WELSH

CALVINISTIC METHODISM

A Historical Sketch.

BY

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CHAPTER X.

Rev. H. Venn on Trevecca—Lady Huntingdon and the Welsh Methodists—A projected College—Rev. J. Berridge’s letter—Opening of the College at Trevecca—Qualifications and salary of Head-master—First anniversary—The Calvinistic contro­versy—Another anniversary—Fall of the scaffold—Fireside talk—Death and funeral of Howell Harris—Ultimate results of his withdrawal to Trevecca—Another controversy—Expul­sion of Peter Williams—A long drought—A great revival—Rowlands expelled from the Established Church.

Whatever may be thought now of the institu­tion at Trevecca, it is certain that there were many among the best people of those days who did not regard it with disfavour. The. Reverend Henry Venn, author of *The Complete Duty of Man,* and one of the most eminent of the early Methodistical clergymen, visited the place in 1769, and we give his impressions of it in his own words:—“Happy Trevecca! Howell Harris is the father of that settlement, and the founder. After labouring for fifteen years, more violently than any of the servants of Christ, in this revival, he was so hurt in body as to be confined to his own house for seven years. Upon the beginning of this confinement, first one and then another, whom the Lord had converted under his word, to the number of near a hundred, came and desired to live with him, and that they would work and get their bread. By this means, near one hundred and twenty—men, women, and children, from very distant parts of Wales—came and fixed their tents at Trevecca. We were there three days, and heard their experience, which they spoke in Welsh to Mr. Harris, and he interpreted to us. Of all the people I ever saw, this Society seems to be the most advanced in grace. They speak as men and women who feel themselves every moment worthy of eternal punishment, and infinitely base; and yet, at the same time, have such certainty of salvation through the second Man, the Lord from heaven, as is indeed delightful to behold. My heart received a blessing from them and their pastor which will abide with me.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Countess of Huntingdon had been long ac­quainted with Howell Harris, and other leading Welsh reformers. Her Ladyship, in 1748, had ac­companied several of these men on a tour through parts of Wales, of which we have the following account in her *Life and Times:*[[2]](#footnote-2)*—*

“About the month of May 1748, Lady Hunting­don and her daughters, accompanied by Lady Anne and Lady Frances Hastings, left Bath on a tour through Wales. It is a matter of regret that so little information can now be obtained of her Ladyship’s journey into a part of the kingdom where she was destined in after years to reap a harvest so abundant.

“From the scanty materials, however, which re­main, an imperfect and irregular journal, in the handwriting of Lady Frances Hastings, we are in­formed that Lady Huntingdon was met at Bristol by Mr. Howell Harris, Mr. Griffith Jones, Mr. Daniel Rowlands, and Mr. Howell Davies, all of whom accompanied her into the Principality. They appear to have travelled slowly, taking short stages every day. For fifteen days successively two of the min­isters that accompanied her Ladyship preached in some town or village through which they passed, by which means the seed of Divine truth was widely scattered over a large extent of the country. In Cardiganshire her Ladyship was visited by the Rev. Philip Pugh, a Dissenting minister, eminent for his piety, diligence, and success. On their arrival at Trevecca, they were joined by several of the awak­ened clergymen, particularly Mr. William Williams, Mr. Thomas Lewis, Mr. Penry Baillie, Mr. John Powell, and Mr. Thomas Jones; also by some of the exhorters, or lay preachers, and some pious and laborious Dissenting ministers, amongst whom Mr. John Watkins, Mr. Lewis Jones of Glamorganshire, and Mr. Lewis Rees from North Wales, were the most notable. Her Ladyship remained a few days at Trevecca, which exactly twenty years after became her chief residence and scene of action. Whilst there, they had preaching four or five times a day, to im­mense crowds who had collected from all the adja­cent country. ‘The divine influence of the Spirit of God,’ says Lady Frances, ‘was very evidently afforded with his Word, and many were added unto the Lord’s people.’”

