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AN ESSAY

ON

RICHARD BAXTER'S LIFE, MINISTRY, AND THEOLOGY.

by

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IT is a remark of Dr Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, that "it was enough for one age to produce such a man as Richard Baxter." The age which had the honour of producing this holy and great man, was the age of the Commonwealth, the age of Nonconformity. "Never did our England, since she first emerged from the ocean, rise so high above surrounding nations. The rivalry of Holland, the pride of Spain, the insolence of France, were thrust back by one finger each; yet those countries were more powerful than they had ever been. The sword of Cromwell was preceded by the mace of Milton, by that man which, when Oliver had rendered his account, opened to our contemplation the garden-gate of Paradise. And there were some around not unworthy to enter with him. In the compass of sixteen centuries, you will not number on the whole earth so many wise and admirable men, as you could have found united in that single day, when England shewed her true magnitude, and solved the question, Which is MOST, ONE OR A MILLION? There were giants in those days; but giants who feared God, and not who fought against him."<sup>1</sup>

BAXTER was one of the numerous giants of the Commonwealth. He was to its theology what CROMWELL, was to its politics,—what MILTON was to its liberties,—and what OWEN was to its nonconformity.

This distinguished man was remarkable in every form of his character, and in all those combinations of qualities which fitted him for extensive usefulness, as an eminent saint, a laborious pastor, and a profound divine. The series of works presented to the public in the LIBRARY of PURITAN DIVINES, are intended to interest the private Christian, the faithful Minister, and the theological Student. To meet these cases, this Essay is arranged to embrace Baxter's Life, Baxter's Ministry, and Baxter's Theology, in the hope that it will succeed in making Baxter known to the Million.

## CHAPTER I.

### BAXTER'S LIFE.

RICHARD BAXTER was born November 12, 1615, at Rowton, the house of his maternal grandfather, in High Ercall, a rural village, not far from the foot of the Wrekin, in Shropshire. His parents were connected with the gentry of the county; but his father had squandered much of his estate by the habits of gambling, to which he was addicted in his youth. About the time of the birth of Richard, a deep religious seriousness pervaded the character of his father, which was occasioned by reading the Scriptures in private.

Baxter spent the first ten years of his life at Rowton, under the care of his grandfather; but the father had frequent interviews with his child, and the first religious impressions which his young heart received, were produced by the holy character and serious conversations of his father. Under this influence the boy became so habitually devout and serious, that, even at this early age, as Dr BATES mentions in his funeral sermon for him, he would reprove the improper conduct of other children, "to the astonishment of those who heard him."

The youthful piety of Richard Baxter was unfolded in the midst of elements calculated to quench and destroy it. He was born in a district where the religion of the Book of Sports was in the highest popularity. The clergy of the district were, almost universally, mere readers of prayers, and no preachers. It is on this account that they were called reading curates, reading vicars, &c. In addition to their total incapacity for preaching, they were, for the most part, poor, ignorant, immoral, and even dissolute men. The result was, that the villagers and peasants were sunk in vice and irreligion, and spent the greater part of the Sabbath in dancing round the Maypole, and in other gambols, which the Book of Sports recommended and enjoined as proper exercises for the Lord's day. Baxter, at so tender an age, was likely to be influenced by the corrupting scenes around him; and, in subsequent life, he deeply laments that, "during his boyhood, he became addicted to the sins of disobedience to parents, lying, stealing fruit, &c.—sins which afterwards greatly disturbed his conscience, and which he found great difficulty in mastering.

In such a district, and in such circumstances, the education of the future Schoolman of English Theology was likely to be neglected. His first ten years were spent among the peasants of High Ercall, and all the education which he received, from the age of six to ten, was under the training of the four successive curates of the parish, of whom the two ablest were drunkards, even to beggary. At the age of ten, he was removed from Rowton to the house of his father, at Eaton Constantine, a village reposing on the left bank of the Severn, about five miles below Shrewsbury. Here he was placed under the instruction of the curate, a notorious drunkard, who had been a lawyer's clerk, who was now reading prayers under forged orders, and who, in Baxter's time, preached only once, and was then drunk. From this wretched teacher, in pretended holy orders, he was transferred to the care of a man of acknowledged abilities, "who," says Baxter, "loved me much, and who expected to be made a bishop." This tutor grievously neglected

his charge, for, in the course of two years, he never gave his pupil one hour's actual instruction, but "devoted his time to attacks on the Puritans." His next tutor was Mr Owen of Wroxeter, the head-master of the free school of that place. Here Baxter made considerable attainments in the Latin Classics, but not much progress in Greek.

In all these places of education, Baxter had to depend entirely upon his own diligence, ambition, and judgment. His proficiency at Wroxeter was so satisfactory to Mr Owen, that he was now deemed fully prepared for the University of Oxford, for which he was intended; but instead of sending the youth to Oxford, Mr Owen recommended him to go to Ludlow, to be under the tuition of Mr Wickstead, the chaplain of the council, who was allowed to have one pupil. He who has once seen Ludlow Castle, will fondly remember it as the romantic centre of one of the sweetest landscapes in England, and as the august seat of many historical recollections. Here Baxter entered as a pupil,—here, some three or four years afterwards, Milton presented his immortal "Comas" for the first time,—and here, some thirty years afterwards, Butler wrote the first part of his *Hudibras*. In Ludlow Castle, however, as well as elsewhere, Baxter's education was neglected by his tutor; and all the benefit which the youth received, he derived himself from the enjoyment of abundance of time, and plenty of books. His own indomitable mind did all the rest, in his "pursuit of knowledge under difficulties."

In the history of Baxter's life, Ludlow is celebrated for two events which had great influence in the formation of his religious character: and these were his temptations to become a gambler, and the religious apostasy of his most intimate friend. The first game he ever played in his life, he played with the best gamester in the Castle. It was soon perceived that, he must inevitably lose the game, unless he obtained one particular cast of the dice each time in succession. The dice gave that particular cast each time, and he won the game. His astonishing success induced him to believe that the devil had managed the dice for the purpose of making a gamester of him. He therefore returned the money to his antagonist, and determined never to play another game. The apostasy of his young friend was more dangerous to him than the temptation to gambling. His friend was a religious and a very devotional young man. They were very much attached to each other, and were constantly studying together. He was the first that Baxter had ever heard pray extempore, and it was from him that Baxter himself acquired the gift and habit. This youth became a reviler of all religion, and even scoffed at Baxter's devotional habits. From the contagion of his influence Baxter was preserved, partly by his own deep religious convictions at that time, and partly by his removal from Ludlow Castle to Eaton Constantine.

