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# Transactions

of the

## Baptist Historical Society.

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### Richard Baxter's Relation to the Baptists AND HIS Proposed Terms of Communion.

**B**AXTER does not appear to advantage in his first recorded encounter with the Baptists. In section five of the general dedication of his "Saints Everlasting Rest"—1st edition 1650—he wrote:—"Anabaptists<sup>1</sup> play the Divels part in accusing their own children, and disputing them out of the Church and covenant of Christ; and affirming them to be no Disciples or Servants of God, not holy, as separated to him . . . I cannot digress to fortify you against these Sects<sup>2</sup> you have seen God speak against them by Judgments from Heaven. What were the two monsters<sup>3</sup> in New England but miracles? Christ hath told you by their fruits you shall know them . . .

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<sup>1</sup> Baxter apologises for using this name; *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, Part ii, page 181. This book is henceforth quoted as R.B.

<sup>2</sup> He has mentioned Antinomians, Arminians, Socinians, Independents as well as Anabaptists. He is thinking chiefly of the first.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrous births alleged—on the testimony "of all the godly reverend ministers and sober Christians in New England"—to have been "brought forth" by Mrs. Hutchinson and Mrs. Dyer, "the leading" Antinomian "sectaries." See Baxter's *Plain Scripture Proof of Infants' Church Membership and Baptism*, p. 197, 8, and "New England's Memorial" sub-year 1637.

Heretikes may seem holy for a little while, but at last all false doctrines likely end in wicked lives. Where hath there been known a society of Anabaptists, since the world first knew them, that proved not wicked? . . . They have confident expressions to shake poor ignorant souls . . . but when they meet with any that can search out their fallacies how little have they to say? You heard in my late publike dispute at Bewdley January 1 with Mr. Tombes who is taken to be the ablest of them in the land, and one of the most moderate, how little they can say even in the hardest point of Baptism; what gross absurdities they are driven to and how little tender conscientious fear of erring is left among the best." The date of this was January 15th 1649/50, a fortnight later than the debate referred to in the last sentences. Mr. Tombes was "Lecturer"<sup>4</sup> to the Baptist Church at Bewdley, three miles from Kidderminster. Naturally resenting such aspersions he issued "an Antidote against the venome of a Passage in the 5th direction of the Epistle Dedicatory. . . ." (1650).

Mr. Tombes speaks of having been well content "to enjoy the neighbourhood and assistance in the Lord's work of so precious a man as Mr. Baxter was, and is still accounted by me"; and asserts that the Bewdley disputation had been thrust upon him after vain efforts to gain his arguments against Believers' Baptism in writing.

Baxter in the second edition of S.E.R. modified without mollifying his unworthy attack. "For Ana-

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<sup>4</sup> John Tombes (1603?-1676), a native of Bewdley, Oxford graduate, noted preacher, and after 1643 ablest advocate of Baptist views. Chosen as incumbent of Bewdley by his fellow-townsmen, he gathered also a small Baptist Church (Baxter says about 20). He was a zealous propagandist, but deserved far more respect from Baxter than he received. Baxter came to see this afterwards.

baptism and Antinomianism I have writ against them in two other books (and more shall do against the latter, if God will). But my guilty friends are offended with me for what I have done. I dare not therefore be silent, as being the officer and ambassador of Christ and not of men. God spoke effectually against them by those wondrous monsters in New England. But wonders are overlookt where the heart is hardened, and God intends to get his Justice a name."

The two books here mentioned were "Aphorisms of Justification by Faith" (1649)—against Antinomianism; and "Plain Scripture Proof of Infant Church-membership and Baptism" (1651). The "Proof" consists of the arguments which he "prepared for (and partly managed in)" the recent discussion—with much besides, including personal details about himself and Mr. Tombes. With regard to himself, he says that the matter of Infant Baptism had so troubled him that, after baptizing two infants at Bridgnorth, he "forebore the practice and set himself "as" he "was able to study the point." He was troubled even more concerning "the other sacrament"; and this was why he "durst not adventure upon a full Pastorall charge but to preach only, as a Lecturer till" he "was fully resolved." Then came the war; and his retirement (for a month) to Gloucester, where he "spoke so much in extenuation of" Anabaptism that his "conscience" had "since checked" him "for it." At Coventry, where he spent more than two years, he found no Anabaptists either in city or garrison, but, after awhile, they crept in and so increased that "at last they got a separated society and despised the Ministers." But few of the soldiers took the infection. It prevailed most with "some younger people of the city"; and "one Mr. Coxe (an ancient minister of competent learning and parts) was sent from London to confirm them."

Being "desired to depart" he did so; but "came down a second time," and "because he would not promise to leave the city and come no more" he was imprisoned "by the town committee." Baxter was charged with having "procured" his imprisonment, but answered:—"I can truly say that I never spoke word to put him in prison, but did speak to get him out." If Mr. Coxe taught what Baxter says he did, and even went so far as to encourage a "re-baptized husband" not to "Pray with his (supposedly) unbaptized wife," he was certainly provocative enough. Anyhow, by this time Baxter's doubts had all gone. He "preached many sermons against Separation" and "Re-baptizing"; and was requested by the committee to print them; but declined, partly because he "then purposed never to have appeared in print," partly because the sermons would have made "a great volume," and especially because he was not yet so sure of his position but that "somewhat might come forth" to shake it again. In 1645 he joined Colonel Whalley's regiment as a chaplain; and, for the most part, had neither occasion nor desire to discuss Baptism. There were "weightier matters to conferre on." But before this there came what seems to have been his first meeting with Mr. Tombes. While he was in London<sup>5</sup> that gentleman "came into my quarters at the house of my dear friend Colonel Sylvanus Taylor." Their talk turned on the views of which Mr. Tombes was an acknowledged champion and Baxter urged much the same arguments against them as he afterwards "managed" at Bewdley. But the champion, according to Baxter, put up so feeble a defence that he felt himself more

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<sup>5</sup> "About five or six years ago," p. 210 in "Plain Scripture Proof," (1651) . . . Baxter had just read over Tombes' "Exhortation and Examen," Dec. 1645. He had never before had a word with Mr. Tombes about Infant Baptism.

than ever on sure ground. They parted in friendship; and "when the wars were ended" Baxter, being consulted<sup>6</sup> as to the respective merits of Mr. Geree and Mr. Tombes for the vacant "chappel" of Bewdley, gave his voice for the latter on the score of "his parts, his piety, and his peaceableness." After his final return to Kidderminster Baxter says he "more rejoiced in Mr. Tombes' neighbourhood, and made more use of it, than of most others." He would, however, never discuss Baptism with him if he could help it: he had come to think the matter of such comparative insignificance. To break the peace on its account seemed to him criminal. Mr. Tombes did not agree; and when "once preaching for Peace (which is the very drift of my doctrine and life, though I speak sharply against Peace-breakers)," he maintained that Truth must sometimes be suspended for the sake of peace. "Mr. Tombes" sent word, "by a godly man, that if I so said I spoke that which is false." Indeed, Baxter himself felt that he was carrying his love of peace too far when some of his hearers began to suspect him of sympathy with Mr. Tombes on the ground that he still refrained from baptizing any infants.<sup>7</sup> So at length he "began to open himself fully to the congregation." About the same time, his "Book of Rest being Printed," he "was forced to send up the Epistle, and finding my Body almost consumed, and that my abode on Earth was like to be very short; and, withall, being sensible of their danger . . . I set down those lines in that Epistle" which have given offence.<sup>8</sup> But what is said there about the "strange

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<sup>6</sup> Plain Scripture Proof, Introduction.

<sup>7</sup> The two forementioned were all he had baptized before 1650.

<sup>8</sup> "What a fearfull passion was Mr. T in? Not able to contain himself" on "the day of his departure from Bewdley . . . after his sermon," he "made a speech of an hour long against me."

Judgements of God (never to be forgotten) on Mrs. Hutchinson and Mrs. Dyer Antinomians in New England," applied to those only; and Mr. Tombes was mistaken in thinking that he "had intended it as against the Anabaptists." All the same he did mean to be severe on the latter in respect of their schismatic separatism. "Peace-breakers and dividers of the Church, especially that violently and resolvedly go on in that practice should not have the same language as others." When he wrote this (July 5, 1650) and the book it introduces Baxter's mind was evidently overheated: for he declares that the greatest wrong he ever did to Bewdley was in doing anything to settle Mr. Tombes there. But when Mr. Tombes, "yet after this," solicited his "Proofs of Infants Church membership out of the circumcised Church" he wrote them out "at large," "as from the creation downward;" and otherwise showed that he bore no malice.

Here a word seems due as to Tombes's Pluralism—Crosby (vol. i., 289) makes light of this, but Baxter's statement (though not kindly) is very precise and spoke to facts of which he must have had personal knowledge—"To be Parson of Ross and Vicar of Lemster and Preacher of Bewdley, and Master of the Hospital at Ledbury (which requireth many months yearly residence) having means of your own besides—yet to complain as you do in your Books of the great want that you and your Family may be put to—*si ego sic fecissem!*"—Plain Reasons, p. 203.

Nine years later (July 18, 1659)<sup>9</sup> Baxter makes reference to another scandal after Tombes, but this time in a very different spirit.

Mr. Tombes, it appears, had left the MS. of his *Romanism Discussed* at Will. Allen's house in his absence with a request—through his wife—that he

<sup>9</sup> R.B. App. iv., p. 92.

would ask Baxter "to prefix an Epistle to it." Baxter was willing enough; "but" (he wrote) "one thing only, a little scruples me (which I charge you to conceal from him and all Men), 'A' great Scandal hath been long raised of him by Collonel Clieve, who about two Years ago put it by Letters into my Hands, and I caused Mr. Tombes to have the Knowledge it, but otherwise stifled it as well as I fairly could. But now Collonel Clieve hath made it very publick, and told it to the Commissioners for Approbation who greatly resent it &c. If you know not of it, you shall know no more for me." But would my "prefacing to his Book savour well" in the circumstances? Yes—replies Allen—"I had heard of it" (the scandal) "more particularly than you express; and am troubled that so little hath been done by himself for his own Vindication. This, however, need not hinder your doing what is asked if the Book "deserve it." You can countenance the man's book "without concerning yourself in his Morals."<sup>10</sup>

By 1656 the "Plain Christian Proof" reached a Fourth Edition; and was augmented by the Letters which had passed between Mr. Tombes and himself. These, as well as another addition concerning Mr. Thomas Bedford (who also had been drawn into the dispute), seem to mark a return to "mutual esteem and love." Then in August 1658 Baxter received a letter which spoke to his heart. It was dated the 12th of that month from "London in Great St. Bartholomew"; and signed "Yours in our Lord Jesus, Barbara Lambe."

She wrote of her husband, unknown to him; and her own words best describe the case:

"This dear Husband of mine, Mr. *Lambe*, is one that hath been devoted to God's fear from his Youth

<sup>10</sup> R.B. App. iv., p. 93 (July 23, 1659).



up; and hath desired exceedingly, and delighted greatly, to serve Jesus Christ our Lord. The Ministry he was nourished and bred up in was Mr. *John Goodwin's* for Twelve or Thirteen Years—where he joined a Member and, afterward, by common Consent, and Prayer and Fasting was ordained an Elder over that Flock; and did labour in the Word and Doctrine with great delight, striving to adorn the Gospel in all acts of Love, Righteousness, and Mercy. Going on thus with Joy, about Five Years ago the great Controversy of Baptism had some access into his Judgment through the means of another Member of that Body, Mr. *Allen*, a very Holy and good Man who, having had long doubts about Infant Baptism, was carried to the other by means of Mr. Fisher, since Quaker.<sup>11</sup> By these Arguments presented, Mr. *Lambe* was taken in his Judgment; and in Conscience of his Duty did practice accordingly, not thinking then but still to hold communion with the Church notwithstanding; but then suddenly was led farther, namely, to leave the Communion of that Church, and, finding not where to find any Society in that Engagement where they could have such means

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<sup>11</sup> Allen and Lamb had namesakes from whom they should be carefully distinguished. The most famous William Allen was indeed a Baptist preacher, but he was essentially a soldier, and rose to be Quartermaster-General; his home was Devon, his chief place of service Ireland. (See in these Transactions, iii, 251, and iv, 130, and distrust Carlyle.) His name was borrowed by two brother-colonels, one of whom advocated the assassination of Cromwell, the other tried to hang the lord-lieutenant of Ireland. Our William Allen was a Londoner who in 1653 wrote a book of 136 pages on baptism, and replied to John Goodwin's forty queries whether re-baptized people could not join in communion with other Gathered Churches. The famous Thomas Lamb was a General Baptist, preaching at Colchester before 1640, then a soap-boiler in London, and for more than thirty years a mainstay of his denomination. The present sketch gives all that is important about his namesake. [Note by the editor.]

of edification as they had left, they were induced to join in a Body with some others, about Twenty that came off by their means from the same Fellowship; and so for Five Years have gone on till there is an Addition of about an Hundred."