Howell Harris was likewise for many years one of her Ladyship’s regular supplies in London, Brighton, and other places. In the year 1767, Lady Huntingdon conceived the idea of’ establishing a college or “seminary,” as it was called at the time, for the purpose of preparing earnest and devoted young men for the ministry of the gospel. It was not intended to confine the benefits of this school of prophets to any particular denomination; on the contrary, the young men who were trained in it were at liberty to take orders in the Establishment, or to join themselves to any other section of the Christian Church, according as they were led by the providence of God, or by their own inclinations. Her Ladyship consulted a great many of her minis­terial and other friends, with reference to this im­portant project, and as is usual in such cases, was encouraged to persevere in her intention by some, and dissuaded from it by others. Among the latter was the Rev. J. Berridge, whose characteristic letter in reply to her Ladyship we take the liberty to insert:— “The soil you have chosen is proper. Welsh mountains afford a brisk air for a student, and the rules are excellent; but I doubt the success of the project, and fear it will occasion you more trouble than all your other undertakings besides. Are we commanded to make labourers, or to ‘pray the Lord to send labourers’? Will not Jesus choose and teach and send forth His ministering servants now, as He did the disciples aforetime, and glean them up when and where and how He pleaseth? The world say No, because they are strangers to a Divine commis­sion and a Divine teaching. And what if these asses blunder about their Master’s meaning for a time, and mistake it often, as they did formerly? No great harm will ensue, provided they are kept from paper and ink, and from a white wall and char­coal. Do you like to see cade-lambs in a house, and suckling with a finger, or to view them skipping after the dam in their own proper pasture? We read of a school of prophets in Scripture, but we do not read that it was God’s appointment. Elijah visited this school, which was at Bethel, and seems to have been fond of it, yet the Lord commands him to fetch a successor, not from the school, but, as the Romans fetched a dictator, from the plough. Are we told of a single *preaching* prophet that was taken out of this school? Or do we find any public em­ployment given the scholars, except once sending a light-heeled young man, when light heels were need­ful, with a horn of oil to anoint Jehu? (2 Kings ix.) That old prophet, who told a sad lie to another prophet, was of this school, and might be the master of this college, for he was a grey-headed man (1 Kings xiii. 11). While my heart is thus prattling to you very simply, like a child, it stands in no fear of offending you; and if your project be right, the Master will keep you steadfast, and you will only smile at my prattling. Indeed, I am the most dubious man in the world about my own judgment, and will stickle for nothing excepting to live to and trust in my Lord.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

Her Ladyship fixed upon Trevecca for her College, and we suppose that her reason for making that choice was, that the students might have the ad­vantage of Howell Harris’s earnest ministrations. The building was prepared by him. He repaired and enlarged Trevecca House, “an ancient structure, supposed to have been part of an old castle erected in the reign of Henry the Second. The date over the entrance, now almost effaced, is 1176. This building was opened as a college for religious and literary instruction, and the chapel dedicated to the preaching of the everlasting gospel on the 24th of August 1768, the anniversary of Lady Hunting­don’s birth-day, by the Rev. George Whitefield, who preached from Exodus xx. 24, ‘In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and bless thee;’ and, on the following Sabbath-day, he ad­dressed a congregation of some thousands in the court before the College. His text on this occasion was,—‘Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.’ When speaking of the dedication of the College, Mr. Whitefield says, ‘What we have seen and felt at the College is un­speakable.’”[[4]](#footnote-4)

The Rev. J. Fletcher of Madeley was chosen Pre­sident of the College; and Mr. Easterbrook, after­wards the Vicar of the Temple and Ordinary of Newgate, “a deeply pious and useful man, an able preacher, and a bold defender of the truths of Christianity,” the first Master. The latter does not appear to have remained at Trevecca more than a few months; and a Mr. Jones, who had been one of the Masters at Kingswood school, applied to Mr. Fletcher for the appointment. A short extract from the reply of the President to this gentleman will give the reader some idea of the character of the College, and of its promoters:—