When he returned to the house of his father he was fifteen years of age. He was one day rummaging among the books of his father, and discovered an old tattered book, which a poor cottager in the neighbourhood had lent him. Young Baxter, fresh from the scenes and recollections of Ludlow Castle, read this book very closely, and with great "searchings of heart;" and the reading produced in his mind decided convictions of the evil of sin. It will be interesting to know what book that was which gave the decisive turn to Baxter's mind. That tattered old book was BUNNY'S "Booke of Christian Exercise appertaining to Resolution."

Its name in common use was "BUNNY'S Resolution." The real author of it was PARSONS, the famous English Jesuit. The original was written on purely popish principles; but it was corrected and improved by EDMUND BUNNY, a thorough old Puritan, who was Rector of Bolton Percy, and who, after a life of apostolic labours, died in 1617.

"BUNNY'S Resolution" deals much and vigorously with con-science, and rouses every man to the obligation of "resolving our-selves to become Christians indeed." It is probable that this work gave to Baxter's mind that awakening tone, and that eloquent energy, which tell so mightily in his "Call to the Unconverted." The Jesuit, in composing this work, never thought that it would produce the author of "The Certainty of Christianity without Popery." BUNNY'S Resolution was useful to Baxter, only so far as it awakened his mind, and directed him to caution, prayer, and firmness: it neither led him to Christ, nor brought him to the guidance and aid of the Holy Spirit, and, therefore, it gave him no "joy and peace in believing." This was reserved for another, and a very different work: this honour was for Dr SIBBS' Bruised Reed. This admirable little work brought him and his resolutions to the Saviour, and melted his heart into devotion. If BUNNY'S Resolution strung Baxter's harp, it was Sibbs' Bruised Reed that tuned it to the love of Christ.

These were the circumstances in which Baxter was making arrangements for studying theology. In these he was interrupted by his being requested to superintend the school at Wroxeter, on account of the illness of his old tutor Mr Owen, and then by his own bodily infirmities. After superintending the Wroxeter school for three months, he placed himself under the care of the Rev. Francis Garbett, of the same village, that he might study theology as a science. He had scarcely been a month in the study of logic, before he was attacked with a harassing cough, spitting of blood, and many other symptoms of consumption, which continued to afflict him, almost incessantly, for two years. This affliction checked his intellectual studies, but it gave a powerful and an onward impulse to his religious affections; it excited him to a closer examination of his motives for entering the ministry, and it associated all his future plans and present movements with eternity. He already began to feel as a dying man among dying men. In this frame of mind, he found EZEKIEL CULVERWELL'S "Treatise of Faith," a great help and a delightful solace. It is reported of him that, in the twilight of every evening, at that interval in which it was too dark for him to read, and not dark enough to light his lamp, he employed his mind regularly in thinking of heaven. This will account for the sweetness and power with which at a subsequent period he wrote about "The Saints' Everlasting Rest;" the reading of which now is like conversing in "the gate of heaven."

The first month of his studies under Mr GARRETT had been given to logic; but after this affliction, he resolved to devote himself entirely, and almost exclusively, to theology, and that with a special and direct view to the information and the spiritual furniture of his own soul. In his theological curriculum, he studied first practical theology as exhibited in the best works of our English divines. In learning systematic theology, he was obliged to have recourse to the works of foreign

divines; because, unless PERKINS'S Golden Chain be regarded as a systematic work, the English language did not at this period possess a Body of Divinity.

Wroxeter is to be held in remembrance as the place in which Baxter finished his course of education preparatory to his entering on his ministerial work. In that important process he greatly needed an intelligent guide, who would have directed him to the best course of theological reading, and to the best methods of study: but instead of having such guidance, he was left much to himself, and was almost entirely his own teacher. Had he had the advantages of a regular curriculum at a college or university, his knowledge would have been better arranged and more symmetrical, though, perhaps, not so various and discursive. In the absence of such salutary discipline and wholesome aid, his predilections and taste led him to plunge himself into the thick forests of metaphysical theology. In dialectics he became a consummate Aristotelian. The ecclesiastical fathers came to him as if they were brethren; Aquinas, as a familiar spirit; Anselm, as a fellow student; and Duns Scotus, as a pleasant companion. His success in these kinds of studies was so great and thorough, that, for acuteness in definitions, for subtlety in distinctions, and for masterly adroitness in disputation and logomachy, he deserved to be called the last of the Schoolmen. To all theologians, who have made any acquaintance with scholastic divinity, it is a pleasing marvel that, amid all its jargon Latin and its dry speculations, Baxter's mind and heart were kept in all their lively freshness and healthy glow. On one occasion their ponderous tomes seriously endangered his life, as they fell from shelves under which he was reposing. He recounts his deliverance as a singular interposition of Providence. "As I sat in my study, the weight of my greatest folio books brake down three or four of the highest shelves, when I sat close under them, and they fell down on every side of me, and not one of them hit me, save one upon my arm; whereas the place, the weight, and the greatness of the books was such, and my head just under them, that it is a wonder they had not beaten out my brains." It is quite as great a wonder, that their weighty and crabbed lore did not wither and shrivel the energies of his capacious heart. Profound studies in metaphysics tend generally to freeze the religious affections of the student, but it is evident that they did not damp the ardour of Baxter's devotion. Even while threading the labyrinths and "wondrous mazes" of scholastic theology, he was "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Hear his own account, and his own estimate of his studies, as given in a letter to the bigoted and partial Anthony Wood, who wished to know whether he was an alumnus of Oxford. "As to myself," says Baxter, "my faults are no disgrace to any university, for I was of none; I have little but what I had out of books, and inconsiderable helps of country tutors. Weakness and pain helped me to study how to die; that set me on studying how to live; and that on studying the doctrine from which I fetch my motives and comforts. Beginning with necessities, I proceeded by degrees; and now I am going to see that for which I have lived and studied."

When Baxter was giving himself a theological education at Wroxeter, his prospects of usefulness in the ministry were clouded by his diseased constitution. He was now eighteen years of age, and his liveliest hopes were blighted. His former tutor at Ludlow Castle advised him to try his fortune at court, "as being the only rising way." For, at this period, Charles I. had but lately ascended on the throne.

