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"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXII. No. 28.

Poetry.

Farewell to Acadia!

[For Graduating Class of 1858.]

Four years my Brothers!—O how strangely swift
their days
Have one by one gone down the winding ways
Of the dread past. Those days are all with thee
Great God—
Those sinful days. O Father spare thy rod.
Four years into Eternity!—we marked them sink;
And standing now upon the brink
Of the broad future, let us breathe a sad good-bye,
And then go forth to dare and do and die.

Farewell our MOTHER, fare thee well. We feel this
word
That, parting here, the lips can scarce be heard.
Good-bye, my Mother, and my Brothers. We must
go;
But going, linger oft with footstep slow.
What, though the years are rolling from beneath our
feet
Why sad, that we no more on earth may meet,
Since through our Christ, who bled and died upon the
tree,
Our band shall yet again united be.

The birds are warbling forth a farewell on the hill.
I would their voices for an hour were still;
For as I go, it pains my heart that I must hear
Their mournful echoes die upon the ear.
The boat is off—the sails are filling with the breeze
And I—if I but turn my blood shall freeze;
But I must turn—one long and lingering farewell
gaze
A sigh—a tear, for dear departed days.

Acadia College,
June 4th, 1858.

R. L. W.

Baptist History.

For the Christian Messenger.

A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A YOUNG CHRISTIAN.

LETTER XLVIII.

The Troublous Period.

From A. D. 1567 to A. D. 1688.

Continued.

MY YOUNG FRIEND,

The history of DR. DU VEIL is extremely interesting. He was a native of France, and of Jewish extraction. His parents were probably in affluent circumstances, as it is evident that he received a very liberal education. The study of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament convinced him of the Messiahship of Jesus. When he avowed that conviction, and his determination to embrace Christianity, his father was so enraged that he attempted to kill him, and would have accomplished his purpose had he not been prevented by some persons present. Du Veil joined the Roman Catholic church, and soon became an eloquent and popular preacher. He acquired considerable fame also as an author by a Commentary on the Gospels of Mark and Luke, in which he displayed much learning and controversial tact. The University of Anjou bestowed on him the degree of D. D., and he was urged to enter into the lists with the Huguenots, whose powerful defences of Protestant truths gave no small trouble to Romish ecclesiastics. He engaged in preparation for that work, but found to his astonishment that Protestantism was a purer form of Christianity than he had yet been acquainted with. Honestly following his convictions he withdrew from France to Holland, since his life would have been in danger had he continued in the former country and publicly abjured Popery. Shortly afterwards he proceeded to England, where he was received with great respect and liberally befriended by many prelates and dignitaries of the English church. He was ordained to the ministry in that church. In 1679 he published a "Literal Explication of Solomon's Song," and in the following year a "Literal Exposition of the Minor Prophets." These works greatly enhanced his reputation. The Bishop of London was so pleased with them that he offered every encouragement to the learned author to continue his biblical researches, and gave him the free use of his library for that purpose. This led to another and final change. In the Bishop's library he found the works of Baptist authors, and the perusal of them convinced him that the Baptists were in the right. A pious young woman, a servant in

the Bishop's family, introduced him to the church with which she was connected, and of which the Rev. John Gosnold was pastor. Dr. Du Veil was baptized by him, and joined the church, by that act separating himself from the rich and powerful, by whose means he would have most probably obtained ecclesiastical advancement. In 1685 his "Literal Explication of the Acts of the Apostles" was published. This is a valuable commentary. It has been reprinted by the Hanserd Knollys Society.

I have been unable to obtain further information respecting Dr. Du Veil. Whether he preached after he became a Baptist, or confined himself to literary labour, is not recorded in any works to which I have had access. Doubtless he devoted his talents to the diffusion and defence of the truth, and it may be inferred that he was usefully employed. It is not often that we meet with such a case. There have been many in all ages who have seen the light, but failed to follow it, through fear of poverty or suffering. Dr. Du Veil was not one of that class. Every change placed him lower in a worldly point of view; but that did not move him. Truth was to be embraced and conscience obeyed, at all risks. Peace to his memory!

JOHN BUNYAN'S fame is world-wide. He was truly a God-taught man. His "Pilgrim" tells his tale in nearly all languages, and it is listened to with rapt interest and admiration by men of every clime and of all varieties of mental culture. It is the peasant's food and the philosopher's luxury.

The history of his life is so well known that it is quite unnecessary to reproduce it here. I will only give you a chronological note or two. John Bunyan was born at Elstow, Bedfordshire, in the year 1628. He was converted to God in 1653, and soon afterwards began to preach. On the 13th of November, 1660, he was committed to Bedford jail for "teaching men to worship God contrary to the law." There, with no other aids than the bible and Fox's "Book of Martyrs" he wrote the "Pilgrim's Progress" and other works which have immortalised his name. He was released in December, 1672, and spent the remainder of his life in manifold labours for the cause of Christ. As pastor of the church at Bedford, to which office he was chosen Dec. 21, 1671, while yet a prisoner, "he was instant in season, out of season," and the church greatly flourished under his ministry. When he visited London people flocked in crowds to hear him: three thousand persons were known to be assembled for that purpose at seven o'clock in the morning. Not unfrequently the learned and the great were among them. Charles II. once asked Dr. Owen how it was that he was so fond of hearing a tinker preach. "May it please your majesty," the Doctor replied, "had I the tinker's abilities for preaching I would gladly relinquish all my learning."