But about nine months ago doubts came upon him—not as to the subject of Baptism but as to the right of practising "separation" on its account. What hurt his conscience was the rigid narrowness of his new society in "unchurching all besides themselves" and even forbidding "any to marry but to those in their own way." She describes his mental sufferings, due simply to his intense desire to suppress all selfish motives and to please God—as a succession of Temptations and Terrors, relieved by gleams of light. So she turns to "sweet Mr. Baxter," whom she does not know except through "some converse" with his writings. This has led her to "Judge" that, being himself "experienced in spiritual affairs and temptations" he is one who has "the tongue of the Learned, to speak a word in Season." Has she been too bold? She trusts not. She trusts that God has put it into her heart to write, because He means the "Sun of Righteousness" to shine "through him" into their dark night.<sup>12</sup>

Baxter received this letter on Saturday night, 21st August, and replied next day. "I thought it no sin to make it a part of this Lord's Day's work" to meet such a call. Indeed, he hailed it with delight. It drew out his soul "into as strong a stream of love and closing Unity of Spirit as almost ever" he "had felt in" his "life." "There is a Connaturality of Spirit in the Saints that will work by Sympathy. . . .

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<sup>12</sup> She desires that what he writes in answer he will enclose in a cover to Mr. James Marshal, in Friday St., at the Half Moon, "who is my Son-in-law and so I shall have it with privacy."

as a Loadstone will exercise its attractive force through a stone wall. I have an inward sense in my soul that told me . . . your Husband and you and I are so one in our Dear Lord that if all the self-conceited Dividers in the world should contradict it on account of Baptism I could not believe them."<sup>13</sup>

He does his best to cover most of the points in which Mrs. Lambe sought guidance; but the welcome and important fact, in his eyes, is that her husband has given heed to the Lord's voice calling His followers to unite amid their differences: "I know not Mr. Lambe by Face but Mr. Allen I know.<sup>14</sup> Could he find in his Heart to deny me Brotherly Communion if I desired it of him, and protested that I would be of his Opinion and Practice if I durst, and my contradicting Judgment did not hinder me? I have told the Pastors of the Rebaptized Churches here that if any of their Judgment and Practice will satisfie themselves with being again Baptized, and will live in peaceable communion with us, they shall be as dear to me as any other; and that if I were a member of Mr. Tombe's Church, if he would permit me, I would live obediently under his Ministry (allowing me the Liberty of my conscience). I hope God is working for our Unity and Peace. I have been long preaching of the Unity of the Catholick Church, containing all true Christians as Members; and the last Week save one, Mr. Tombes came to the Rebaptized Church at *Bewdley*, and preacht on the same Subject, and so extremely well (as I hear) for Unity among all true Christians, to the same purpose with your Husband's Arguments, that I much rejoiced to hear of it (though

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<sup>13</sup> Baxter speaks of having received her husband's "lines" as well as Mrs. Lambe's letter. Does this indicate that both unknown to each other had written to him at the same time?

<sup>14</sup> He calls him "our Kidderminster factor." App. No. 4, p. 76.

I hear some of his People were offended). And now that this should be seconded with your Husband's peacable Arguments,<sup>15</sup> puts me in some Hopes of a little more healing. I have strong Hopes that if I were in London I should persuade such as your Husband and Mr. *John Goodwin* and many an honest Presbyterian Minister (as great a distance as seems to be between them all) to come together and live in Holy Communion." He winds up his letter with the following "motion." "Tell him from me . . . (1) if he desire it, I will presently send him a Model of Agreement between the churches of the Pædobaptists and Anabaptists (as commonly called) in order to their charitable brotherly Communion, and the preservation of the common Truth that it suffer not by our Divisions. This he and I will subscribe to, and then I doubt not to get Mr. *Tombes* to subscribe it; and next I will get all our Association to subscribe it; and next let Mr. *T* and he get what other of the Rebaptized to subscribe it that will. If none but he and I do it, we will publish it, and shame the World into a Peace, or do our Parts. . . .

"2. When this Agreement is Published, Mr. *L* shall also Publish his Arguments, and I my Reasons for our Agreement

"3. When this is done, let Mr. *L* become the Pastor of a church that's mixt of the Baptized and Rebaptized, if it may be; if not, at least a Publick Preacher in a convenient Station. . . ."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "About a year ago Sir *Henry Herbert* gave me one of your Husband's Books about Baptism, which when I had read, I told him that the Author and I were one in Love, though not of one Opinion and that he wrote in the most savory, honest, moderate style of any of that Mind that I ever read."

<sup>16</sup> In a P.S. he says:—"If Mr. *L*. look into my Book for Infant Baptism, let him know that I much repent of the harsh Language in it, but not of the main matter."

This letter was answered by Mr. Lambe himself (on 16th September) who reveals a state of mind which Baxter in his second letter (September 29th) deprecates as far too scrupulous—especially in regard to his reasons for hesitating to rejoin Mr. John Goodwin's Church.<sup>17</sup> But Mr. Lambe, though pleading the inability of a "wounded Spirit" to feel much present interest, will do what he can with the "Model of Agreement." "If you would draw it up . . . I believe some here would Subscribe it, I hope many. I propounded it to Mr. Manton. He said he should like such a thing very well."<sup>18</sup> His next letter—dated 15 January 1658/9 in reply to two of Baxter's—is much more cheerful. He has regained peace and light. "I see by experience that though I am dark, God is Light; and though I am poor, he is Rich; and I believe there is nothing I want but Heaven is full of it." He has rejoined Mr. Goodwin's Church (in a qualified fashion); he has with his family, begun to frequent the "publick Lectures" of the Parish Church; he has expounded his position to the members of his own congregation with the result that "their hearts" are quite gone from me" and are devising how to "cast me out of the Church." Finally, if that should come to pass, he will "be content to return to Mr. Goodwin and try to settle down because the latter is really for "Free Communion";<sup>19</sup> and "saith (he) will

<sup>17</sup> "I should leave the poor and go among the rich that minded more the adorning of the outward man than the glorious Gospel of Christ ordinarily; whereas my Spirit is much set against gay Apparel and following of fashion; not but that Mr. Goodwin's church is as sober as most."

<sup>18</sup> Mrs. Lambe enclosed a grateful note—dated Sept. 20th, four days after the date of her husband's.

<sup>19</sup> Yet "I am so clog'd with scruples about popular Government and such like things that though to will is present with me, to perform I find not."

join in such a uniting Draught as I hope you will now draw up and prosecute presently; and which I will labour in, God willing, to promote when it cometh here." Meanwhile at the instance of Mrs. Lambe, Baxter had been in correspondence with Lambe's colleague, William Allen; and one long letter is extant, dated 6th November 1658, in which he argues the case for Infant Baptism or, granting the sole validity of Believers' Baptism yet, for free communion. This concludes as follows:—"Your communion with differing Saints is not as sinning against your Opinion about Baptism, nor a leaving your Station. You may own your own way, and yet own Catholick Communion. Dear Brother, I think the Lord of Love and Peace is laying hands on you, and will have you away out of your dangerous Schisms into Paths of Love and Peace. It is Uncharitableness and separation that have made the Rebaptized so odious throughout the world. Love breedeth Love, as Heat breedeth Heat. . . . O! if days of Persecution come, it will cut your hearts to think how you have refused Communion with your Brethren in days of Peace. If we will lay our Heads and Hearts and Hands together for God's Church and Cause it will be too little. My motion to you is That you will Joyn with us for a Brotherly Agreement between the men of your mind and ours. The Articles shall be but these three:—

"1. That all that can, being satisfied in Conscience with their being rebaptized, shall continue loving communion in the Church.

"2. That those that cannot be brought to this, but will hold separated Churches, shall acknowledge us true churches, and profess their Brotherly love, and Distant Communion.

"3. That we all agree on some Rules for the peaceable management of our Differences, without

hardning the Wicked, ensnaring the Weak, hindering the Gospel, and wronging the common Truths we are agreed in. If this motion take with you, I will send you a form of such Agreement: and get as many, as you can of your way to subscribe it; and the Associated Ministers of this County, I doubt not, will Subscribe it; and we will do our parts to lead the world to Peace. Seek God's direction, and return your Resolution to your faithful brother Rich. Baxter."

Allen's response was so satisfactory to Baxter that he wrote (January 7, 1658/9): "I bless the Lord for the great consolation I had in the perusal of your Papers . . . your Arguments for Communion are very weighty. My next work to these ends shall be to perswade some godly ministers that differ from you to a more charitable Judgment and walking towards them of your opinion; and (if I live so long) to perswade our Parliament men against excessive Rigour and Bitterness against them. Do you the like with those of your way. If Love reign in us it must command our Tongues to plead its cause, and to endeavour the promoting of it in the world." Then, on the 22nd of the same month, writing to Mr. Lambe in reply, to his letter of the 15th, he says:—"Is it not a great encouragement to you that your Brother and Fellow-labourer comes over with you, and so your hands are strengthened, and half your opposition taken off and turned into comfort? For though I never told him of your Letters to me, nor you of his, yet I take it for granted that you know each others minds and ways, and yet you know he is resolved for Catholick Communion. I pray you go together, and do what you do as one man, while you have one Mind and Heart. I perceive the Signs of Charity also in him. I beseech you also both to hold on your Charity, even

to them that are offended with you; so far as Christ appeareth in them, let them have your Special love."<sup>20</sup>

The door being thus opened Baxter entered—on February 28, 1658/9, with his Proposals or Terms of communion. But, before exhibiting these, we may finish with Messrs. Lambe and Allen. These two Brethren say Baxter, "at last cast off their Anabaptistry also;" and became "more zealous than other men" or than Baxter himself, "against Independency and separation by how much the more they smarted by it." As early as July 12th, 1659 Allen reported to Baxter that Mr. Gunning (Episcopalian) had "given out that" Mr. Lambe was "come over to them"; and that he had even "let fall odd expressions" seeming to indicate a bent to Popery. Allen, therefore, earnestly entreated Baxter, with whom his "brother Lambe" was on a visit, to "caution him against extremes to which his temper doth much addict him." But Allen, also, stood in need of the caution. For, although he had no bent to Popery, not only did he conform to the established church and publish (before June 1672) a retraction of his Separatist errors—which Baxter appears to have approved—but he even went so far as to write against the non-conforming 2000. The book in which he did this Baxter "received and read," and answered, on May 13, 1676. Its drift was to the effect that the nonconformists were to blame for continuing to preach, and ought rather to have subsided into quiet henchmen of the conforming Parsons everywhere. Baxter's answer is of crushing force; and stands as perhaps the ablest defence of Nonconformist practice. But, while astonished at his old friend's perversity, he has no doubt of his sincerity and still cherishes "unfeigned Love" for him. There is a pathetic sadness in his

<sup>20</sup> R. B. App. No. 4, p. 66.



last words:—"Did I think that ever you would have been one that should publicly have perswaded us to this" (not to preach) " ? . . . Papists would silence me; Prelatists would silence me; Quakers, Anabaptists, Antinomians, and Separatists would silence me! and would my Dear and Judicious and experienced Friends silence me also? Alas! how many Difficulties have we to overcome, while our weary Flesh, and too cold Love, and the Relicks of Sloth and Selfishness, which loveth not a laborious suffering Life, doth hinder us more than all the Rest. But the Judge is at the Door."<sup>21</sup>

Baxter issued his Terms of Agreement under the title, "An Offer of Christian fraternal Communion to the Brethren that are against, or doubtful about, Baptizing Infants of Believers."<sup>22</sup> But, in sending it to Messrs. Allen and Lambe, he introduced it "with a short Disputation preparatory thereto," a very characteristic piece in respect of his sincere endeavour to define exactly the state of the case; and explore all possible pros and cons. It may be summarized thus: There are extremists who, besides nullifying Infant Baptism, nullify the ministry and all extant Church-order, deny the essentials of the Faith and generally endeavour the ruin of the church. With such it is not possible to hold Peace and Communion; nor indeed, do they seek or desire it. But even towards these there should be felt and manifested "the common love which is due to all men." Then, there are those who, by the strictness with which they construe their particular difference, "make themselves incapable of being members of the same particular Churches with us," and shut us out of their own Churches; yet are loyal to the "fundamentals of the Christian religion

<sup>21</sup> App. No. 4, p. 107.