Many circumstances seconded this recommendation. His parents had never been very cordial in his wishes to enter the ministry. They had great confidence in the opinion of Mr Wickstead; and he had great interest with Sir Henry Herbert, who was Master of the Revels. Baxter came to London and spent a month at court, but it was a month of disgust and revulsion. He says, "I had quickly enough of the court; when I saw a stage-play instead of a sermon on the Lord's day in the afternoon, and saw what course was there in fashion, and heard little preaching but what was, as to one part, against the Puritans, I was glad to be gone."

The illness of his mother supplied him with a good excuse for quitting Whitehall and retiring to Shropshire. He left London about Christmas 1633, during a severe frost. While travelling on horseback through a heavy and memorable snow-storm, he met, in a narrow part of the road, a loaded wagon, which he could pass only by riding on the side of a bank. In spurring his horse up this bank, the animal fell, the girths broke, and Baxter was thrown immediately before the wheel. At this critical juncture the horses stopped suddenly, unaccountably, but providentially, and his life was saved. The preservation of his life, in so remarkable a manner, deeply affected him. Under the influence of this fresh interference of God in his behalf, he reached his home, where he found his mother in such agonies of pain that her groans filled the whole house. She languished through the spring, and died on May 10, 1634. At the grave of his mother, and being rescued so wonderfully from his own grave, his mind was awakened to fresh and resolved thoughts about the ministry; and, in three or four years more, he entered the church as a Conformist, though no Episcopalian.

In 1638 he was appointed head master of the Free School which had been just established at Dudley, where he would have also opportunities for preaching. In the same year he was ordained at Worcester by Bishop Thornborough. After staying one year at Dudley, he removed to Bridgenorth, where the Et Cetera Oath made him a Nonconformist, and where, he says, he continued about a year and three quarters, having "liberty of preaching in troublous times."

The days of Baxter's sojourn in Bridgenorth might well be called "troublous times." In these times Laud was teaching popery to England, and manufacturing bonds of iniquity for Protestants. Strafford was learning and practising servility to Charles, and sap-ping the liberties of his country; kings trembled on their thrones, and bishops were ill at ease on their benches; the immortal Hampden was disputing with his king about ship-money; Peter Smart was imprisoned twelve years for preaching against high church ceremonies; Dr Leighton, as much the minister of the freedom of truth, as his son was the minister of its love, had his ears cut off, and his nose slit, for writing his "Zion's Plea against Prelacy;" Prynne, the barrister, had similar cruelties inflicted on him for writing against plays and masquerades; the Scots were marching to England with their Covenant; the High Commission Court was practising the abominations of the Inquisition; the English were beginning to speak in honest Saxon, and bold tones, to their princes; Charles was become the most consummate and shameless hypocrite in England; the House of Commons appointed a committee to receive the complaints and petitions of the people against their ignorant and dissolute clergy, and the chairman published those complaints in his "One Century of Scandalous Ministers."

Such were the times about 1640, when Baxter left Bridgenorth to settle in Kidderminster, where he had been invited by the people to become their lecturer. This was his first settlement in that town, which lasted about two years; but they were two years of laborious preaching on his part, of great political agitations among the people, and of imminent danger to his life. The Royalist rabble were so malignant against his ministry, that his best friends recommended him to leave the place.

From Kidderminster he went to Gloucester, where he tarried one month. During his short stay, he witnessed, for the first time, one of the public disputations, which were sometimes held between the ministers and the Baptists, who were every where agitating the churches on the question of immersion,—a question on which, it is the humiliation and enervation of the Congregationalists, that they have not agreed to differ without separating from each other. On all other topics they can meet and associate with safety and peace. A Baptist and Independent are much like the powders of an acid and an alkali; they can mix together in the same phial, and in the same vessel, with perfect concord: but just drop a little water among them, and they are immediately in effervescence. So did Baxter find them at Gloucester, and so did he afterwards find them in his controversies with Mr Tombes of Bewdley.

When he had spent a month at Gloucester, his friends at Kidderminster thought he might return to them in safety; but, on his return, he found the town so much divided on the questions between the King and the Parliament, that he was obliged to quit it immediately. Once more he was a wanderer, and he visited his old friend Mr Samuel Clark, at Alcester, where he preached on Sunday, October 23, 1642, amid the sounds of the cannon at Edgehill. On the next day he went to see the field of battle, and saw the two armies keeping the ground in sight of each other, and the space between them covered with the unburied bodies of the slain. From Alcester he went to Coventry to spend a month with his friend Mr Simon King, who was minister there. He expected that, in a month, Charles and the Parliament would have adjusted their differences and put an end to the civil war, but instead of ceasing, the war raged more and more furiously. The state of the country induced him to accept the invitation of the committee and governor of Coventry to stay with them and to preach to the soldiers. After a stay of one year in this city, he went to Shropshire for the purpose of releasing his father, who was a prisoner at Lilleshall. It was on this occasion that he joined Colonel Mytton, and Mr Hunt of Boreatton, at the garrison of Wem. In Shropshire, he was perpetually in the midst of tumults and skirmishes, and, therefore, at the end of two months, he returned to Coventry, and stayed there another year. It was during this second stay that he signed the Scottish Covenant, and declared himself openly on the side of the Parliament. The first of these acts he always afterwards lamented; and for the second, he apologises with thirty-two reasons in his “Penitent Confessions.”

Baxter was at Coventry when Cromwell fought and won the battle of Naseby; and, two days after the victory, he visited the field of battle, and passed a night in the Parliamentary camp, near Leicester. This visit opened his eyes to the real state of the army on the subject of civil and religious liberty. His new information deepened and darkened his prejudices against Cromwell. Yet some of the officers

persuaded him to join the army, and he consented to become chaplain to Colonel Whalley's regiment.

As a military chaplain, his subsequent movements were regulated by the campaigns and marches of the regiment to which he was attached. Immediately on joining the army, he marched to Somerton, and was present at the battle of Langport, where, standing on the brow of a hill, he could survey the operations of both armies. As Goring's army began to flee before the Parliamentary forces under Fairfax, Baxter stood next to Major Harrison, and heard the gallant officer "with a loud voice break forth into the praise of God with fluent expressions, as if he had been in a rapture."