“The first and grand point to be kept in view at Lady Huntingdon’s College, is to maintain and grow in the spirit of faith and power that breathes through the Acts of the Apostles, and was exemplified in the lives of the primitive Christians. The first and grand qualification required in a person called to be at the head of such a College, is, then, a degree of faith and power from above, with an active devotedness to God and His cause. The Master who is there at present seems, on account of his youth, to be deficient in point of Christian experience; nor is he a proper master of the Greek, nor even of the harder classics, so that he can hardly maintain his superiority over those who read Cicero and Horace.[[5]](#footnote-5) Whether this inconveniency, Sir, would be avoided, suppose you were to succeed him, I cannot judge by your letter. He is also unacquainted with Divinity and the Sciences, of which it is proper he should give the student some idea; and how far you may excel him in these points, Sir, is not in my power to determine. He hath twenty-five guineas a year, with his board, room, and washing. I dare say the generous foundress would not hesitate to raise the salary of a master of superior merit, though she hopes none would under­take that province for the sake of money. The variety of classes demands great assiduity and dili­gence in the master. I would not, therefore, advise any one to engage without a proper trial. . . . I think that, if upon consulting with the Lord in prayer, and with Mr. Maxfield in conversation, you find your heart free to embrace so peculiar an oppor­tunity of being useful to your generation, it might be best to come and see how you like the business, and how it agrees with you; and should not matters prove agreeable on either side, I dare say Lady Hunt­ingdon will pay your expenses to Talgarth and back again.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

In August 1769 the anniversary of the opening of the College was held, and this was a great occa­sion. “On Friday the 18th, Mr. Daniel Rowlands, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. W. Williams, arrived at the College, and, on the following morning, Mr. Row­lands preached in the chapel to a crowded congrega­tion, on the words, ‘Lord, are there few that be saved? In the afternoon the Lord’s Supper was administered, when Mr. Fletcher addressed the com­municants and spectators in a very close and pointed manner. Power from on high accompanied the Word, and rendered it effectual to the conversion of many. Mr. Williams then gave out the hymn, ‘Come, let us join our cheerful songs,’ etc., which was sung with the most lively feelings of devotion. Abundance of people being gathered together, Mr. Howell Harris stood in the court and gave a solemn warning to a large congregation from these awful words: ‘The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.’

“On the 19th Mr. Shirley and several exhorters and lay-preachers arrived at Trevecca. The next day, being Sunday, a very numerous congregation assembled in the court, the chapel being much too small to contain the half of the people. Public ser­vice commenced at ten o’clock. Mr. Fletcher read prayers, and Mr. Shirley preached on ‘Acquaint thy­self now with him, and be at peace.’ At one the sacrament was administered in the chapel. Mr. Rowlands and Mr. Fletcher alternately addressed the communicants during the distribution of the elements, and Mr. Williams closed the solemnity with a suit­able address to the awakened and unawakened. In the afternoon, Mr. Fletcher stood in the court and applied the words of the apostle—‘I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,’—to an immense congrega­tion, many of whom appeared to receive the word with gladness. When the sermon was concluded, a hymn was sung, and Mr. Rowlands explained and enforced, in the Welsh language, those solemn words, ‘It is appointed unto men once to die.’

“From this time to the day of the anniversary, people flocked from all parts to Trevecca. Mr. Howell Harris, and several of the Welsh exhorters, assisted the clergymen assembled at the College, so that there was preaching twice every day. On Wednesday the 23d, Mr. Wesley, accompanied by Mr. Howell Davies and Mr. Peter Williams of Carmarthen, arrived at Trevecca. Mr. Wesley preached on that day; and in the evening, at Mr. Harris’s desire, gave a short exhortation to his family.