<sup>22</sup> R.B., Pt. ii, p. 186-7.

and of Church Policy." With such, it is obvious "we cannot have Church Communion"; but we can acknowledge them "to be Christian societies, or truly Particular Political Churches, though *in tantum* corrupt and sinfully separated." Lastly, there are persons who, feeling bound in conscience to be rebaptized, are willing still to continue their membership with "our Churches"; and to "live peaceably and inoffensively under the oversight of the church guides." Such are to be welcomed. Nay, even if a mistaken sense of duty should constrain them "publicly to enter their dissent to the Doctrine of Infant Baptism," they "ought not to be rejected," provided that, after such relief to their conscience, they "acquiesce and live quietly under the oversight of the Ministry."

Extremists opposed to all regular Church practice; separated Strict Baptist Churches; sporadic Baptists in the Parochial Churches—such was the situation as it appeared to Baxter; and his conclusion in view of it is this:—"It is our Duty to invite those called Anabaptists now among us, to loving familiar conferences; of purpose (1) to narrow our Differences as far as is possible, by a true stating of them, that they seem not greater than they are; (2) and to endeavour, if possible, yet to come nearer by rectifying of mistakes; and (3) to consult how to improve the Principles, that we are all agreed in, to the Common Good, and to manage our remaining Differences in the most peaceable manner, and to the least disturbance and hurt of the Church." But "how should such an attempt be managed," and "what hope is there of success"? As to the first question Baxter's answer takes the form of certain "Directions," anticipative of what is embodied in the "Terms of Agreement," and illustrative of the manner in which outstanding differences may be composed. They strike me as a

fine example of sweet reasonableness. As to the second question—what hope of success?—Baxter, speaking for himself, says, “I am not quite out of hope of some measure of success with some few particular Persons, but my hopes are very low as to the generality.” On the one hand, the bulk of those on his own side are ready with many objections (he enumerates and disposes of thirteen); and on the other the Anabaptists will object—“we are bound to propagate the truth, and, if you will have communion with us, you must be rebaptized.” Nevertheless, to attempt reconciliation is a duty if there be no more than a bare “possibility with the least probability” of success. Moreover, we leave extremists without excuse if we try our best. So he shaped his “offer of Christian Fraternal Communion” as follows:—

“It is our exceeding Joy that we have all one God, one Saviour, one Spirit, one Faith, and one Baptismal Covenant, one Rule of Faith and Life, one End and Hope, and are Members of one Catholick Church, and agree about God's Worship in the most and greatest parts; and it is our Grief and the Matter of our great Humiliation, that we can come no nearer, and that by the Remnants of our Differences the Wicked are so hardened, the Weak offended, our Charity hindered, our holy Communion and mutual Edification disturbed, our Minds discomposed, and the Gospel, the Catholick Church and our Saviour dishonoured. Lamenting this, with the rest of our Unhappiness while we are in the Flesh, and absent from the Lord, the Centre of Perfect Unity and Concord, and knowing it to be our Duty to walk by the same Rule, and mind the same things so far as we have attained, and being taught of God to love one another, and observing how frequently and urgently Brotherly Love, and Forbearance, and the

Unity and Concord of Christians, is prest in the holy Scriptures, and Uncharitableness and Divisions condemned, that as far as may be, we may promote our Common Ends of Christianity, and with one Mind and Mouth may glorifie God, We whose Names are underwritten do make this following Offer of Communion:

" 1. To all those who Joyn with us in the foregoing Profession of the Christian Faith, and have been Baptized since their Infant Baptism, as thinking it unlawful or insufficient, we offer free Communion in our particular Churches, with leave to Enter your dissent from our Infant-Baptism into the Church-Register or Records, so be it you will thenceforth walk in that Love and Holiness, and that Obedience to the faithful Overseers of the Flock, and that Concord and Brotherly Communion with the Church, as is required in the holy Scriptures (according to your power), and will resist Uncharitableness, Discord and Divisions, and Joyn with us in our Common Work for the Common Ends.

" 2. To all those who goyn with us in the foregoing Profession of Faith, though they have been baptized since their Infant-Baptism, or think that Baptism unlawful, and dare not hold Local Communion with us in our particular Churches, we yet offer, that we may at that distance that our Infirmities have set us, maintain unfeigned Brotherly Love, and acknowledge our several Churches for Christian congregations, and hold a Correspondency, by Delegates or other convenient Means, for the strengthening of each other, and observe the Rules exprest in the following *Offer*.

" 3. To all those who goyn with us in the foregoing Profession of Christianity, and yet, through their dissent from our Baptizing the Infants of Believers,

dare not hold Local Communion with us, nor yet acknowledge our Churches to be true Instituted Particular Churches, we yet *offer* (1) that we may acknowledge each other for Members of Christ (supposing the foresaid Profession of Christianity to be solemnly and credibly made) and Members of the Church Universal; and (2) that we may converse in the World together in a faithful Observance of the following Rules:—

“1. That we addict ourselves heartily to the promoting and exercising of Brotherly Love towards one another and take heed of all things contrary thereto in Word and Deed.

“2. That we addict ourselves to preserve the Unity of the Church Catholick, and Concord of true Christians and the Common Interest of the Godly, and to farther the Cause of Christ in the World, and take heed of so managing our different Opinions as may be a hindrance to these.

“3. That we study and addict ourselves to promote the Conversion of ignorant, ungodly People, and the building up of the Weak, and that we take great heed, lest in the managing of our different Opinions, or opposing one another, we should hinder these Works, hardening the Wicked, and offending the Weak.

“4. That we always in our esteem and industry prefer the greater common Truths that we are all agreed in, before the lesser Points that we differ in; and that we take heed of so managing our Differences, publicly or privately, as may tend to hinder the Reception or Success of those greater common Truths in which we are agreed.

“5. That we publish our Ageements, and profess our Christian Love, and Resolutions for Peace, in our several Congregations, and profess our goynt disowning and detestation of all Errours, Heresies, and

Ungodliness, contrary to the Profession wherein we are agreed.

"6. That we will not preach publicly for our differing Opinions in each other's Congregations without the Pastor's consent, not privately so to speak for them as is like to tend to the hinderance of God's greater Work in that Place; nor hold any private Assemblies in one anothers Parishes, which shall be more to the distracting of each others Societies, than for common Christian Edification.

"7. That in our Preaching and Conference, we will allow the greater and common Truths such a proportion of our Time and Zeal and Speech, as the Nature, Necessity, and Number doth require, and not lay out inordinately such an undue proportion of Zeal and Time and Speech for our different Opinions, as shall be injurious to those Truths.

"8. That we will avoid in Publick and Private all unbrotherly, scornful, reproachful Speeches of each other; especially before ungodly People; and that we will not, to them, dishonour one anothers Ministry, so as may hinder their profiting by it, but will rebuke all such ungodly Persons that we hear reproaching the Ministry or Brethren of either part.

"9. That we will not receive into any of our Churches any Scandalous Persons that fly from the discipline of other Churches, and pretend a Change of Opinion to cloak their Scandals, but will impartially hear what Accusations shall be sent in against them, and proceed accordingly.

"10. That we will upon any Defamations, or Accusations or Rumours of Injury against one another, or of violating our Profession by contrary Doctrine, or breaking of this Agreement, be responsible to each other as Brethren; and will forbear divulging private or uncertain Faults, or censuring or reproaching one

another, till we have either conferred together to give and receive Satisfaction, and duly admonished each other, or tendered such Conferences and Admonitions seasonably, till we see they are wilfully rejected'

Offerers, *Richard Baxter*, Pastor of the Church at *Kidderminster*<sup>23</sup>  
&c. &c. &c.

Subjoined to this was a form for use by the Baptists:

"We whose Names are Subscribed, dissenting from Infant-Baptism, heartily accept this Offered Agreement, as followeth:—

In the first Rank (i.e. those of no: 1).

In the second Rank ( " " 2).

In the third Rank ( " " 3)."

Baxter reinforced his proposals by several apt quotations from Optatus, bishop of Mileve in Numidia, who about 366 A.D. wrote a very broad-minded book, "De Schismate Donatistarum Adv. Parmanianum."

The sequel is not very clear. Messrs Allen and Lambe "had a meeting," which promised well, "with divers of the most moderate Pastors of the Re-baptized Churches";<sup>24</sup> and Mr. Allen reported to Baxter a public joint Meeting of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists held in London on September 30, 1659. He wrote of it, on the same date, in no hopeful strain. Presumably they had Baxter's proposals before them; and so long as they dealt with "generals" "the work went on merrily," but when they descended to "some particulars" it came almost "to a stand." What "troubled" them most concerned the "sending forth or furnishing the Nation with Preachers of the Gospel." All were agreed that

<sup>23</sup> The names would be more of the Worcestershire Association. See R.B. App. No. 4, p. 89, and No. 3, p. 57.

<sup>24</sup> R.B., Pt. ii, p. 181.

Preachers must be sent; that they must be "godly, sound in the faith and apt to teach"; that they must be conveniently maintained and properly approved. It boded ill for Unity, however, that a Baptist brother, who submitted a little scheme involving some measure of "state patronage and control," was "looked shie on" for his pains, by other Baptists; and dubbed a Presbyterian. In fact, the conference wandered off from Baxter and came to little. Nay, it would have come to nothing had "not my Lord Goff (as some call him) and some others" "earnestly moved" "that that wherein they had agreed might be improved for common benefit; and (which was agreed to) that three or four of each Perswasion should meet privately to see what could farther be done; and that there should be no further Publick Meetings, till they were in a Readiness to call them."<sup>25</sup>

Here the curtain falls. "Suddenly"—says Baxter, writing about 1670—"the Broils of the Army, pulling down *Richard Cromwell*, and setting up I know not what, and keeping all in Confusion, broke off all our consultations, till the King came in; and since then men dare not prosecute the Agreement, lest they be taken as Conspirators, that do it in preparation of a Plot: so unhappily are the Affairs of the Church oft crossed by Secular Interests and Divisions in the World."<sup>26</sup>

FRED. T. POWICKE.

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<sup>25</sup> R.B. App. No 4, p. 94-5.

<sup>26</sup> R.B., Pt. ii, p. 181.



## Seventeenth Century Baptist Disputations.

THE year 1641 A.D. is one of the great dates in English constitutional history. The old feudalism and the Stuart pretensions were soon to be destroyed. Parliamentary government was to become a reality. Not only was civil liberty to be a fact, there was also to be religious equality, for one of the first and greatest achievements of the Long Parliament was to place on the Statute Book Acts abolishing the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission, and thus destroying the chief instruments of regal and ecclesiastical tyranny, and declaring, in a practical way that "the civil power has no right to make and impose ecclesiastical laws."