From Langport he accompanied the army to the siege of Bridgewater, which he saw taken by storm. He was again at the siege of Bristol, where, in about three days, he was taken ill of a fever, occasioned by the plague which prevailed in the neighbourhood. He immediately quitted the camp, and rode to Bath, to be under the care of his physician, Dr Venner. In fourteen days the fever ended in a crisis, but it left him so emaciated and weak that "it was long," he says, "before I recovered the little strength which I had before." On his recovery, he returned to Bristol, and saw that city taken in four days, Major Bethell wounded and slain, and Prince Rupert routed with the loss of his "ordnance and arms." His next march was to Sherborne Castle, which, after a fortnight's siege, was taken by storm, "and that on a side which one would think could never have been that way taken." Cromwell, after his success at Basing-house, near Basingstoke, resolved to pursue Lord Goring's troops to the west of England, where they had made themselves infamous for their flagrant impieties and barbarous outrages. In consequence of this movement of the army, Baxter was present at the siege of Exeter, where he continued about three weeks, and then left because his regiment was ordered to march against Oxford to keep that garrison in check till the army would return from Exeter. Colonel Whalley's regiment quartered in Buckinghamshire for about six weeks, when it besieged and took Banbury Castle. It was while quartering in this neighbourhood that Baxter maintained his famous disputation with Bethell's troopers at Agmondesham.

At the siege of Worcester, Baxter was again taken very ill, and he was urged by his friends to visit London for medical advice. On arriving in the metropolis, his physician sent him to Tunbridge Wells, where he received considerable benefit, and then returned through London to the army in Worcestershire. His quarters were at Rous Lench, the seat of Sir Thomas Rous, where he had never been before. Here Providence supplied him with a valuable friend, who continued for years to be of great use to him. This friend was Lady Lench, "a godly, grave, and understanding woman, who entertained me," says Baxter, "not as a soldier, but as a friend." From Worcestershire he went into Leicestershire, Staffordshire, and Derbyshire. At Melbourn, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, his former diseases again afflicted him. It was now a cold and snowy season, and "the cold," he says, "together with other things coincident, set my nose bleeding. When I had bled a quart or two, I opened four veins, but that did no good. I used divers other remedies, for several days, to little purpose. This so much weakened me, and altered my complexion, that my acquaintances who came to see me scarcely knew me."

This affliction was a turning point in the history of Baxter. It took him completely from all his schemes of opposing the Ironsides, just when he thought himself best prepared and furnished for the enterprise; and, by this means, he was separated for ever from the army. His illness at Melbourn detained him in his chamber and among strangers for three weeks. As soon as he gathered a little strength, he went to Kirby Mallory, and spent three weeks at the house of his friend Mr Nowell. When the news of his illness reached Rous Leach, Lady Rous sent her servant all the way to Leicestershire to bring him under her roof. "In great weakness," says Baxter, "thither I made shift to get, where I was entertained with the greatest care and tenderness, while I continued to use the means for my recovery; and when I had been there a quarter of a year, I returned to Kidderminster."

He had now been ill about five months, but they were the most memorable months in his history. It was in this season of pains and medicines that he wrote his first works. His disputes in the army had prepared him to write his "Aphorisms of Justification;" and his sanctified afflictions made him write of "The Saints' Everlasting Rest." The work which he commenced first was the "Saint's Rest;" and it was while discussing the rewards, which should be conferred on the saints for their works of faith, that he was led to write his "Aphorisms." In speaking of the "Saint's Rest," he says, "Whilst I was in health, I had not the least thought of writing books, or of serving God in any more public way than preaching. But when I was weakened with great bleeding, and left solitary in my chamber at Sir John Cook's in Derbyshire, without any acquaintance but my servant about me, and was sentenced to death by the physicians, I began to contemplate more seriously on the everlasting rest which I apprehended myself to be just on the borders of; and that my thoughts might not too much scatter in my meditation, I began to write something on that subject, intending but the quantity of a sermon or two (which is the cause that the beginning is, in brevity and style, disproportionate to the rest); but being continued long in weakness, where I had no books, nor no better employment, I followed it on till it was enlarged to the bulk in which it is published. The first three weeks I spent in it was at Mr Nowell's house at Kirby Mallory, in Leicestershire; a quarter of a year more, at the seasons which so great weakness would allow, I bestowed on it at Sir Tho. Rous's house, at Rous Lench, in Worcestershire; and I finished it shortly after at Kidderminster. The first and last parts were first done, being all that I intended for my own use; and the second and third parts came afterwards in besides my first intention."

Myriads of saints will have to bless God for ever for having afflicted Baxter at Melbourn, and for having taught him, in the minister's house at Kirby, to write the "Saints' Rest." He wrote it when he had no books by him but a Bible and a Concordance. It was the transcript of his own heart, and therefore he found that, of all his works, "it had the greatest force on the hearts of others." It was first published in 1649, and since then, it has gone through many successive editions—surpassed, in number of editions, by, perhaps, no other book but the Pilgrim's Progress, or his own "Call to the Unconverted." All the editions subsequent to 1659 are distinguished by one painful peculiarity. In the Commonwealth editions, he has introduced the name of Lord Brook, Hampden, and Pym, as among the glorified saints whom he should meet in "the everlasting rest;" but in impressions

under the Restoration, these names are left out. The motive for omitting them was to please Dr Jane, and to induce him to license the publication of the volume. It is a wonder and a grief to all the friends of Baxter, that he should have thus truckled; for the omission was against his own firm judgment concerning these illustrious individuals; and the omission, like all other such will-sacrifices, was far from giving satisfaction to the prelatical party. According to Baxter's own unchanged opinion, Hampden, Pym, and Brook, were still in the everlasting rest, though their names were no longer in his book about that rest. This omission marred the honour, but it did not injure the usefulness, of the book. Many thousands own their conversion to it; and many more owe to it their growth in grace, and their edification in love and heavenly mindedness.

Baxter's afflictions and meditations on the Saints' Rest had prepared him for his pastoral work at Kidderminster, whither he hastened from Rous Lench. The account of his ministry in that town, made famous by his pastorship, will be found in the second chapter of this Essay. He spent there fourteen years, which were as eventful in the history of England as they were in the life of the laborious minister. In these years Cromwell marched his troops against the Parliament and subdued it. Charles, after a life of improbity and bloodshed, was seized by the army and executed; the Commonwealth was established, and Cromwell proclaimed its Protector; the Scottish Covenanters were intriguing with Charles II. at Breda, and sacrificed Montrose to their schemes; war was devastating Ireland and Scotland; Charles II. entered England, lost the battle of Worcester, and immortalized the royal oak; the Protector died, and his son was deposed; England ceased to be puritan; and General Monk had matured his plots for duping the army to restore Charles to the throne of his father.