“At an early hour on the morning of Thursday the 24th, the Lord’s Supper was administered by Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shirley, first to the clergymen assembled at the College, then to students; after which the Countess of Huntingdon, the Countess Buchan, Lady Anne Erskine, Miss Orton, and other members of her family received. An amazing con­course of people being collected from all parts, the public service commenced at ten o’clock. Mr. Howell Davies and Mr. Daniel Rowlands read the prayers, with appropriate lessons selected for the occasion; after which Mr. Fletcher preached an exceedingly lively sermon in the court, the chapel being far too small to contain the congregation. When he had finished, the Rev. W. Williams preached in Welsh till about two o’clock. At two they all dined with Lady Huntingdon, and baskets of bread and meat were distributed amongst the people in the court, many of whom had come from a great distance. Public service commenced again at three o’clock, when Mr. Wesley preached in the court, then Mr. Fletcher. About five the congregation was dis­missed. Between seven and eight the love-feast began, during which Mr. Shirley, Mr. Davies, and Mr. Rowlands gave short exhortations; and Mr. Peter Williams and Mr. Howell Harris engaged in prayer.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

Of these manifold and prolonged services Lady Huntingdon writes:—“Truly our God was in the midst of us, and many felt Him eminently nigh. The gracious influence of His Spirit seemed to rest on every soul. Many with whom I have conversed ex­perience a spring-tide of sensible comfort, and strong joy, and vehement longings after more communion with Him, especially in the means of grace. Though necessarily much hurried with outward things, my mind was preserved in peace. I enjoyed a divine composure, a heavenly serenity of soul; while my communion was with the Father and the Son. Words fail to describe the holy triumph with which the great congregation sang—

‘Captain of Thine enlisted host,

Display thy glorious banner high,’ etc.

It was a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,—a time never to be forgotten.”[[8]](#footnote-8)

Daniel Rowlands, William Williams, Howell Davies, and Peter Williams, as we see, take an active part in these services. Here are Howell Harris and his dear old friends together again, after an estrangement of eighteen years. The sore had been completely healed, for these good brethren had by this time discovered that there were no substantial reasons after all for their separation.

Some time after the anniversary services which we have just described, the Rev. Joseph Benson was, by the recommendation of Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Wesley, appointed head-master of the College; but he only continued in that position for nine months. The great Calvinistic controversy began in 1770, and he was dismissed in consequence of the part which he took in relation to the celebrated “Minutes” of the Wesleyan Conference of that year. His dismissal was soon followed by the resignation of Mr. Fletcher as President. From this time there was a complete separation between Mr. Wesley and his people on the one hand, and the Calvinistic Methodists on the other. There was an effort made to effect a recon­ciliation, which at first promised to be successful; but it completely failed, and there ensued a long and bitter controversy. The two eminent brothers, Richard and Rowland Hill, Augustus Toplady, and John Berridge, entered the arena on the Calvinistic side, against the brothers John and Charles Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, and two or three more, on the other. The titles of some of the pamphlets which were then written prove that the writers had not engaged in the controversy in the best and mildest spirit; and there were passages in those books themselves which were more remarkable for their vigour than for Christian charity, and which the authors on either side would have been glad to be able to withdraw, when the heat of the battle had passed. This controversy did not at all affect Wales, inasmuch as all the Welsh Methodists adhered to the Calvinistic side; and therefore it does not appertain to us further to en­large upon its history. The College continued at Trevecca until after the death of the Countess of Huntingdon in 1791, when it was removed to Cheshunt. Up to that time anniversaries continued to be held in August each year, and to draw together great crowds of people. The Rev. Augustus Toplady, in a letter to his friend Mr. Hussey, gives an interesting account of one of those meetings which he attended in 1774. We give an extract:—