One result of this was that Baptists began to declare themselves. Pastors and elders itinerated, evangelised, and formed churches in many counties. A steady stream of tracts and books came from the press. Many of the preachers were cultured, and some had received University training. Naturally, many opponents disliked their increased activities, and in pamphlets and sermons, endeavoured to hinder the propagation of Baptist beliefs. Hence it is not surprising that this was an age of public disputation. The Anabaptists—as the Baptists were then called—welcomed these disputations, since they drew attention to the truth, gave the opportunity for declaring the Gospel to large crowds of people, and sometimes led

to conviction amongst the hearers; also to the formation of churches on New Testament lines. Subjoined is a list of one hundred and nine disputations, and from these we may gather facts concerning the origin, position, distinctive practices and tenets of the English Baptists.

The dates of ninety-one of these disputations are known, and it is significant that the first took place in 1641, on the village green at Westerleigh, seven miles from Bristol, and the consequence was the formation of Broadmead Church, Bristol. From 1641 to 1650 inclusive, twenty-six were held; from 1651 to 1660 there were fifty-three; and after 1660 to the last, in 1698, only twelve more. The total for the Commonwealth period itself is sixty-one, demonstrating that Baptists exercised their liberties to the full in that critical, yet formative, period. Twelve took place in 1655, the year Cromwell secured liberty of worship for the Vaudois.

The ground covered is significant. We know the places where 105 were held. Of these Scotland claims four, Wales three, Ireland two, and Italy one. This leaves ninety-five for England, and of these twenty-four were held in London, and altogether twenty-seven counties were the scenes of these wordy combats. Kent had eight, Warwickshire six, Leicestershire, Worcestershire, Sussex, and Bedfordshire five each; Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire four each; and there were three in each of the counties of Essex, Bucks., Cambridge, and Hereford. It is significant that we have only three for the northern counties of England, and they were all in the West.

Over sixty Baptists took part as disputants, for most of the leaders participated in this warfare of tongues. The most active was John Tombes, M.A., B.D., of Magdalene Hall, Oxford; he held nine, apart

from that one in 1642 at Bristol, which led to his becoming a Baptist. Other notable converts through them were Henry Jessey, M.A., F. Cornwell, M.A., and Christopher Blackwood. Another notable protagonist was William Kiffin—merchant, pastor, army officer—who appeared in six contests. The most popular appears to have been Jeremiah Ives, who held at least eight. He seemed always ready to meet any antagonist. His prowess in this harmless kind of conflict became so famous that he was sent for by King Charles II. to dispute with a Romish priest. Ives appeared before the King habited like a clergyman. The priest, according to custom, began to vaunt upon the antiquity of his church; but upon this point Ives pressed him very closely, showing that, whatever antiquity the Roman Catholics claimed, their doctrine and practice could by no means be proved apostolic, since they are not to be found in any writings which remain of the apostolic age. The priest, after much wrangling, in the end replied that this argument was of as much force against infant baptism as against the doctrines and ceremonies of the Church of Rome. To which Ives replied that he readily granted what he said to be true. The priest thereupon broke up the dispute, saying that he had been cheated, and that he would proceed no further; for he came to dispute with a clergyman of the Establishment, and it was now evident that this was an Anabaptist. John Bunyan held six disputations, but they were all, except one, with Quakers.

The opponents were chiefly clergymen, who numbered twenty-five, mostly university men, and including eleven Doctors of Divinity. Thirteen of these were afterwards ejected from their livings. The most famous were Drs. Gunning and Featley. It is worthy of note that at least thirty-two disputations were with

Quakers, and of these George Fox himself held sixteen, of which three were in Scotland and the rest in no less than nine different English counties. Young James Parnell was the next most active Quaker. Richard Baxter crossed swords on three occasions. Very few Independents, Presbyterians, or Unitarians are in the list of antagonists.

What were the subjects of dispute? Naturally, often the question of the subjects and mode of baptism. We have records of twenty-six such disputes. In every case where the mode was mentioned the Baptists maintained that it was immersion. It is never suggested that they had ever changed. If they had, as is sometimes stated, you would have expected a reference. On the other hand, the report of the dispute in November, 1658, at St. Clement Dane's Church, Strand, London, between Henry Denne and Dr. Gunning, gives us a clear guidance. It is called "A Contention for Truth," and Denne answered a question which is often asked—Is immersion injurious to the person baptised?—in the negative, and in his answer there is a passage which is of great importance, because it gives us a landmark in the history of infant sprinkling. Denne says that, "It is easy to prove that dipping of believers is not so dangerous, as dipping of infants; yet dipping of infants is not only commanded by the Church of England, but also generally practised in the Church of England till the year 1600; yea, in some places it was practised until the year 1641, until the fashion altered."

The most famous disputation was held on October 17th, 1642, in the Borough of Southwark, between Dr. Daniel Featley, M.A., and four Anabaptists, of whom one appears to have been W. Kiffin. There is Featley's own biased account of this. It is our earliest report of a disputation, and it possesses a scandalous frontis-

piece in which fifteen different sorts of Anabaptists are supposed to be depicted. Notwithstanding the writer's animadversions, he makes some important admissions. Apparently he had been informed of forty-seven Baptist Churches that existed, and he considered them to be "the most dangerous and pestilent enemies" to the State. He tells us that "this fire in the reignes of Queen Elizabeth and King James, and our most gracious soveraigne, till now, was covered in England under the ashes; or if it brake out at any time, by the care of the Ecclesiasticall and Civill Magistrates it was soon put out. But of late, since the unhappy distractions which our sinnes have brought upon us, the Temporall Sword being other wayes employed, and the Spirituell locked up fast in the Scabberd, this sect, among others, hath so far presumed on the patience of the State, that it hath held weekly Conventicles, re-baptised hundreds of men and women together in the twilight in Rivulets, and some armes of the Thames, and elsewhere, dipping them over head and eares. It hath printed divers Pamphlets in defence of their Heresie, yea, and challenged some of our preachers to disputation."

Other subjects discussed covered almost every conceivable theological topic, i.e., "The Trinity and the Church"; "The Person of Christ"; "The Second Coming of Christ and the Resurrection of the Body"; "Universal Redemption"; "Election"; "The right of private persons to take upon them public preaching"; "Church government and discipline"; "Original Sin"; "Ye Business of the Reformation and ye duty of Separation from ye Worship of Antichrist"; "The immortality and immateriality of the soul"; "The Diety of Christ"; "Admission of Jews into England"; "Socinianism"; "Whether the Heathen, who want the ministry of the Gospel, have not

sufficient means to believe unto Salvation?" "The Validity of the Ministry." When the Quakers were the disputants it generally meant considering the question of "The Inner Light." The Baptists had their own differences, and they debated between themselves the questions of the laying on of hands, the Seventh Day Sabbath, the practice of singing, as well as the distinctions between Generals and Particulars. Ordinary buildings proved too small and inconvenient for the excited and eager crowds who attended, and the largest accommodation being afforded by the parish church, to the parish church they commonly hurried. In those days the rights of parishioners were greater than now. At Cambridge they met in the Shire Hall. Some took place in prison, and others in orchards, or other places, with the blue canopy of heaven as their roof. The victory, as in all such public discussions, was usually claimed by both sides. As early as 1645 A.D., the authorities would only permit such meetings by means of a licence, but oftentimes the disputants took risks and ignored the question of licence altogether.

#### LIST OF DISPUTATIONS.

The names of Baptists are the first when known.

1641. *At Westerleigh, Near Bristol.*

Between John Canne and Richard Fowler, who was ejected from his living in 1662, and died in 1684, being at the time the Presbyterian minister at Newbury.

"They debated ye business of the Reformation, and ye Duty of Separation from ye Worship of Antichrist." This was one of the things that led to the formation of Broadmead Church, Bristol. But it has been questioned in these pages that Canne himself was ever a Baptist; see *Transactions*, vol. iii., p. 212.

1642. Oct. 17th. *At Southwark.*

Between William Kiffin and Dr. Daniel Featley, M.A. The latter published his account of this in 1645, in his "Dippers Dipt, or the Anabaptists duck'd and plung'd over Head and Eares, at a Disputation at Southwark." This passed through six editions in as many years. The debate covered a wide ground; the Trinity, the Church, the Sacraments, Lay Preaching, and other subjects were considered.

1642. *At Bristol.*

Between John Tombes, M.A., B.D., of Magdelene Hall, Oxford, and an ingenious Baptist. The subject was infant baptism, which he had practised as being based on i. Cor. vii. 14. This led to Tombes becoming a Baptist, and he became a great power in the land, and was one of the Triers. He held many disputes, and died 1676, in his 73rd year.

1642. *At Wickham, Essex*

There is no record of this, but we know that John Stalham was invited to be present by Enock Grey, and Thomas Lowry, the incumbent, was present. Lowry was subsequently ejected from his living at Harborough, Leicestershire.

1643. January 11th. *At Terling, Essex.*

Between Timothy Batt and Thomas Lambe, for the Baptists, and John Stalham, M.A. (Oxon), a man of strict Congregational principles. The last named published in 1644 a record of this, entitled: "The Summe of a Conference." Lambe was one of the first to encourage females preaching.

1643. January. *At London.*

Between John Tombes and Dr. N. Holmes, Messrs. Stephen Marshall, M.A., B.D., Thomas Blake, M.A., and Henry Scudder. The question proposed was, what Scripture there was for infant baptism.

1643. *At Coventry.*

Between Benjamin Coxe, M.A., and Richard Baxter, on "Infant Baptism." Baxter issued the challenge, but as the outcome of it Coxe was imprisoned. See *Transactions* of the Baptist Historical Society, vol. vi., 52.

1643. *At London.*

Between Hanserd Knollys, William Kiffin and Henry Jessey, M.A. See *Transactions*, vol. i., 237. This led to Jessey becoming a Baptist.

1644. *In the prison at the Lord Peter's house, London.*

Between Henry Denne and Dr. Featley. Denne had so much the best of the argument that Featley, under the excuse of the danger of publicly disputing without a licence, declined to proceed with it.

1644. *In Kent.*

Between Edward Barber, Thomas Lambe, on the one side, and William Kiffin and Thomas Patient on the other. Barber was strong for the practice of laying on of hands when receiving new members, and his congregation was the first to practice it. See *Transactions*, vol. i., 119.

1644. *At Cranbrook, Kent.*

Between William Jeffery, of Sevenoaks, and the clergy. This was the outcome of a sermon by the Rev. F. Cornwell, M.A., preached on March 7th, and led to Mr. Christopher Blackwood becoming a Baptist. The subject of debate was infant baptism. Cornwell introduced amongst Baptists the practice of the laying on of hands.



1644. *'In the stone-house' (i.e., the parish church),*  
Warboys, Hunts.

Between Henry Denne and Eusebius Hunt, the parish teacher. Denne maintained that infant sprinkling was of human tradition, and there was no ground for it in the Scriptures.

1646. Jan. *At the Spital, near Norton Falgate,*  
*London.*

"Upon the day of public thanksgiving for the taking of Dartmouth by the Parliamentary Forces."

Between Thomas Lambe and a Mr. Batty, a teacher in the same church, namely, Bell Alley, Coleman Street. The subject of the dispute was, the immortality and immateriality of the soul. The Lord Mayor, it appears, had private notice of the meeting, and sent his officers to prevent it.

1646. *At Trinity Church, Coventry.*

Between Hanserd Knollys and W. Kiffin on the Baptist side, and the Rev. John Bryan, D.D., Vicar of Trinity Church, and the Rev. Obadiah Grew, M.A., D.D., Vicar of St. Michael's, Coventry. The last two were both ejected in 1662.