Such was the state of England when Baxter left Kidderminster, and reached London, April 13, 1660. On his arrival he conversed with Lord Lauderdale on the nation's obligation to the oath which they had sworn to Richard Cromwell. This Lauderdale was the man who had procured letters to be written by Protestant ministers in France, filled with assurances that Charles was firmly attached to the Protestant religion. A new parliament was immediately summoned to cancel the obligation of the oath to Richard Cromwell, and to invite Charles II. to England. To this parliament Baxter preached at St Margaret's, Westminster, April 30, on Repentance, from Ezek. xxxvi. 31. Immediately after the sermon, the House was to meet to vote the return of Charles. On May 10, he preached again from Luke x. 30, on "Right Rejoicing," to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, who were keeping a day of solemn thanksgiving for General Monk's success in bringing the king back. As Charles passed through the city of London to Westminster, the London ministers attended him with acclamations, and, by the hands of the oldest minister among them, the venerable Arthur Jackson, they "presented him with a richly adorned Bible, which he received, and told them that it should be the rule of his actions." Thus, before he had yet reached his throne, Charles began to act the hypocrite, even with the Bible in his hand, and to treat with flagitious duplicity the men who had restored him to his crown. These ministers were honest men, but they allowed themselves to be duped and entrapped; and, in two years after their acclamations, he made them pay dearly for their silly confidence in royal

promises. Oh! had wisdom uttered her voice in some street, and cried in some place of concourse, or in the opening of the gates of London, while Charles was passing, and had told these ministers, "PUT NOT YOUR TRUST IN PRINCES,"<sup>2</sup> many wailings and much shame would have been saved this country.

After the Restoration, ten or twelve of the Presbyterian ministers were made royal chaplains; and among these was Baxter, "at his Majesty's own desire, as an acceptable furtherance of his service." In this office none of them ever preached except Mr Calamy, Dr Reynolds, Dr Spurslow, Mr Woodbridge, and Baxter, once each. After his appointment, he had an interview with the king on the practicableness of effecting an agreement between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians, which ended in the royal farce of the meeting at Sion College. In September 4, 1660, Charles published his insulting Declaration, to which Baxter drew up an answer, in such terms of firmness and manliness as to alarm Calamy and Reynolds, who declared that "it would not be so much as received." When Baxter's modified reply was presented, a modified declaration of the king was proclaimed, which was as unsatisfactory as its first composition. Defective and even insolent as the king's modified declaration was, the very pastors who had enabled Charles to insult them, met to thank him for the minimum of liberty which he graciously gave them. When they presented their thanks to the king, Baxter refused to attend. On hearing this, the king sent for Baxter the next day, and flattered him, but did not change his opinion about royal fidelity. These discussions concluded with farce the second, called the Savoy Conference, at which Sheldon acted with the haughtiness and tyranny of a Wolsey.

Though the Presbyterian Divines were thus treated by the court and the hierarchy, the Nonconformists were known and felt to be a powerful body in the country. As a measure of kingcraft, therefore, it was proposed that the best way to silence them was to make some of their leaders Lord Bishops; and, accordingly, Hereford was offered to Baxter, Lichfield and Coventry to Calamy, and Norwich to Reynolds, who accepted it on the ground that the *congé d'elire* was taken out without his knowledge by a friend. An emissary of the court, Colonel Birch, waited upon Baxter again and again to get him to intimate his consent; but he declared, that "if the old diocesan frame continued, he would not accept it." Even this was not enough, the Chancellor, Clarendon, had an interview with him, and asked him about his resolution, when the proposal was rejected for ever. In saying "Nolo Episcopari," he meant it as "the words of truth and soberness."

The next step in Baxter's life is one perfectly singular, and is a good illustration of his character. Having declined a bishopric, he entreated Clarendon to give him the poor curacy of Kidderminster. "My people," he says, "were so dear to me, and I to them, that I would have been with them on the lowest terms. Some laughed at me for refusing a bishopric, and petitioning to be a reading-vicar's curate; but I had little hopes of so good a condition, at least for any considerable time. The Chancellor, and even the King, professed to be for his restoration to his people, but they allowed themselves to be baffled by his well known enemy, Sir Ralph Clare; and Bishop Morley also was resolved that he should never again enter the diocese of Worcester." When the people at Kidderminster understood the disposition of Baxter towards them, "in a day's time they gathered the hands of sixteen

hundred out of the eighteen hundred communicants,” with the assurance of more, if they had only time given them. What Clarendon and the King had professed to fail to do, he tried to do for himself. “I went down,” he says, “to Worcestershire, to try whether it were possible to have any honest terms from the reading-vicar there, that I might preach to my former flock; but when I had preached twice or thrice, he denied me liberty to preach any more. I offered to be his curate, and he refused it. I then offered to preach for nothing, and he refused it. And, lastly, I desired leave but once to administer the sacrament to the people, and to preach my farewell sermon to them, but he would not consent. At last I understood that he was directed by his superiors to do what he did.” From Kidderminster, Baxter, after paying a hasty visit to his afflicted father in Shropshire, waited on Bishop Morley. “I reminded the Bishop,” he says, “of his promise to grant me his license, &c.; but he refused me liberty to preach in his diocese, though I offered to preach only on the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and that only to such as had no preaching.”

Baxter was silenced,—the man who had received his “ministry from the Lord Jesus,” was rejected. He went to the Bishop’s palace with “neither purse nor scrip.” He said, “peace be to this house,” but “the son of peace was not there.” When the door of Worcester’s palace closed on “holy Baxter,” the event appeared trifling in episcopal judgment; but all the influence and bearings of that little event have not been yet developed. An edict has gone forth from the Lord, which says—“Into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same and say, Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you.” That dust, as it falls from the messenger, will have its influence on other interests. Natural Philosophy informs us, that a grain of sand on the point of a needle has its influence on the greatest and most remote bodies in the solar system. In the same manner, Revelation assures, that the dust from the sandals of ejected ministers, will, in the day of retribution, make it more tolerable for Sodom than for that city or that house which has rejected them.

After the prelate of Worcester had refused to license him in that diocese, he settled in London, and preached in various vacant pulpits, where his services were requested. After a year of such occasional, and always gratuitous ministrations, he resolved to become a colleague of the Rev. Dr Bates, at St Dunstan’s in the West, where he preached once a week. The subjects of his sermons seem to have been regularly reported in high quarters, and he was always charged with sedition and rebellion, till he preached the series which he afterwards published under the title of “The Formal Hypocrite Detected,” when the low hypocrites that reported him, and the high hypocrites which heard their reports, ceased their accusations.