“The night I left town, the Worcester coach, in which I went, broke down, but not one of us received the least injury. I have a still greater deliverance to acquaint you with, even such as, I trust, will never be blotted out from my thankful remembrance. On the anniversary day in Wales, the congregation was so large that the chapel would not have con­tained a fourth part of the people, who were sup­posed to amount to three thousand. No fewer than thirteen hundred horses were turned into one large field adjoining the College, besides what were sta­tioned in the neighbouring villages. The carriages also were unusually numerous. A scaffold was erected at one end of the College court, on which a book­stand was placed by way of pulpit; and from thence six or seven of us preached successively to one of the most attentive and most lively congregations I ever beheld. When it came to my turn to preach I ad­vanced to the front, and had not gone more than half through my prayer before sermon when the scaffold suddenly fell in. As I stood very near the highermost step, and the step did not fall with the rest, Providence enabled me to keep on my feet, through the assistance of Mr. Winkworth, who laid fast hold on my arm. About forty ministers were on the scaffold and steps when the former broke down. Dear Mr. Shirley fell undermost of all, but received no other hurt than a very slight bruise on one of his thighs. A good woman, who, for conveniency of hearing, had placed herself under the scaffold, received a trifling contusion on her face. No other mischief was done. The congregation, though greatly alarmed, had the prudence not to throw themselves into outward disorder, which, I believe, was chiefly owing to the powerful sense of God’s presence, which was eminently felt by most of the assembly.

“Such was the wonderful goodness of the Lord to me, that I was not in the least disconcerted on this dangerous occasion, which I mention to the praise of that grace and providence, without which a much smaller incident would inevitably have shocked every nerve I have. About half a minute after the inter­ruption had commenced, I had the satisfaction to inform the people that no damage had ensued, and, removing for security to a lower step, I thanked the Lord with the rejoicing multitude for having so undeniably given His angels charge concerning us. Prayer ended, I was enabled to preach, and great grace seemed to be upon us all.”[[9]](#footnote-9)

The same eminent man gives an insight into the character of the conversation which the assembled friends held together around the hearth at the close of each day. The following we give as examples:—

“‘The Spirit of God can convert men without the Bible, but the Bible cannot convert without the Spirit.’—*Mr. Shirley in conversation at Trevecca this day, August* 29, 1776.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

“‘The sanctifying principle of grace in the heart may be compared to a candle in a lantern, which transmits its light through the lantern, though in and of itself the lantern still continues what it was before, a dark body.’—*Lady Huntingdon in conversa­tion at Trevecca, August* 29, 1776.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

“‘If comfort fails, God’s faithfulness does not. What though your pitcher is broke? The fountain is still as full as ever.’—*Rev. Peter Williams at Trevecca, August* 1776.”[[12]](#footnote-12)

It was such talk that those good people had among each other when they “unbent” after the labours of the day.

Howell Harris had more than three years before this time been called to his rest. He died triumph­antly on the 21st of July 1773, and his funeral was a “great mourning” of the Methodists. Lady Huntingdon says that “there were present no less than twenty thousand persons,” and that there were “some special seasons of Divine influence both upon converted and unconverted.” His withdrawal to Trevecca was a strange proceeding, and in some re­spects an unhappy one, and yet it proved in the result to be the best for the benefit of the Connexion, and, as we take it, of the Principality. Had he, after the final disruption at Llanidloes, continued to itinerate, and to plant and organize churches all over the country, as he had done before, there would have been inevitably two distinct, and, for a long while, antagonistic, denominations. As it was, there were for a time two sections, known as “Harris’s People,” and “Rowlands’s People,” who, as we have seen, were not remarkable for their love to each other. His continued itinerancy would have perpetuated, and most probably intensified the evil; but he withdrew to Trevecca and left the field to his brethren. He was followed there by perhaps altogether a couple of hundred people from all parts of Wales. Those, we may naturally conclude, were drawn to him, some by personal attachment, and some by sympathy with his manner of setting forth the truth. They were no doubt the most zealous of those who were re­garded as “Harris’s People.” Their withdrawal, therefore, from the various congregations, was the withdrawal of an element of discord, and the with­drawal from the whole of Wales of the people who had sufficient zeal and ability to keep up another denomination. Some of those who remained behind returned to the Establishment, and others joined the Independents; but the great mass adhered to the Connexion, and by and by forgot all past disagree­ments. The “family” at Trevecca soon ceased to be replenished from the country, and therefore of necessity became smaller and smaller as its members one by one passed away, and, long before the whole of them had been taken home, the remnant had be­come part and parcel of the Connexion from which they had withdrawn themselves.