1646. *Before the Synod of Ministers (Presbyterian),*  
*London.*

Between Vavasor Powell and Stephen Marshall, M.A., B.D. It was proposed that Powell should receive Presbyterian ordination, but he maintained that they had no authority without the concurrence of the church to which he was to become pastor. The result was that, on September 11th, the necessary certificate was given, signed by eighteen of the divines, that he should be allowed to exercise his gifts. Powell was baptised at the end of 1655.

1647. January 11th. *In St. Mary's Church, Oxford.*

Between William Erbury, B.A., and Francis Cheynell, M.A., D.D. This was a debate on Socinianism. R. Baxter considered Erbury one of the chief of the Anabaptists, but Neal describes him as a turbulent antinomian. He held some curious views, his leading tenets were that about the end of the Apostolic times the Holy Spirit withdrew itself, and man substituted an external and carnal worship in its stead; that when apostasy was removed the New Jerusalem would descend, so that certain men could already see it; that baptism consisted in going ankle deep only into the water, and that none had a right to administer that ordinance without a fresh commission from heaven.

1647. *At Newport Pagnell, Bucks.*

Between John Gibbs and Richard Carpenter.

"A scholasticall Discussion of the much-agitated controversie concerning Infant Baptisme."

1648. *At Leicester.*

George Fox's first dispute with Baptists. This was the first mention of his speaking in a "steeple-house," when "Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Common-prayer men" all took part. The debate came to an abrupt termination, but was resumed at an inn.

1649. Jan. 14th. *At All-Hallows-the-Great, in Thames Street, London.*

Between John Simpson and John Goodwin, M.A., Messrs. William Ames and John Griffith acting as moderators. The subject was "that Jesus Christ died intentionally, to save all the posterity of Adam." Griffith was a G.B., Simpson came to dwell on the Fifth-Monarchy,

1649. *Feb. 11th. At the same place, the same disputants* discussed whether the heathen who want the Ministry of the Gospel have not sufficient means to believe unto salvation?" Simpson said no; Goodwin said yes. Messrs. James Cranford, M.A., and John Griffith acted as Moderators.

1649. *At Barrow-upon-Soar, Leicestershire*

Between Samuel Oates and George Fox, on "Faith and Baptism."

1649. *July 27th. At Ashford, Kent.*

Between Samuel Fisher, M.A. (Oxon), and several clergymen, in the presence of two thousand people, on infant baptism.

1649. *December 31st. At Coleman Street, London.*

Between Vavasor Powell and John Goodwin, M.A., on Universal Redemption, in the presence of divers ministers of the city of London, and thousands of others. Messrs. J. Cranford, M.A., and D. Lowdell acted as moderators. Lowdell is a name well known in G.B. circles.

1650. *January 1st. At Bewdley, Worcestershire.*

Between John Tombes and Richard Baxter, who disputed from the infants' rights to church-membership to their right to baptism. There was a crowded audience, and the debate lasted from nine in the morning until five at night.

1650. *At Axbridge, Somerset.*

Between Thomas Collier and J. Smith, of Badgworth, concerning the person of Christ, the Trinity, etc.

1650. *August 20th. At Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire.*

Between Lawrence Williams, Samuel Oates (Baptists) and Thomas Hall, B.D. Subject was "the right of private persons to take upon them public preaching."

1651. *At Petworth, Sussex.*

Between Samuel Fisher and Dr. Channel.

Fisher engaged in eight other disputes within three years. He had been a clergyman, but in 1643 returned his licence to the bishop and joined the Baptists. In 1654, through the influence of William Caton and John Stubbs, he became a Quaker. He continued to hold disputations, and in 1660 held three with Thomas Danson, M.A., at Sandwich.

1651. *At Cowbridge, Glamorgan.*

Between William Erbury and Henry Nicholls.

1652. March. *At Antrim.*

Between Andrew Wyke, assisted by a Mr. Taylor, an Independent minister, and some Presbyterian ministers, on church government and discipline.

1652. July 23rd. *At New Chappel, in Montgomeryshire.*

Between Vavasor Powell and Dr. George Griffith, M.A. The subject was church government, and Griffith received the Bishopric of St. Asaph for the part he took in this debate in particular, and in traducing Nonconformists in general.

1652. September 11th. *In the Parish Church of Watlington, Oxon.*

Between John Pendarvis, B.A., Exeter College, Oxon, and Dr. Jasper Mayne, M.A., of Christ Church, Oxford, on infant baptism. There was an innumerable company of people on each side.

1652. October 25th. *At Cupar, Fife.*

Mr. Brown, chaplain to Colonel Fairfax's regiment, disputed with one James Wood, a Scotch minister, upon the question whether infant baptism was grounded upon the Word of God.

1652. *At Oxford.*

Between John Tombes, M.A., B.D., and Henry Savage, M.A., B.D.

1652. *In the Parish Church, Kendal, Westmoreland.*

Between Thomas Taylor and three neighbouring ministers. It led to Edward Gathorne becoming a Baptist. It was a dispute on baptism. Soon after Taylor met George Fox and became a Quaker.

See *Transactions*, vol. v., 168.

1652. *In London.*

Between Dr. Peter Chamberlen and Mr. James Cranford, M.A. (Oxon), on the question of ordination. The dispute occupied four days in March and April, and took place "at the house of Mr. William Webb, at the end of Bartholomew Lane, by the old Exchange." Chamberlen was M.D., of Padua, but afterwards was incorporated both at Oxford and Cambridge. Also a F.R.C.S.

See *Transactions*, vol. iii., 180.

1653. 26th May. *At Cork.*

Dr. Harding, the pastor at Bandon, challenged Dr. Edward Worth, of Cork, and Mr. John Murcot, of Dublin, to a public discussion on baptism, which was held on the above date.

1653. September 2nd. *London.*

Before the Committee of Tythes.

William Erbury, M.A., disputed with Dr. Lazarus Seaman, M.A., and Dr. Anthony Burgess, M.A., on "Ministers for Tythes."

1653. September 5th. *At Abergavenny (St. Mary's Church), Mon.*

Between J. Tombes, M.A., B.D., and Henry Vaughan, M.A., and John Cragge, M.A. The two last named tried to refute the necessity of dipping and maintain infant baptism.

1653. October 12th. *At Lombard Street, London.*

[Between a Mr. Webster, and three others, a Presbyterian, an Independent, and an Anabaptist. The last was W. Erbury, and he issued an account of what he termed this "monstrous dispute, because it had neither head nor taile."

1653. *At Carlisle.*

Between George Fox and the Anabaptist Pastor.

1653. Nov. 6th. *At London.*

Between Dr. Chamberlen and W. Kiffin (now a Captain in the Army), on "the imposition of hands."

1654. July. *At Broadmead, Bristol.*

[The Baptists and two Quakers from Kendal, John Audland and Thomas Airey, on "the inner light."

1654. Aug. 16th. *At Broughton, Kent.*

Between George Hammon, pastor of Biddenden, and Matthias Rutton, on "original sin."

1654. Sept. 27th. *At Harlaston, Staffs*

Between Richard Farnworth, a Quaker, and the Baptists.

1654. *At Swanington, Leicestershire.*

Between George Fox and the Baptists.

1654. *At Baddesley Ensor, near Atherstone,  
Warwickshire.*

Between George Fox and the Baptists.

1654. *At Theobald's House, near Waltham Abbey,  
Herts.*

Between Major William Packer and George Fox.  
See *Transactions*, vol. iv., 58.

1655. March 30th. *At Fennystanton, Hunts.*

"in the house of a Mr. Ashen."

Between Richard Elligood, a Baptist Pastor, and James Parnell, a young Quaker, who died in Colchester Gaol on May 5th, 1656, in his twentieth year "for conscience sake." This disputation was the result of Parnell dispatching a paper of forty-three queries to the Baptists of the place, inviting them to come and answer it publicly. It was a discussion on "the letter and the spirit." The meeting was not the last of the matter, for several disputatious letters were afterwards exchanged, which are to be found printed in the collection of Parnell's writings.

1655. April 20th. *At Cambridge.*

In the Shire Hall, in the Castle yard, where the Baptists were waiting, "sitting upon the Bench like judges."

Between Joseph Doughty, and James Parnell, on the invitation of Mr. Hind, a tanner of the city. A great number of university men, and clergy, were present.

1655. May. *In an orchard at Littleport, Isle of Ely.*

Between John Ray, of Wichelbrook, in Suffolk, and James Parnell.

1655. June 24th. *At Horsham, Sussex.* At Sedgwick Lodge, in the house of Bryan Wilkinson.

Between Matthew Caffin and George Fox.

1655. Sunday, July 4th. "*In the French School,*"  
*at Colchester, Essex.*

Between William Archer, the town lecturer, Thomas Tillam, a Seventh Day Baptist, and James Parnell.

1655. December. *At Rosse, Herefordshire*, "in the steeple-house."

Between John Skinner, from Weston, who wrote a book against infant baptism, and Thomas Goodayer. See *Transactions*, vol. iii., 117.

1655. *At Kenilworth, Warwickshire.*

Between John Onley, a farmer and Baptist preacher of Lawford, and Dr. John Bryan, of Coventry. (The account of this discussion was criticised by J. Ley, Prebendary of Chester, in 1658.

1655. *At Sibley, Leicestershire.*

Between George Fox and several Baptists, one of whom said that "he had baptized thirty of a day, and came by the Lord's teachings by his spirit and power."

1655. *At Romney, Kent.*

Between George Hammon and George Fox.

1655. *At Dorchester, Dorset.*

Between George Fox and the Baptists.

1655. *In St. Paul's Cathedral, London.*

Between John Griffin and John Biddle, M.A. (Oxon), a Socinian, the subject being "Whether Jesus Christ be the Most High and Almighty God." As a result of this Biddle was banished to the Scilly Islands, on Oct. 5th of the same year, where he remained until 1658, when some Baptist ministers interceded for his release. Subsequently he died in prison.

1655. *At the Quaker's Meeting-house, Crawley, Sussex.*

Between Matthew Caffin and two Quakers, Thomas Lawson and John Slee. They discussed the second coming of Christ and the Resurrection of the Body. It was adjourned to Caffin's house at Southwater, where it was resumed Sept. 5th. Continued for seven



years by means of printed pamphlets, with such quaint titles as these, viz.: "An Untaught Teacher Witnessed Against," and "The Deceived and Deceiving Quaker Discovered." Caffin was assisted by W. Jeffery, of Sevenoaks, and Joseph Wright, of Maidstone. The Quaker disputants were George Fox, J. Naylor, H. Woolrich, and George Whitehead.

1656. April 30th. *Ellesmere, Salop.*

Between Henry Haggard, of Stafford, and Thomas Porter, M.A., of Whitchurch, who was afterwards ejected. The subject of debate was infant baptism, and Mr. Francis Tallents was moderator.

1656. *At Bristol, in an orchard.*

Paul Gwin, "ye rude Jangelinge baptist," and George Fox, who also "went to ye meetinge in Broorde Mede."

1656. *At Edge Hill, Warwickshire.*

George Fox and the "ranter baptists."

1656. *Thomas Collier and the Quakers.*

Collier defended the admission of Jews into England.

1656. *At Pavenham, Bedfordshire.*

Between John Bunyan and the Quakers.

1656. May 23rd. *In Paul's Steeple House Bedford.*

John Bunyan, John Burton, and the Quakers.

1656. *At the Market Cross, Bedford.*

John Bunyan and the Quakers.

Bunyan's antagonists included both male and female Quakers. On one occasion Mrs. Anne Blackley bid him "to throw away the scriptures," to which Bunyan replied, "No! for then the devil would be too hard for me."

These disputes led to Bunyan publishing his first

work, the same year, entitled, "Some Gospel Truths Opened," in which there was a denunciation of the tenets of the Quakers. It elicited an immediate reply, written by Edward Burroughs, entitled "The Gospel of Peace, contended for in the Spirit of Meekness and Love." In a postscript to it we read, "And now seeing we have taken in hand to discover and lay open the deceits of the Deceivers, that all men may come to the knowledge of the Truth, and be saved, and led out of the snare of the crafty Fowlers; these things further we shall add, which are contrary to the knowledge of the true Gospel.