It was while preaching in St Dunstan’s that he displayed that solemn and calm superiority to alarm and fear which is related by Dr Bates. The church of St Dunstan’s had “an ill name, as very old, rotten, and dangerous;” when therefore “a little lime and dust, and perhaps a piece of brick or two, fell down the steeple” during service; the whole congregation was exceedingly alarmed, and every one rushed towards the doors. Baxter “sat down in the pulpit, seeing and pitying their vain distempers; and then, as soon as he could be heard, he rose and said, “We are

in the service of God, to prepare ourselves, that we may be fearless at the great noise of the dissolving world, when the heavens shall pass away, and the elements melt with fervent heat." He then continued and finished his discourse, which was his last at St Dunstan's church, which had to be rebuilt.

Between this time and the passing of the anti-Christian Act of Uniformity, he continued to preach for some time at St Bride's in Fleet Street, and at St Ann's, Black Friars, and he had also a week-day lecture in Milk Street, supported by Mr Ashurst. Thus he continued to labour in his Master's work, till the shadows of Bartholomew Eve warned him to quit the English Church, which incessantly harassed him, and persecuted him even unto death.

The whole noble band of Nonconformists were about to be ejected from the Church of England on August 24, 1662; but Baxter resolved to quit that Church before the Act of Uniformity came into force, and he accordingly preached his last sermon on the 25th of the previous May. This he did, partly because his legal advisers informed him, that as he was only a Lecturer, the liberty of all lecturers terminated on the 25th of May; partly to let authority know that he would obey it in all that was lawful; but chiefly to let all the Ministers in England understand in time that he did not intend to conform, lest any should conform in the expectation that he would be a conformist. When the 24th of August came, two thousand illustrious, able, and faithful ministers—such two thousand then and as England never saw—were faithful to their consciences, and faithful to the God of truth and liberty; and they all quitted the English Church. Popery had its Bartholomew's day in France, and it shed the blood of myriads; and Prelacy has had its Bartholomew's day in England, and it covered it with the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity.

While Baxter was busy in devising schemes of comprehension for Episcopalians and Nonconformists, he was at the same time employing his thoughts and his heart on a subject of much delicacy and tenderness, and that was his marriage. On September 10, 1662, just a fortnight after the dark and black Bartholomew's day, he was married in Bennet Fink Church in Cheapside, by Mr Samuel Clark, to Miss Margaret Charlton. Baxter was now forty-seven years of age, and Miss Charlton was about twenty-three. It had always been a part of his creed, that for ministers to marry was only barely lawful. All these things made his marriage notorious. "The king's marriage," he says, "was scarcely more talked of than mine." Two things brought Miss Charlton under the special notice of Baxter; she was born within three miles of his own native village, and, on her removal with her mother to Kidderminster, his ministry was the means of her conversion. Notwithstanding the inequality in their ages, he says that "the many strange occurrences which brought it to pass, would take away the wonder of her friends and mine"—but "in her case and mine there was much that was extraordinary, what it doth not concern the world to be acquainted with." The terms on which Baxter proposed marriage, and which Miss Charlton accepted, are these: First, "That I should have nothing that before our marriage was hers; that I, who wanted no earthly supplies, might not seem to marry her for covetousness. Secondly, That she would so alter her affairs that I might be entangled in no lawsuits. Thirdly, That she would expect none of my time which my ministerial work should require." They were

“married in the Lord,” and he found in her a help-meet for him, sometimes his fellow prisoner, and always the helper to his joy.

On June 1, 1663, Sheldon became Archbishop of Canterbury, a man of deep craftiness, of dexterous ability, and of unrelenting malignity against the Nonconformists; and, consequently, their sufferings were greatly aggravated on his accession to the primacy, especially through the severity of his act against private meetings. This law put all public service at an end. Baxter resolved to leave London; and he says, “I betook myself to live in the country, at Acton, that I might set myself to writing, and do what service I could for posterity, and live as much as I possibly could out of the world. Thither I went on the 14th of July 1663, where I followed my studies privately in quietness.” Here he attended the church in one part of the day, and preached in his own house at another. Here also he finished some of his best works, especially his “Christian Directory.” On March 26, 1665, he was nearly being shot dead. While he was preaching and administering the Lord’s Supper, a bullet came in at the window, and passed close by him, but did him no hurt. The villain who had attempted to murder him was never discovered.

Towards the close of 1665 the Plague made its appearance in London, amidst all the troubles of a war with Holland. Baxter seems to have regarded this as a visitation upon England for the wickedness of the Corporation Act which had lately passed. He says,—“From London the plague is spread through many counties, especially next London, where few places, especially corporations, are free; which makes me oft groan, and wish that London, and all the Corporations of England, would review the CORPORATION ACT, and their own acts, and speedily repent.” While Baxter was penning this noble sentiment, he was at Hampden, in Buckinghamshire, in the house of his beloved friend, Mr Richard Hampden, “the true heir of his famous father’s sincerity, piety, and devotedness to God.” Here he continued while the plague raged about London.

It is probable that Nonconformity and Religious Liberty in England owe more to the Plague, and to the Fire of London, than to any other two causes in the providence of God. “When the plague grew hot,” says Baxter, “most of the conformable ministers fled, and left their flocks in the time of their extremity; whereupon divers Nonconformists, pitying the dying and distressed people, when about ten thousand died in a week, resolved that no obedience to the laws of mortal man whatever could justify them in neglecting men’s souls and bodies in such extremities. They therefore resolved to stay with the people, and to go into the forsaken pulpits, though prohibited; and also to visit the sick and the dying, and to get what relief they could for the poor, especially those that were shut up.” Yet while those noble and generous men were thus labouring in the very domain of death, and at the post which the hireling clergy had forsaken, Sheldon and Clarendon were forging the chains of the Five Mile Act to stop all their efforts. When the Plague ceased at Acton in March 1666, Baxter returned home, and found the church-yard like a ploughed field with graves, and many of his neighbours dead.”

The next mysterious Providence which promoted religious liberty was the great Fire of London. It broke out at midnight, September 2, 1666. Baxter says, that “it was set on fire,” and he believed that the agents in this awful destruction “of one of the fairest cities in the world “were the Papists. Whether the suspicion be true

or not, the report, and the common belief of it, shew in what degree of detestation all Papists were held in that age. After the fire, as well as during the plague, the religious condition of the Londoners was equally wretched and destitute, as far as the conforming clergy were concerned. When the churches were burnt, the parish ministers all departed, as if they had no ministry for the souls of men, except within the walls of churches. At this season, again, the generous Nonconformists came forth to the work of the ministry, with a disinterestedness and a diligence, that should have shamed their rivals and oppressors. This was the birth-season of dissenting chapels; for the ministers now prepared large rooms, and “plain chapels with pulpits, seats, and galleries, for the reception of as many as would come:” and, says Baxter, “many of the citizens went to those meetings called private, more than went to the public parish churches.” These magnanimous labours produced a fresh rumour about a “comprehension,” and liberty of conscience; but the clergy opposed every effort for the restitution of the Nonconformists, and continued to refuse them all toleration till the fall of the wily Clarendon.