Some years later there arose another contention, which, although it did not affect the Connexion to anything like the same extent as that which had occasioned the withdrawal of Howell Harris, resulted in the expulsion of one of the earliest and most elo­quent of its preachers. We have already spoken of the labours of the Rev. Peter Williams, and of the persecutions he endured in going about to preach the Gospel. This excellent man conceived the idea of publishing a Welsh edition of the Bible, with marginal references, and explanatory and practical observations at the close of each chapter. He ap­plied himself to this task, and in the year 1770 a quarto edition of 8600 copies was brought out. Nine years later another edition of 6400 was pub­lished. Nothing of the kind had ever been attempted in Welsh before, and though several have since fol­lowed in the same track, this Book has hitherto kept the lead by far of all others in popularity. Seve­ral editions have been published since the author’s death—four or five at least within our own memory, one a handsome folio published in London by Fisher above forty years ago, and another, handsomer still, published quite recently by “The London Printing and Publishing Company—Limited.” In fact, Peter Williams’s is *the* Family Bible of the Welsh people. The Welsh bride in the humblest walks of life does not feel that her little room has been completely fur­nished, until she has, lying on her chest of drawers, a well-bound copy of “Peter Williams’s Bible.”

But the appearance of the first edition of this great work was the beginning of contention between the author and his brethren, because he had, in his “observations” on the first chapter of the Gospel of John, enunciated views which they regarded as un­sound, and as at least tending towards Sabellianism, on the doctrine of the Trinity and the Eternal Sonship of our Redeemer. The passages objected to only appeared in the first edition, and are to the following effect:—

“‘In the beginning was the Word.’ Let us observe: There was not a beginning before the Word, but the Word was in the beginning. The mind of God is the same as His will, and His will the same as His Word, for He does not change, and He willed, before either the world or an angel was in existence, to give Christ to be the Head of the Church. Therefore God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost from eternity, in His own everlasting will; not ‘as a necessary mode of existence, if no man were to be saved, or no sinner were to be sanctified,’ as some unwisely say, but because He willed to save and to sanctify. For Christ in whom, above all, the wisdom of God is manifested, was the Father’s delight daily in the beginning of His ways, and is the Alpha and Omega of all His works. Agreeably with which will, the Lord, in the fulness of times, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and some beheld His glory, and believed that Jesus is God; not ‘God by appoint­ment,’ as some vainly talk, but that He is the only true and living God, for the Scripture testifies that the man Jesus is the eternal Father.”

From the above extracts it appears that Mr. Williams regarded the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, not as the necessary mode of the Divine existence, but as the result of the Divine will, as much so as the incarnation of the Second Person,—that He is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost not in His own nature, but because He has willed to be so, that man might be saved. In the “Vindication” which he published some years after the beginning of the controversy, he expressed precisely the same sentiments, as will be seen from two short extracts:—

“I dare not say that a Trinity is necessary to the existence of God, as some presumptuously assert, but I do say, and believe, that a Trinity is essen­tially necessary to the revelation of God unto the heirs of eternal life.”—“Let us remember that the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are given, not to signify a mode of existence, but a mode of opera­tion, and especially in the work of Redemption.”