"First. John Burton said in a Discourse with some Friends, 'That Christ had two bodies, and one of the bodies was out of the fight of the Saints.'

"Secondly. John Bunyan said, 'Christ's second coming is not his coming in spirit, for his coming in Spirit is no comming.'

"Thirdly. John Bunyan said, upon Discourse of the Word of God being in the heart, in the presence of divers People, 'That there was nothing in him, nor in any man to be taken notice of.'

"Fourthly. One of their Brethren said, 'That Christ and the Word of Life were too things.'

"Fifthly. Some others of the same members, in the Market of Bedford, said, 'That they scorned that Light which we (meaning the Quakers) speak of, which is the Light that convinceth of sin, which Light they confessed to every man, in the same discourse, which was with some of them called Quakers.'

Within a few weeks, early in 1657, Bunyan replied in "A Vindication of the Gospel Truths opened." He tells Burroughs that he is censorious and useth many words without knowledge.

1657. Jan. 30th *At Bedford.*  
John Bunyan and the Quakers.

1657. Nov. 23rd. *At Bedford.*

John Bunyan, John Child, John Fenn, and the Quakers.

1657. *At Leith.*

George Fox and an Anabaptist.

1657. *At Edinburgh.*

George Fox and an Anabaptist.

1657. *At Stirling*

George Fox and Anabaptists, "vain Janglers and disputers."

1657. *At Leominster, Herefordshire.*

John Tombes, M.A., B.D., and George Fox, who was assisted by Thomas Taylor, now a Quaker, formerly the Baptist protagonist at Kendal. They disputed on "The Light that enlightens every man that cometh into the world."

1658. *June 3rd.*

Between George Hammon and Mr. S. Hendon, and his son John, on "the good ancient laws and statutes of King Jesus."

1658. November 19th and 26th, *in St. Clement Dane's Church, Strand, London.*

Between Henry Denne and Dr. Peter Gunning, a celebrated divine of the day, who received his D.D. by royal mandate, afterwards bishop, successively of Chichester and Ely. This was attended by some thousands of people, and five days afterwards Denne baptized the lady at whose instance it took place.

1658. *Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.*

Joseph Coate (Quaker) a very young man, of Reading, got a dispute "with ye Baptists at the house of Wm Waters."

1659. Jan. 6th to Feb. 2nd. *In the Stone Chapel by St. Paul's, London.*

Jeremiah Ives had disputes about the seventh day Sabbath with three leaders of the Seventh Day Baptists, viz: Thomas Tillam, Dr. Chamberlen, and Mr. Coppinger. There were four days of discussion, and on the last day Ives was assailed by Henry Denne and John Gosnold.

1659. May. *In Daniel Angier's barn at Toft, Cambridgeshire.*

Between John Bunyan and Thomas Smith, M.A., B.D., Professor of Arabic, Lecturer at Christ Church, and Keeper of the University Library, Cambridge. The dispute followed a sermon by Bunyan on i. Tim. iv. 16, and was on the right of lay preaching and calling most of his hearers unbelievers. It led to Smith issuing a pamphlet to which Henry Denne, himself a Cambridge man, replied.

1660. November 27th. *At Leominster, Herefordshire.*

Between John Tombes and Edward Hayes (Baptists), and two Quakers named John Scaff and Alexander Parker. Also another between John Tombes and two Quakers named Thomas Kellam and John Moore.

1660. *At Southwark.*

Between Baptists and Quakers. This Samuel Bradley refers to in his "A reply to a Scandalous Paper," which was answered by the Quaker, George Whitehead.

1662. *At Lincoln.*

Between Thomas Grantham and a Roman Catholic.

1664. *At Lancaster Castle, Lancashire.*

Between Major John Wigan and George Fox, who were both prisoners, on "The Inner Light."

1670. *At High Wycombe, Bucks.*

Between Jeremiah Ives and William Penn, the Quaker.

1671. Feb., 12th and 26th. *In London.*

Between Jeremiah Ives and Thomas Danson, M.A. The subject was, "Whether the doctrine of some true believers, final 'Apostasy, be true or not."

1671. *Between Jeremiah Ives and Thomas Grantham*  
on the subject of "the laying on of hands."

1672. *John Miller, pastor of Minthenton, Dorset,* had several disputes with divers clergymen. The most remarkable was that he had with Dr. Beach, and four more, before a multitude of people. The time and place appointed, having been publicly published in three market towns. The subjects to be debated were baptism, the church, and the ministry. The clergy retired defeated after Miller had dealt with the first one.

1673. 18th Sept. *At Blyton, Lincolnshire.*

Between Thomas Grantham and W. Fort, minister of the parochial congregation. It arose out of Fort visiting the baptized Christians' meeting and saying that they were foolish.

1674. October 9th. *At the Barbican, London.*

Between J. Ives, W. Kiffin, Thomas Hicks, T. Plant, Robert Ferguson, all Baptists, and the Quakers named W. Penn, G. Whitehead, Stephen Crisp, and G. Keith.

The subjects were the Person of Christ and the Inner Light, and thousands were present.

1692. *At Pen-y-lan, Pembrokeshire.*

Between John Jenkins, pastor of Rhydwilim, and John Thomas, of Llwyngrawys, Independent pastor of Llechryd. After many private debates both parties agreed to hold a public meeting. One day, Thomas preached on Paedobaptism, the succeeding day, Jenkins preached on adult baptism. The two sermons, so far from ending the dispute, proved to be only its beginning in earnest. There was a war with pamphlets. Mr. James Owen published, in 1693, a small duodecimo volume of 200 pages, entitled, "Bedydd Plant o'r Nefoedd," i.e., "Infant Baptism from Heaven." This was the first work which appeared in the Welsh language on the baptismal controversy. It was specially translated into English for Mr. Benjamin Keach, so that he could write a reply. This he did in 1696, and his work was published in English, and soon afterwards in Welsh. It is full four times the bulk of Mr. Owen's book, and was entitled, "Light broke forth in Wales expelling darkness."

1692. May 24th. *In London.*

On whether the praises of God should be sung in public assemblies? Many churches were distracted on this subject, and many pamphlets had appeared. The protagonists included B. Keach, Isaac Marlow, George Barrette, Hercules Collins, Richard Allen, and Thomas Hollowell. John Bunyan advocated singing in 1688. The General Assembly of Particular Baptists intervened and referred the subject to the consideration of Andrew Gifford, Bristol; Edward White, Eversholt; Henry Austin, Norwich; Robert Keate, Wantage; John Wills, Allesbrey; Samuel Buttell, Plymouth; and John Scott. They were directed to consider the question "only respecting reflections and matters of fact." They reported on the above date,

a truce followed, and the practice of congregational singing more and more prevailed.

In 1689 the General Baptist Assembly, following the lead Thomas Grantham gave in 1678, sanctioned the singing of praises in the church by a soloist, but forbade congregational psalmody. The same year the Particular Baptist Assembly was asked to take action, but refused until 1692.

1698. Feb. 22nd. *At Portsmouth*, in the Presbyterian meeting-house, High Street. The last with His Majesty's licence.

This arose out of the preaching of Samuel Chandler, a Presbyterian minister of Fareham, who had established a fortnightly lecture at Portsmouth. In it both General and Particular Baptists united. For the Baptists had as champions William Russell, M.D. the G.B. minister of London, who was assisted by two P.B. ministers, viz.: John Williams, of East Knowle, John Sharpe, of Frome, the latter acting as Moderator. The Presbyterians selected Samuel Chandler; Mr. Leigh, of Newport; and Mr. Robinson, of Hungerford, the last named acting as moderator for their party. The assembly was worthy of the occasion, and the debate lasted for nine hours. The governor, the lieutenant governor, the Mayor, and magistrates of Portsmouth were present. The theme of the dispute was, the subject of baptism, and the manner in which it is to be performed.

There were many other disputations, but the dates of the following are uncertain, viz:

*At Maidstone Gaol, Kent*, between Wilson, of Ottham, and F. Cornwell, M.A.

*At Dover, Kent*. Between John Finesse and Luke Howard, who was formerly a Baptist, and says in his Journal that he was the "first receiver of

Friends, and his wife the first baptized person in Kent."

*At Sarden, Kent.* Matthew Caffin and three London ministers disputed.

*At Henfield, Sussex.* Between Matthew Caffin and a Mr. Rothwell, who over-rating his own powers, issued the challenge.

*At Waldron, Sussex.* Matthew Caffin debated with the minister in the Parish Church.

*At Agmondesham, Bucks.* Richard Baxter disputed with the Baptists.

*In London.* Vavasor Powell debated with a Mr. Price on Election and Redemption.

*At Hereford.* John Tombes and another disputed.

*At Rosse, Herefordshire.* John Tombes debated with Tirer and Smith.

*At Portsmouth, Hants.* Dr. Peter Gunning had a dispute with the General Baptists.

*At Newbury, Berks.* Jeremiah Ives debated with Benjamin Woodbridge, M.A. (Oxon), who was afterwards ejected.

*In London, before the King.* Between Jeremiah Ives and a Romish priest.

*In Leicester Castle.* Between Samuel Oates and William Sheffield, M.A. Sir Thomas Beaumont acted as Moderator.

*From the "Journal" of the Friends' Historical Society* we learn that Isabel Hacker, of Withcote Hall, the widow of Colonel Francis Hacker, the Regicide, shared in a noted local dispute with the Baptists.



*At Genoa, in Italy.* Dr. Peter Chamberlen disputed with six Jewish Rabbis at the house of Rabbi Abraham Athias. In it he sets forth the fulfilment in Christianity of Old Testament promises and prophecies, and concluded with an appeal to the Jews to accept the Messiah. This was before 1682, and is referred to in a single sheet tract Chamberlen issued that year, entitled, "The Sons of the East: being an epistle written in English by old Dr. Chamberlen (Eldest Scarlet of Europe, Senior to all Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, and Doctors now living). To the Synagogue of the Jews in London." Chamberlen was now eighty-one years of age.

*In Evans' "Early English Baptists" (ii., 136)* we read that Spelman mentions two disputations between Mr. B. C., an Anabaptist, against Mr. W. J. of Chr., and another against Mr. J. Cr. This appears to be Benjamin Cox.

Sometimes disputations were arranged but not held, e.g., John Tredwell and William Burkitt were to have disputed at Lavingham; B. Keach, at Gravesend. Sometimes the licence was withdrawn, as was the case with one issued by the Lord Mayor for a disputation to be held at the church at Aldermanbury, on December 3rd, 1645, between Edward Calamy and Benjamin Coxe, M.A.

Occasionally the Baptists were challenged to a debate, but, on coming to the place of meeting, they found that their opponents would not listen to arguments, and instead of being properly treated, they were mobbed. Thus Edward Barber suffered, on February 14th, 1648, at the parish meeting-house of Benetfinch, London, when he had come in response to an invitation to meet Edward Calamy.

Oftentimes the Baptists issued a challenge and there was no response, as was the case, in 1670, at Lincoln, when Thomas Grantham tried to get a Robert Wright, who had left the Baptists, and afterwards obtained a living in the Established Church, to debate. Wright had delivered some violent sermons in the city of Lincoln, in which he cast some severe reflections upon the tenets and practices of his former associates. Five copies of the challenge were written, signed by Grantham, and posted in the most conspicuous places in the city during the assizes. It was not accepted, but the writer was threatened that he should answer for it before the council, and it is probable that one of the ten imprisonments endured by Grantham was the result of this.

Henry Haggard and James Brown issued a challenge at Stafford, but no Paedobaptist would face them in a public dispute. It led to a war of pamphlets, the most famous of which was "The Font Uncover'd for Infant Baptisme," by William Cook, of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, which appeared in 1651.

The last recorded disputation of the century, took place on February 22nd, 1688, at Portsmouth, "with His Majesty's licence," between Baptists and Presbyterians. Both parties claimed the victory, but much bitterness and angry recrimination on both sides resulted. It had its good fruit. Henceforth such controversies were discouraged.