On the rise of the Duke of Buckingham, the preaching of the Nonconformists was connived at, “so that the people went openly to hear them without fear”—“and they did the like in most parts of England.” In the mean time, Baxter was busily engaged at Acton with his illustrious friend Judge Hale in arranging the heads of a new scheme of Comprehension. While Judge Hale and Baxter were thus employed, the inquisitorial Sheldon addressed a circular letter to all the Bishops, requesting them to give an account of all the conventicles in their diocese. The result was, that many ministers were imprisoned; and one of Sheldon’s first victims was Baxter. Information was laid against him by his neighbour, one Colonel Phillips, for preaching in his own house at Acton, and he had to appear before the magistrates at Brentford. These, after treating him rudely and insultingly, sent him to Clerkenwell prison, “where,” says Baxter, “I had an honest jailer, who showed me all the kindness he could.” Mrs Baxter went to prison with her husband; and he says, “My wife was never so cheerful a companion to me as in prison, and was very much against my seeking to be released.” From this prison he was liberated by a Habeas Corpus, but with an *obitum dictum* of the Judge that it was not on account of his innocence, but merely because of a flaw in the mittimus.

On his release, he found that his position was more difficult than he had apprehended; for the Five Mile Act prevented him from returning to Acton, where he had a house of large rent; and that his enemies among the magistrates had made a fresh and a more accurate mittimus to send him to Newgate “among thieves and murderers;” he felt, therefore, that he must at any cost leave Middlesex.

His next place of abode was Totteridge, near Barnet, where he lived in “a few mean rooms, which were so extremely smoky, and the place withal so cold, that he spent the winter with great pain.” It was during his stay at Totteridge that he had his controversy with Dr Owen; that Lauderdale offered to make him a Scottish Bishop, or a Scottish Principal of one of the Universities; that he wrote a great part of his “*Methodus Theologiae*,” that he lost a great part of his property through the bankruptcy of the King’s Exchequer; that he aided Lord Orrery in forming the “Healing Measure,” which failed; and that he availed himself of the

King's "Dispensing Declaration" to recommence preaching. Trusting in the word of a king, he removed to London, and preached as one of the lecturers at Pinners' Hall. He says: "On the 19th of November (1672), my baptism day, was the first day, after ten years' silence, that I preached in a tolerated assembly." On January 1673, he began a Tuesday lecture at Mr Turner's church in New Street, Fetter Lane, but "never took a penny of money for it from any one." He had also a lecture at St James' Market-House. In this neighbourhood his ministry was very extensively useful, though it was now illegal; having been made so by the circumstance that the Parliament had annulled the King's Dispensing Declaration, and had passed the Test Act. Informations were again laid against him, in which an Alderman of London, a Sir Thomas Davies, figures as a beast of prey seeking whom he might devour, who distrained his goods for fifty pounds for preaching his lecture in New Street.

In consequence of the dangerous state of his place of preaching at St James's, his friends pressed him to obtain another place, and Oxenden chapel was built for him by their liberality. "Mr Henry Coventry, one of his Majesty's principal secretaries, who had a house joining to it, and was a member of parliament, spoke twice against it in the Parliament, but no one seconded him." Here he was incessantly worried by his persecutors. "I was so long wearied," he says, "with keeping my doors shut against them that came to distrain my goods for preaching, that I was fain to go from my house, and to sell all my goods, and to hide my library first, and afterwards to sell it; so that, if books had been my treasure (and I valued little more on earth), I had now been without a treasure. For about twelve years, I was driven a hundred miles from them; and when I had paid dear for the carriage, after two or three years I was forced to sell them." As an illustration of his dangers at Oxenden Chapel, he gives the following account of Mr Seddon, who was to preach for him during his absence in the country: "I had left word that if he would but step into my house through a door, he was in no danger; they not having power to break open any but the meeting-house, While he was preaching, three justices, supposed of Secretary Coventry's sending, came to the door to seize the preacher. They thought it had been I, and had prepared a warrant upon the Oxford Act to send me for six weeks to the common jail."

After the silence of a whole year, he opened another place of preaching in the parish of St Martin. In the spring of 1676, Charles, utterly heedless of the "word of a Christian king" given at Breda, urged all the judges and magistrates to put the laws against Nonconformists in strict execution, yet Baxter recommenced preaching at a chapel in Swallow Street, while his own stood empty, at the expense to him of thirty pounds a year for ground rent. A fresh warrant was issued against him, and for twenty-four Sabbaths constables and beadles watched the chapel door to apprehend him.

On the 14th of June 1681, Baxter sustained the irreparable loss of his excellent and heroic wife. She was buried in Christchurch, and Howe preached her funeral sermon. Her husband praised her in the gates, and in the sketch of her character says, "She was the meetest helper that I could have had in the world." She was only forty when she died.

On August 24, 1682, he preached his last sermon in New Street, “just that day twenty years that I, and near two thousand more, had been by law forbidden to preach.” “I took that day leave of the pulpit and public work in a thankful congregation.” “When I had ceased preaching, and was nearly risen from extremity of pain, I was suddenly surprised by a poor, violent informer, and many constables and officers, who rushed in, apprehended me, and served on me one warrant to seize my person for coming within five miles of a corporation, and five more warrants to distrain for a hundred and ninety pounds for five sermons.” In this state he accompanied them to the magistrate to be sent to jail, but his physician meeting him, made oath that he could not go to prison without danger of death. The magistrates represented the affair to the King, and Charles consented that he should not be sent to prison for the present, that he might die at home. They, however, seized his books and goods, and even the bed which he lay sick on, and sold them all. “I had no remedy but utterly to for-sake my house and goods and all, and take secret lodgings at a distance, in a stranger’s house.”