This is at least so like Sabellianism that it would be difficult for plain people to see a difference. Dr. Evans, in his *Sketch of the Denominations of the Chris­tian World,* the first edition of which was published when the controversy we are speaking of was at its height, says, “The Sabellian reduces the three Persons in the Trinity to three *Characters* or *Relations.* This has been called by some a *Modal* Trinity, and the persons who hold it *Modalists.* Sabellius, the founder of the sect, espoused the doctrine in the third century. Of his tenets the accounts are vari­ous. Some say he taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were one subsistence, and one Per­son, with three names; and that in the Old Testa­ment the Deity delivered the law as Father, in the New Testament dwelt among men as the Son, and descended on the apostles as the Holy Spirit.” The author adds, no doubt with special reference to this controversy, “This opinion gains ground in the Principality of Wales.”[[13]](#footnote-13)

The controversy extended over several years, but it was not until Mr. Williams had published an edition of “John Canne’s Bible,” in 1790, that mat­ters came to a crisis. Here he had taken the liberty of introducing several changes into the text, and some of his brethren charged him with making these alterations for the express purpose of favouring his own views. The Welsh Bible is not a translation from the English, as some of our good friends on the other side the Severn have said and written, but from the original languages. It differs mate­rially from the English version, and, as we think, for the better. “John Canne’s” was an English Bible, and Mr. Williams, in many instances, thought it right to adhere to the English rendering. There is one instance in which this was done, which seems to give some ground to the charge which his brethren brought against him. In Heb. v. 9, it is said in the Welsh version, that our Redeemer “*was made* the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey him;” but the English version says that He “*be­came*” so, and Mr. Williams gave the English ren­dering. Great and bitter were the contentions that followed, and the result was, that this eminent man was, in his old age, expelled from the Connexion in which he had so long, and faithfully, and success­fully laboured.

The Calvinistic Methodists of those days regarded the views enunciated by Mr. Williams as serious errors, and yet they bore with him for many years; but since he persisted in refusing to retract any­thing that he had said or written, they felt it to be their duty to do as they did, and, painful as the duty was, they discharged it. It was a sad thing to do, but, under the circumstances, we are unable to see how it could have been avoided. We have not the least shadow of a doubt that the upright and conscientious old minister and his equally con­scientious brethren now see eye to eye.

The rupture between Howell Harris and Daniel Rowlands was followed by a long season of spiritual drought in that part of the Connexion which had adhered to the latter. During the fifteen years that had passed since the beginning of the movement, there had never been wanting conclusive evidences that the Lord was blessing His own Word. Great awakenings were taking place, here and there, all over the Principality, which made that period one of uninterrupted progress. But now everything seemed to have come to a stand. The Gospel was preached, and other means of grace continued to be employed, but there was no awakening anywhere; sinners were not converted, and many of those who had been once regarded as saints were falling away. Large numbers continued to assemble at Llangeitho on the Communion Sabbath, but even there the re­freshing showers of former years had ceased to descend. In North Wales, as well as in the South, all was alike dead. No new ground was gained, no new churches formed, most of the existing ones were dwindling away, and some ceased to exist at all. Thus it continued for eleven years, but in 1762 the Lord was pleased again to visit His people. At that time a great awakening occurred in many places throughout the Principality. Preachers and exhorters were again endowed with the power which they seemed, for a time, to have for ever lost; Christians began again to feast on the joys of salva­tion; thousands were converted to God, and the brethren who had been estranged from each other by the painful disputes of past years, were now rejoicing together in the glorious triumphs of the Redeemer’s cause. Daniel Rowlands had so far been allowed to retain his curacy at Llangeitho, and had the drought which we have spoken of continued it is not likely that he would have been disturbed; but the great revival of 1762 drew towards him the unfavourable notice of the authorities, and he was turned out of the Church in 1763. The people went out with him, and a spacious chapel was built for him a short distance from the parish church, and here he con­tinued to labour with great earnestness and success until, full of years, he was called to his reward in 1790.

1. *The Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon,* vol. i. p. 482. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Life, and Times of Lady Huntingdon,* vol. ii. p. 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Ibid.* p. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. We do not know the name of this gentleman, but he seems to have been only appointed *pro tem.* when Mr. Easterbrook left. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon,* vol. ii. p. 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Life and Times of Lady Huntingdon,* vol. ii. p. 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Ibid.* p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Posthumous Works of Rev. A*. *M*. *Toplady,* p. 586. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Ibid.* pp. 175, 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Ibid.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Art. “Sabellius,” p. 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)