The only public disputation recorded afterwards took place on March 5th, 1717, at Burton Latimer, in Northamptonshire, between Baptists and Quakers. On the first of the same month Baptists and Quakers meeting in the Hanover Coffee House, Finch Lane, London, resolved to send a letter earnestly entreating their friends to abandon their intentions to hold the same. The letter was sent, signed by five Particular Baptists

and four Quakers, but it proved ineffectual. Possibly the reason was that the local Baptist disputants were all General Baptists, and the letter was conveyed by Quakers. A great number were present at the disputation, and at the conclusion of this meeting they appointed another, to dispute on some points of difference which they had not time to debate then. The date fixed was June 4th, but before it came another letter was sent to the disputants. It read as follows:—

“London, the 22d of the 3d month,  
called May, 1717.

“To our friends in Northamptonshire, who go under the denomination of Baptists and Quakers.

“We are informed that notwithstanding the advice sent in a former letter, there was a dispute held betwixt several of you on the 5th day of the first month, called March last; and that, as the effect of that, there is another proposed to be had on the 6th of the 4th month next, called June; of which we declare our dislike, as well as of the former; for tho' we hope we have the same zeal for our principles, and love to whatever we have embraced for truth, as any of our brethren; yet we think such public disputes don't tend to promote it, they usually being followed with very ill consequences, as well as that the present state of public affairs renders them at this time more especially unseasonable. The event of the former meeting doth shew, that the consequence is like to be worse; for, from contending, we perceive some or both sides are grown hot, which we fear, if not watched against, will destroy mutual love, arise to strife and envy, be a means to exasperate those who are of a different persuasion from us, give a handle to the enemies of both to misrepresent us to the government, and at last end in an unChristian strife and trouble.

We do earnestly entreat you, as well as on the one side, so the other, to forbear at the intended meeting, and not to insist upon such public ways of striving with each other, seeing there are other methods, which will be less offensive, and more informing to those who are in search of truth. We hope you will take us, in this affair, to be what we really are,

Your friends and well-wishers,

Benj. Stinton,	}	Your brethren of the the Baptist persuasion.
John Gale,		
Lewis Douglas,		
Joseph Burroughs,		
Joseph Jenkins,	}	Your friends called Quakers.
Geo. Whitehead,		
John Knight,		
Tho. Pitslow,		
Wm. Armistead,		
Simeon Warner,		

The advice was taken, and thus ended the age of disputations.

ARTHUR S. LANGLEY.

# Minutes of the Quarterly Conferences

of the Leicestershire ministers in the

## New Connexion of General Baptists.

(Continued from volume V, page 126).

### Conference at Smalley May 26<sup>th</sup> 1795

... 8<sup>th</sup> Learning from the minutes of the Lincolnshire Conference that a Plan was forming to establish a kind of Seminary for the Education of Young Men for the Ministry we unanimously agree that this Business be enquired into & Bro<sup>r</sup> Smith write to Mr Treacher the Treasurer accordingly.

9<sup>th</sup> Bro<sup>r</sup> R. Smith appointed to write the Minutes of this Conference to the Lincolnshire Conference for next year.

### Conference Quorndon July 21<sup>st</sup> 1795

... 2<sup>nd</sup> A Letter was read received from Mr Treacher the Treasurer of the Committee for the Education of young men for the ministry amongst the Gen<sup>l</sup> Baptists. When the following Questions were proposed upon the subject

1 Does it appear to us that it is right for persons intending to exercise in the ministry to exert y<sup>m</sup>selves in obtaining a grammatical knowledge of their mother tongue and an increase in knowledge of the truths of divine revelation; & also by application to any person of superior understanding with whom they may be acquainted. Ans<sup>r</sup> Yes Unanimous.

2 Do we think some pecuniary aid necessary in order to carry the above into effect. Ans<sup>r</sup> Yes . . .

Conference at Hugglescoat, Sep<sup>r</sup> 29. 1795.

... Case 1. Is it right for the representative of any Church to withhold any Case of general concernment to the Churches, when recommended by the Conference to Churches? Unanimously No; except 1 neuter & 1 yes. [Wadsworth sent thanks for subscriptions of £50. 15. 9.]

Conference at Melbourn 24 Nov<sup>r</sup> 1795

... The thanks of this Conference was unanimously voted to Bro<sup>r</sup> S. Deacon for his Late Pamphlet on the Principles &c of the Gen<sup>l</sup> Baptists [issued as by "A Mechanic"].

It is requested by a Majority of this Conf. that the two Bro<sup>r</sup> Deacons Publish a History of the Gen<sup>l</sup> Baptists. Some materials for which have been for some time Collected. Also to Publish a 6<sup>d</sup> Number every 2 Months or oftener if possible. These proposals to be made to the Churches in Lincolnshire & Yorkshire.

The Subject of the Education of Young Ministers being taken into Consideration, and Something drawn up by Brethren Deacon and Pollard by way of Plan being read it was agreed that Brother Deacon print what he thinks proper on the subject & lay it before the Churches . . .

Conference at Notting<sup>m</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> 96

... Case 1. Bro<sup>r</sup> Cooke of Earl Shilton having rec<sup>d</sup> a Letter from an attorney demanding Mortuary on account of the Death of his Mother & threatening him with a prosecution in the Spiritual court in case of refusal. Wishes this Conference to give him some advice in this case?

Ans<sup>r</sup> we apprehend no Mortuary can be due only on the Death of the head of a Family, that if it were as he is her son and her Husband still living

he cannot be subject to pay any debts on her Account. . . .

Conference at Leake May 17-1796

. . . Bro<sup>r</sup> Whitaker preached from Matt 5: 14 "Ye are the light of the world &c" The prayer and sermon were attended to, & upon the whole, approved. The sermon, however, was thought not to contain much of ye *matter* of ye *text*, to be delivered in an unpleasant uniformity of voice, the metaphor in ye text lost, and several grammatical inaccuracies noticed.

The place of the next conference was discussed Birmingham was first mentioned, but as it is at such an extremity it was thought to have the conf<sup>ce</sup> there would destroy its utility, inasmuch as very few persons would be likely to attend. Cauldwell was next mentioned, and Conf<sup>ce</sup> agreed to be there . . .

Conference at Cauldwell July 26: 1796

No minutes sent. Br Pollard in a private letter says "We had no business" . . . [Nor are any entered for September, though two pages are left blank. And the remaining minutes down to Jan. 30. 1798 have nothing of interest. But loose papers are folded in the book, with rough minutes of the committee appointed by the Association at Kegworth, to manage the business of instructing young men in biblical knowledge, in order to fit them for the work of the ministry:—]

The Committee Met at the Marquis of Granby Loughbro Monday Oct<sup>r</sup> 23. 1797. Persons present Br S. Deacon [Barton] Chairman, R. Smith [Nottingham] Scribe, J. Deacon [Leicester], B. Pollard [Quorndon and Loughborough], J. Ashwell, J. Johnson [Loughborough], S. Heard [Nottingham, Treasurer].

In conformity to an appointment of the last meeting, the Brethren appointed to draw up an address

for circulation to inform our friends of our design produced their production; which having been read together with the address on the same subject published by the old Baptists we agree to send [the several pieces *erased*] to brother Taylor for his instruction and that he select what he think proper and publish it with any additions [he may think proper to add *erased*] [of his own *erased*] he may think necessary

That Br Taylor be requested to have these pamphlets published in sent into the Country in a fortnight That the size of this pamphlet exceed not one sheet in octavo

That the number be Two [*much altered*] thousand that Bro<sup>r</sup> Taylor reserve For London Kent Lincolnshire & Yorkshire 800. These to be distributed at Br Taylors d may think proportional

And that to the pamphlet desinged for the public have subjoined the following notice. That the institution being commenced all persons friends to it are requested to pay their donations as soon as possible [£174. 17s. 6d. had been promised.]

That the £50 designed to be sent on the Magazine account will be sent by the 1<sup>st</sup> of Dec<sup>r</sup> but if Br T want it sooner he may have it [sooner *erased*] by applying to Mr Heard NB This 50£ is money belonging to the fund for the Education [*The whole minute is crossed out and the next much altered.*]

That £10 be sent to Br Taylor for present purposes and he be requested to send us word what money he will [need] and when for the publication of the Magazine.

There is this day in the hands of Mr Heard the Treasurer £70. 15s. od.

That we have the pamphlet by the time above



named in order that we may have public collections by nex martinmass

That we like the Gen<sup>l</sup> Baptist Magazine [as well *erased*] better than any other

The discessionary power proposed by Br Deacon we unitedly approve think the editor should have

If your portrait come not in the first number we have thought Mr Brittain's might

1797 Dec<sup>r</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> At a Meeting of the Committee to [manage *replaced by*] conduct the business of the Gen<sup>l</sup> Baptist Academy. Persons present R. Smith Chairman John Deacon Tho<sup>s</sup> Pickering John Bakewell Sam<sup>l</sup> Heard John Ashwell W<sup>m</sup> Parkinson Jo<sup>s</sup> Johnson

1 Agreed to let the subscriptions of 20£ each of Mr John Deacon Leicester John Ashwell Nott<sup>m</sup> & S. Heard Nott<sup>m</sup> NB Interest upon their several Notes on demand

2 Agreed that R. Smith write to the persons who have not paid their subscriptions to remit them immediately

3 It appears Mr Heard the treasurer has at this Meeting in hand cash to the amount £158: 11s: 2d.

4 A number of Rules were read and approved

5 Mr James Taylor of Queenshead is this Meeting unanimously approved of as a proper person to enjoy the benefit of this institution

6 Mr Goadby of Market Bosworth's case being not properly stated a letter was written and sent to Br Deacon in order to inform him of it.

7 The next meeting of the Committee to be held at Melbourne the 30 of Jan<sup>y</sup> 1798

8 Agreed that all the expences attending the Committee meeting on this business shall be defrayed by the treasurers.

9 That Mr Heard give note from this day for one

Hundred pounds now in his possession the note to be deposited in Mr Bakewells hands

10 That it be recommended to Mr Taylor to forward his subscriptions, and to Yorkshire friends also

11 A motion was made whether Robinsons reserches might not be inserted a chapter in each number of the magazine to advantage. Ansr Yes if the editor approve it and it will not infringe on the right of the copy holder.

12 Agreed that the first number have a representation of the Baptism of Jesus X by John in Jordon. and that the attitude be the subject just rising out of the water. And that if Br Burgess be well qualified to execute this plate that he be employd. Br Bakewell Donington Br Twells Ilkiston Br Harrison Smalley will unite in supporting the Magazine.

The Committee met at 6 oclock and proceeded to Business Jany 30 1798. Bro<sup>r</sup> Sam Deacon Prayed. Rob<sup>t</sup> Smith Chairman J. Ashwell Scribe S. Deacon J. Bakewell W. Parkinson T. Pickering J. Bennett J. Deacon B. Pollard

Sent By Bro<sup>r</sup> Thos Rogers To Mr Dan Taylor £15. 5s. od making with former cash 50£ including the London Collections

Gave into Mr Treasurer Bakewell [*replacing* Parkinson] hands the Joint Note being the security for the 100£ let to Mr Heard

Agreed to let Mr Bakewell the 20£ now in Hand on Interest at 5 p<sup>r</sup> Ct on his own Note

Agreed to be a positive Rule or Law That no Moneys in futur that is larger sums than Twenty Pounds be let out without Double [*Interest replaced by*] Security

Rec<sup>d</sup> and Read Bro<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Felkins Petition for the Benf of The Fund. Which was agreed too unansy for 6 months

Rec<sup>d</sup> and Read also a Nother Petition for the same Benf from A Bro<sup>r</sup> Sam Driver of Leicester Church.

