancashire Association ceased to print the doctrinal basis, and in Yorkshire the union with the General Baptist Churches was effected without reference to declarations of faith on either side. This decision did not indicate indifference to doctrine or lessened conviction, but rather the fuller recognition of the cardinal principles of individual liberty and subjection to Jesus Christ and to Him alone, faith in the centrality of the Cross, and in Christ the Alpha and the Omega," beyond whom thought cannot pass. Dr. Maclaren, in his centenary sermon at Rochdale (1887), contrasting the past with the present, beautifully described the change.

CHRISTO-CENTRIC THEOLOGY.

“The theology of this generation,” he said, “has become more Christo-centric than that of the past, and we have a living Christ Himself standing in place of a system of doctrine and a scheme of salvation, as being the object of our thought, of our reverence, and of our love. The Christ that is, and was, is the Christ who is to be, and in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge for all generations, lie like gold in the ore, like diamonds in the matrix. In the facts of His incarnation, life, sacrifice, death, resurrection, and ascension, there lie in germ all theology, all morality, and, I venture to say, all social and political truth too; and as all truth, so all power is insphered and centred in that exhaustless Lord, and everything has been done which needs to be done, can be done, or ever will be done, for the regeneration and perfecting of humanity. Therefore, because He is exhaustless and towers above all, Christian progress consists, for the individual and for the Churches, in a fuller understanding and a firmer grasping of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Redeemer of the world, and in a more complete appropriation of the spirit of His life manifested in a fuller conformity to His character, and a more perfect and devoted service to Him.”

The realisation of this will lead to a fuller consecration, more strenuous sacrifices, and a greater loyalty to the commission received from Him. During the century the associated Churches have been drawn closer together. The insular independency has passed for ever, which had no sympathy with the weaker and struggling Churches, and allowed them to wither and die, giving place to other Christian Churches which the circuit and connexional system planted, fostered, and has maintained to this day.

DENOMINATIONAL SOLIDARITY.

Throughout the whole Kingdom under the guidance of the Secretary of the Baptist Union, a scheme has been initiated, which will bind in one great federation all Baptist Churches, and do much towards providing and

maintaining an efficient ministry. In our own County our Home Mission work has elicited the sympathy of practically the whole of our Churches; it has maintained feeble Churches, and has engaged in Church extension in districts where, without such a Union, aggressive work could never have been undertaken by us. But, in this respect, to secure Denominational solidarity, more needs to be done. Our Chapel Building and Church Extension Fund, which, (as has been previously pointed out) aimed at establishing every year one new Church or mission station in localities where evangelistic work needed to be done, and where "Baptists of the dispersion" were sojourning without a home, has never been taken up by the Churches generally. Starting with an income of over £1,800 contributed by a few generous friends, it undertook work in the name of the Association, but found there was no general response to the appeal. Eighty Churches did nothing and more than two-thirds of the income was contributed by thirteen friends. Frequent appeals were made to the Churches to assist in Church extension by appointing collectors, but there was no response, and in 1889 the income was only £46 (one subscription and five collections). The late Ald. Moulson and Ald. J. C. Horsfall, with the writer, were requested to endeavour to resuscitate the fund, and a considerable amount has been raised and disbursed.* But with an income last year of less than £400, one-fourth of which was given by two friends, it is evident that extension work worthy of the Denomination cannot be undertaken. There are many large towns in the county, where, if funds permitted, a Baptist Church might be hopefully planted. There is the South Yorkshire coal-field where, in a few years, there will be a population of from 200,000 to 250,000, including many Baptist families, and in which the "Church of England," the "Wesleyans," the "Independents," and the "Primitives" have already commenced work. There our standard ought to be raised, but, without a deeper Denominational consciousness, such united efforts are impossible.

* £27,000.

OUR MISSION.

What is needed in anticipating the future is the deepened conviction that, as a Denomination, we have a message and a Mission, and that it is impossible for us, without being unfaithful to our Lord, to drop our distinctive testimony and amalgamate with any other body of Christians. Our work is not so much to maintain a certain system of Church polity or government, as to maintain Primitive Christianity, to check the spread of sacerdotalism and sacramentarianism by giving clear testimony to the important and fundamental spiritual truths which underlie and are illustrated by the baptism of the New Testament. "Great truths and ideals must have institutional embodiment if they are to become great historic forces." The strengthening of our association, by enlistment of the sympathy and co-operation of every individual Baptist according to ability, is the duty of the day.

The history of our past hundred years is eloquent of this, and the next century will tell of greater triumphs if the spirit of conviction is developed. As "through the ages one increasing purpose runs" we desire that "The beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us," that the work of our hands may be established, and we close with the prayer "Let THY work appear unto Thy servants, and THY glory unto their children."

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