In 1684 he suffered similar treatment. “While I lay in pain and languishing, the justices of the session sent warrants to apprehend me, about a thousand more being in catalogue to be bound to their good behaviour. I refused to open my chamber door to them, their warrant not being to break it open; but they set six officers at my study door, who watched all night, and kept me from my bed and food; so that the next day I yielded to them, who carried me, scarce able to stand, to the sessions, and bound me in four hundred pounds.”

Early in 1685 appeared his New Testament with Notes, and on February 28 he was committed to prison on a warrant from Judge Jefferies, on account of some sentiments in his Paraphrase. On the 18th of May, it was moved that, on account of his great bodily pains, further time might be given him before his trial. Judge Jefferies said, “I will not give him a minute’s time more to save his life. Yonder stands Oates in the pillory, and he says he suffers for the truth, and so says Baxter; but if Baxter did but stand on the other side of the pillory with him, I would say, two of the greatest rogues and rascals in the kingdom stood there.” The trial came on at Guildhall on May 30, before Jefferies. Over every seat on which this ermined ruffian ever sat might be inscribed, “By appointment, Butcher to the Royal Family.” When Baxter’s counsel was defending him, Jefferies said, “This is an old rogue, who has poisoned the world with his Kidderminster doctrine. An old schismatical knave, a hypocritical villain. Hang him, this one old fellow hath cast more reproach upon the constitution and discipline of our church than will be wiped off this hundred years; but I’ll handle him for it; for, by God, he deserves to be whipped through the city.” When Baxter attempted to explain and vindicate himself, Jefferies said to him, “Richard, Richard, dost thou think we’ll hear thee poison the court? Richard, thou art an old fellow, an old knave; thou has written books enough to load a cart, every one is full of sedition, I might say treason, as an egg is full of meat. Hadst thou been whipped out of thy writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy. Thou hast one foot in the grave; it is time for thee to begin to think what account thou intendest to give. But leave thee to thyself, and I see thou’lt go on as thou hast begun; but, by the grace of God, I’ll look after thee.” After Jefferies had charged the jury in a most un-English and outrageous

manner, Baxter said, "Does your Lordship think that any jury will pretend to pass a verdict upon me upon such a trial?" The ruffian replied, "I'll warrant you, Mr Baxter, don't you trouble your head about that." Jefferies was right, for without quitting the box, the jury found him "guilty." At this trial Sir Henry Ashurst, the son of Baxter's old and faithful friend, acted nobly, led the venerable and injured friend of his father through the crowd, and conveyed him home in his own carriage. Baxter applied in vain to the Bishop of London to use his influence to obtain a new trial, or a milder judgment than was likely to be awarded to him by Jefferies. On the 29th of June his judgment was pronounced. He was to be fined five hundred pounds, to lie in prison till he paid it, and to be bound to his good behaviour for seven years. This award was one of the first acts of James II., who had ascended the throne on the 6th of February. The prosecution was promoted by the efforts of L'Estrange, a name of some rank among the learned men of his day. Every thing contributed to render the trial of Baxter a burning stigma on the royalty, law, and literature of England.

Baxter resolved to go to prison, for he could not pay the fine; and even if he paid it, it was likely he would soon be prosecuted again. In prison he was visited by some of the clergy, who lamented his unjust verdict. He continued in his prison nearly two years, when Lord Powis used his influence at Court to procure his release. He left the prison on November 24, 1686. As a favour, King James allowed him to live in London, notwithstanding the Oxford Act; and having lived for some months within the rules of the King's Bench, he removed on February 28 to Charterhouse Yard, and renewed his pulpit labours in company with Mr Sylvester.

In these stirring times, Baxter's age, sufferings, infirmities, and persecutions, prevented him from taking much interest in the agitations and changes which were taking place around him. Neither James' downfall, nor the glorious Revolution of 1688, seems to have drawn forth any remark from his pen or his pulpit. The last measure of legislation in which Baxter acted any part, was the Act of Toleration passed by William and Mary, which placed all Nonconformists under the shield of the British constitution. The last religious movement in which he interested himself, was the Bond of Agreement which was formed between the Presbyterians and Independents of London, memorable as commencing the name of Presbyterians, properly so called, in England.

In Charterhouse Square he lived near Mr Sylvester's meeting-house, where he preached gratuitously on Sunday mornings, and once a fortnight on Thursday mornings. After spending four years and a half in these engagements, he gave them up, and "opened his doors morning and evening every day "to all who would join him in family worship. Eventually his growing infirmities constrained him to give up this engagement, and confined him to his own chamber. "He continued to preach," says Dr Bates, "so long, notwithstanding his wasted, languishing body, that the last time he almost died in the pulpit. It would doubtless have been his joy to have been transfigured in the mount. Not long after, he felt the approaches of death, and was confined to his sick-bed. He said to his friends, 'You come hither to learn to die; I am not the only person that must go this way. I can assure you that your whole life, be it ever so long, is little enough to prepare for death.' After a slumber he waked and said, 'I shall rest from my labour.' A minis-

ter then present said, 'and your works shall follow you.' To whom he replied, 'No works: I will leave out works, if God will grant me the other.'"

When a friend reminded him of his past usefulness, he said, "I was but a pen in God's hands, and what praise is due to a pen? "In the extremity of his agonies he would sometimes pray earnestly to God for a speedy release, and then he would check himself and say, "It is not fit for me to prescribe; when thou wilt, what thou wilt, how thou wilt." He was once asked how he felt in his inward man, and his reply was, "I bless God I have a well-grounded assurance of my eternal happiness, and great peace and comfort within." On the day before his death, Dr Bates and Mr Mather of New England visited him. To them he expressed his great willingness to die; and when the question was asked, "How he did?" his answer was, "Almost well." This was on a Monday, and he had fully expected and hoped that he should have died on the preceding Sunday, which to Mr Sylvester he called "a high day," in the expectation of his joyful change. He languished through Monday, and on Tuesday, December 8, 1691, about four o'clock in the morning, he had his last conflict with disease, languished into life, and the "Reformed Pastor" found himself in the "Saints' Everlasting Rest."

His body was interred in Christ Church, with the body of his wife. Men of all ranks, and ministers of Nonconformist and of Conformist orders attended his funeral. Two funeral sermons were preached for him; one by his colleague, Mr Sylvester, and the other by his friend Dr Bates, both of which were published.

## FOOTNOTES

1 W. Savage Landor's *IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS*, in the conversation between MARVEL and PARKER.

2 At Breda, April 4, 1660, Charles II. gave his royal word in these terms—"We do declare a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall be disquieted, or called in question, for differences of opinion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." This he had the profligacy to declare on, what he called, "the word of a Christian king."