Agreed there be Three—Young men if proper persons offer

Agreed to give M<sup>r</sup> Felkin 5 Guineas towards bearing his Expenses in Washing and Traveling

### **A Call to the Pastorate, Abingdon.**

At a meeting in November 1721, it was agreed to come to a decision on the case of Brother Benjamin Tomkins, Senr. who was called to be a ruling Elder on May 14 last . . . who from that time had been on his tryall; and after Brother Tomkins was by consent of the church withdrawn, and Brother Fuller had reminded them of the work and duty of such an office, the duty of the members of the church to be ruled, the question was put, whether they did persist in their call of Brother Tomkins to the said office which was answered in the affirmative by holding up their hands, but by Brother W. Buttler it was opposed, alleging that the said Brother Tomkins, being inclined to sleep at the meeting was not fit for the office, for he that could not govern himself was not fit to be concerned in governing the Church. But Brother Buttler, not having dealt with Brother Tomkins for the same, as the Scripture directs, the church was offended that he should so abruptly accuse Brother Tomkins before the church, upon which Brother Tomkins was called in and acquainted with the said proceedings, who owned it was his infirmity and affirmed that he was inclined to sometimes nod in the meeting for which he was sorry, but being in part from a distemper in his head that he had been for some years past troubled with, he hoped it would be looked upon as such, and that it would also be esteemed a just cause of exception, together with his natural incapacity for the work of such an office, that therefore he might be excused from taking upon him the same, but being told the church being so unanimous in their call and choice and persisting in it, the said Brother Tomkins should not be discouraged by this opposition of an irregular brother: whereupon Brother Tomkins told the Church that since it was their pleasure to insist on their choice and call, he hoped it was from God, and he would no longer withstand it, hoping that the church would excuse his weakness and insufficiency for the work and take what he should say or do in the execution of his office in good part, as it would be performed by him in faithfulness.

# A Scotch Baptist Circular.

Communicated by Prof. Witton Davies.

EDINBURGH, Feb. 1822.

The Church of Christ, Meeting in  
Pleasance, Edinburgh,

To the Church in Beverley: to the Deacons.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

In reference to our letter of May last, we have the pleasure of informing you, that we have received answers from all the Churches in the Connection, furnishing the necessary information, from which we have prepared, and now Annex as an Appendix to this letter, a condensed view of the intelligence communicated to us.

We sincerely rejoice that the Proposal of interchanging Annual Circulars, as formerly practised amongst us, has been received with much approbation by all the Churches, which we hope may be considered as a pledge that the measure will be persevered in, and that it may be blessed as a means of keeping up and increasing our interest in each other's welfare, of animating us in the great common cause in which we are engaged, and of leading us more earnestly to pray, That the great Head of the Church would pour out his Spirit upon us, and direct and bless our efforts for the extention of His kingdom.

On the contents of some of the letters, we think it may be proper to make a few remarks.

The letter from Kircaldy, earnestly recommends that some measure should be adopted for a re-union with those Churches from which we have of late years been disunited.

This is an event most earnestly to be desired, and no means for its accomplishment on Scriptural principles, should be omitted.

That from Dundee, suggests the propriety of a fund being collected among the different Churches, and place[d] at the disposal of this Church, for the assistance of such of the Elders in the Churches as require pecuniary aid.

This, in our opinion, would be placing the support of Elders on an unscriptural footing.—The Scriptures clearly shew the source from which this support should flow: "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Here, not only the duty is enforced, but the nature of the connection from whence the duty arises,—the duty of the taught to their teacher—of the flock to their pastor.

This letter further proposes, that one or more Elders should be placed in such circumstances that they could visit the other Churches, which might tend to animate and refresh them; and that the support of Elders should be more generally attended to among all the Churches.

The first of these objects would be gained by attention to the second; and, in regard to it, let each of the Churches for itself consider the clear rule of Scripture, and if they are in circumstances to follow it, not only they, but the profession at large will find their profit in it.

The letter from Nottingham, contains some just and striking remarks on the importance of sending forth persons to preach the gospel, of which we most

cordially approve. The paramount importance of this object must surely be deeply felt; it is not only our duty to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers, but in connection with prayer, to use means for the improvement and encouragement of gifts in the Churches, to render them subservient to this object.

We cannot leave this subject, without remarking, that when we look at the aggregate number of members in the Churches, and consider the state of some of them, the prospect is by no means cheering. This should impress us deeply with the necessity of fervent prayer to the great Head of the Church, that he would strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die; that he would send down his Holy Spirit, to quicken and revive us, increasing our zeal for his glory, blessing his ordinances, and giving his word power and efficacy upon the hearts both of his own children and of sinners ready to perish.

We live, brethren, in a most eventful period, when exertions, beyond all example since the apostolic days, are making for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom; it becomes us therefore, to beware of acting the part of cool indifferent spectators. Let us bestir ourselves, and according to the opportunities we possess, forward the great cause of truth and righteousness. Above all, let us be living witnesses for Christ, by all holy conversation and godliness, letting our light shine before men, that they, seeing our good works, may be led to glorify God.

In the annexed abstract, the state of the Churches is given as at August 1821.

In the letters to be sent this year by the different Churches, the alterations which have taken place within the year, will of course be particularized; and, as none have offered to be the medium of communication,

the letters may be addressed to this Church, until some other volunteer their services.—We shall expect your letter between and the month of August.—And, are, Beloved Brethren, for self and colleagues, yours in the Gospel

Wm SCOTT.

APPENDIX.

67 James's Squire, 12 March, 1822

N.B.—The Churches are arranged in alphabetical order.

	No of Members August 1821
1.—BEVERLEY.—(Including 4 at Hull, and 3 at Thorn	58
1 Pastor.—John Charleton.	
3 Deacons.—John Selly, John Brandham, And Richard Jameson. Mr Charleton Preaches in four of the neighbouring Villages.	
2.—DUNDEE	111
3 Pastors.—William Gourlay, Alexander Pirrie, and John Gilbert.	
4 Deacons.—Robert Torbet, Geo. Brown, Andw. Low, Wm. Gourlay, Jun.	
1 Preacher.—Chas. Robertson, who labours occasionally in the Neighbourhood.	
3.—EDINBURGH	292
2 Pastors.—William Braidwood, and William Peddie.	
7 Deacons.—John Campell, Robert Wilson Roberts Anderson, William Scott, John Marshall, Peter Elder, and George Mercer.	
6 Preachers.—Robert Wilson, William Pattison, Robert Anderson, David Ritchie, Henry Elder, and H. D. Dickie.—Preach-	

ing in the Sabbath Evening in the Meeting-house is regularly kept up and occasionally at other places as opportunities can be got.

- 4.—FORDFORGE ... .. 25  
 2 Pastors.—John and Thomas Black.  
 2 Deacons.—George Smith, and Mark Allan.
- 5.—GALASHIELS ... .. 32  
 2 Pastors.—William Berry, and James Leitch.  
 2 Deacons.—William Johnston, and James Rutherford.
- 6.—GLASGOW ... .. 67  
 2 Pastors.—Andrew Duncan, and David Smith.  
 2 Deacons.—Richard Duncan, and Thomas Duncan.  
 The above number includes the Brethren  
 at PAISLEY, ... 10  
 LANARK ... 2  
 KILMARNOCK 2
- 7.—KIRKALDY ... .. 75  
 2 Pastors.—Charles Arthur, and William Scott.  
 2 Deacons.—Ninian Lockhart, and George Henderson.
- 8.—LARGO ... .. 34  
 2 Elders.—James Murray, and Roberts Kellock.  
 2 Deacons.—William Robertson, and James Dick.  
 The Church living in peace, and well attended by hearers, particularly on the Sabbath Evenings.



9.—LONDON	...	...	...	...	60
2 Elders.—James Blaikie, and Samuel Jones.					
3 Deacons.—William Bell, John Stewart, and J. Bobins.					
3 Preachers.—John Hunter, James Eyre, and J. Rothery.					
A part of the Lord's Day Morning and Evening, has of late been devoted to instructing the poor children in the Neighbourhood of the Meeting-house of whom upwards of 50 attend.					
				Carry over,	754
				Brought Forward	754
10.—MUSSELBURGH	...	...	...	...	12
1 Elder.—James Sanderson, and 1 Deacon.—Richard Stewart.					
11.—NEWBURGH	...	...	...	...	16
1 Elder.—James Wilkie and 1 Deacon.—William Sutherland.					
12.—NOTTINGHAM	...	...	...	...	132
2 Elders.—J. Bayley, and Ward.					
4 Deacons.—J. Storer, W. Sissling, J. Baley, and S. Slack.					
4 Preachers.—J. Robinson, and three others, who labour occasionally.					
Besides the regular meetings of the Church, there is preaching on the Lord's Day Evenings, at Nottingham, Linton, and Bassford, two Villages in the Neighbourhood; and a sermon at each of these places on the week-day Evenings.					
13.—PERTH	...	...	...	...	16
At present destitute of Elders, one having, during last year, removed to Largo, and					

the Other 2 Deacons.—John Paton, and Alexander Donald.

14.—STIRLING ... .. 20

3 Elders.—William Jaffrey, Archibald Shearer, and George Home.

1 Preacher.—George Donaldson.

2 Deacons.—John Paton, and William Bruce.

15.—WOOLER ... .. 14

1 Elder.—Robert Law.

1 Deacon.—James Halliday.

The Elder occasionally preaches in the Neighbourhood.

16.—WEST ALLERDEAN ... .. 10

2 Elders.—Walter Oliver, and William Dodds.

1 Deacon.—Edward Maukins.

Besides the foregoing, there are a few Brethren at the following places:—

LANE END, STAFFORDSHIRE ... 7

NEWCASTLE ... .. 3

And, ABERDEEN ... .. 7

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P.S.—Feb. 1822.

The Brethren at the latter place, have, during the last month, been restored to the fellowship of the Churches, after correspondence with the Churches in Dundee and Edinburgh.

# BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

REPORT for 1918.

Presented and Adopted April 30, 1919.

**A**FTER eleven years your committee is glad to report that the work of research has proceeded unhindered by war, that new workers and contributors are appearing, and that when the conditions of printing permit, further articles are ready. These include a survey of the colonies in 1750, and of early dissent in Worcestershire. A sketch of the Seventh-Day Baptists in England, a microscopic body which has received much attention based on almost total neglect of real evidence, will be available for class A.

The printing of the *Bibliography* has been suspended for a year owing to trade conditions; whenever the second volume is completed by the Baptist Union, this society will furnish it to class A. Other work in progress includes a history of the denomination in Lincolnshire, by Mr. Langley, and a study of the "Scotch Baptists" in Carnarvon, by Prof. T. Witton Davies.

The Brookes Trustees asked the society to report on a church library in Bewdley: as a consequence they have presented books to about thirty towns, including many original Baxters to Kidderminster, where those editions were not in public custody. The trustees have also given a few local Baptist books to the West Midland Association, and several score volumes to this society, which therefore returns thanks.

Enquiries on obscure points of family and church history are constantly sent to your officers, who in most cases are able to render help. To members this is given freely, but the committee has authorised charging a fee of 5s. and upwards to outsiders, who have in one or two cases felt it a slight price for the information.

G. P. GOULD, *President*.

## TREASURER'S STATEMENT FOR 1918.

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CR.				£ s. d.
Balance from 1917	...	...	...	4 1 0
Subscriptions	...	...	...	68 18 0
Proceeds from Sales	...	...	...	10 10 8
				£83 9 8

DR.				£ s. d.
Repayment of Loan, part	...	...	...	29 0 0
<i>Bibliography</i> , from B.U. Pub. Dept...	...	...	...	23 16 8
<i>Transactions</i> , on account	...	...	...	25 0 0
Advertising, stationery, stamps, etc.	...	...	...	1 18 3
Balance in hand	...	...	...	3 14 9
				£83 9 8

Liability : Balance of *Transactions*, 1918 ... £19 9 8

J. W. THIRTLE, *Hon. Treasurer.*

Examined and found correct, March 17, 1919.

HAROLD KNOTT, *Hon. Auditor.*

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**Society**

VOLUME VI  
1918 — 1919

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