He had been engaged in a christian work when he fell under the death-stroke. A profligate son had so offended his father that he threatened to disinherit him. Bunyan effected a reconciliation. He had been to Reading on that benevolent errand, and was returning home through London when he was attacked by fever, caused by exposure to heavy rain on his journey, and died at a friend's house after a few days' illness. This was in August, 1688, about three months before the landing of William, Prince of Orange, afterwards William III. How his heart would have been gladdened, could he have witnessed the nation's deliverance!

One of the last treatises which he prepared for the press was entitled, "Of Antichrist and his ruin." It expresses, in his own plain and nervous style, those sentiments respecting Popery and religious freedom which Baptists have ever maintained. In assigning the "causes of the ruin of Antichrist," he shews that Antichrist must come down, because "he hath usurped and taken the name and attributes of God upon himself;"—because "he hath set himself against the Son of God;"—because "he hath blasphemed against the Holy Ghost;"—because of "the horrible outrage and

villaneous murders" which the Church of Rome, which is "the body" of Antichrist, "hath committed upon the bodies of the saints;"—because "She hath put out of order, and confounded the rule and government that God has set up in the world;"—because of "her exceeding covetousness;"—and because Antichrist "standeth in the way of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the world." "The promise is, that Babylon shall be destroyed." * * The church of God will not flourish as it should, until Babylon is destroyed. The world will never be in its right wits, until Babylon is destroyed. The kingdom of Christ will never be set up, in and by his church, as it ought, and shall, until Antichrist is destroyed. There will never be peace on earth till Antichrist is destroyed. And God has promised that there shall be peace and truth, and glory, when Babylon is destroyed.

We may indulge in a pardonable pride when we boast of John Bunyan as one of ours. We have no name more honoured. But I will not attempt to write his eulogy. His works praise him, and will praise him as long as the church of God abides on earth. Cowper's lines are familiar to you:—

"Oh thou, whom, borne on fancy's eager wing
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleased remember, and while memory yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget;
Ingenuous dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty, and well employed, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame;
Yet e'en in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober grey,
Revere the man whose *Pilgrim* marks the road,
And guides the *Progress* of the soul to God."

I have given you some account of the principal ministers of our denomination in England who died before the glorious Revolution. The names of several others, who survived that event, will be recorded here, because their labours as public men must be chiefly referred to the period now under review.

The first is HANSERD KNOLLYS. He was a native of Chalkwell, in Lincolnshire. While pursuing his studies at the University of Cambridge he experienced a change of heart, having become acquainted with "several gracious christians, then called Puritans," whose conversation was blessed to him. In 1629 he was ordained by the bishop of Peterborough. At Humberstone, where he lived several years, he was accustomed to preach three, and even four times on the Lord's day, besides sermons on saints' days and at funerals. But scruples and doubts agitated his mind. At length he reached the conviction that his position in the Church of England was not in accordance with the New Testament, and he renounced his ordination, resolving not to preach any more till he had "received a clear call and commission from Christ to preach the gospel."

During his silence he underwent much mental distress, which was removed by the instrumentality of Mr. Wheelwright, one of the puritan ministers. He then recommenced preaching. "I began to preach the doctrine of free grace, according to the tenor of the new and everlasting Covenant, for three or four years together, whereby very many sinners were converted, and many believers were established in the faith."

The persecution was so fierce that he joined the emigrants who were at that time flocking to New England, and arrived at Boston in the Spring of 1638. He was not allowed to remain there, the ministers having unaccountably judged him to be an Antinomian and desired the magistrates to send him away. But he found a home at Dover, on the Piscataqua, where he preached with much acceptance upwards of three years. "Mather, in his history of America, speaks of Mr. Knollys in very high terms, saying that 'his name ought to live in their books for his piety, and that he had a respectful character among the churches in that wilderness.'"—(Ivimey, ii. 349.)

Mr. Knollys returned to England about the close of 1641. He settled in London,

where he gained his livelihood by teaching school. His next employment was that of chaplain in the parliamentary army. When he left the army he established himself again in London as a schoolmaster, and preached in the churches as he found opportunity. His labours were very acceptable to the people, but were so disapproved of by the Assembly of Divines, because he preached against national churches, that he withdrew from connection with them, and opened a meeting-house in Great St. Helen Street, where he commonly had a congregation of a thousand hearers. A Baptist church was formed there, over which he was ordained pastor in 1645. He held that office till his death, in 1691, though he was often prevented, by the operation of unjust laws, from fulfilling its duties. On several occasions he found it necessary to retire into the country for a while, and during the hottest period of the persecution he left England and lived two or three years in Germany and Holland. He had his share also of "bonds and imprisonments." But God graciously sustained him. His religious enjoyments abounded, and his labours were eminently successful.

"My wilderness, sea, city, and prison-mercies, he observed, "afforded me very many and strong consolations. The spiritual sights of the glory of God, the divine sweetness of the spiritual and providential presence of my Lord Jesus Christ, and the joys and comforts of the holy and eternal Spirit, communicated to my soul, together with suitable and seasonable scriptures of truth, have so often and so powerfully received, refreshed, and strengthened my heart in the days of my pilgrimage, trials, and sufferings, that the sense, yea, the life and sweetness thereof, abides still upon my heart, and hath engaged my soul to live by faith, to walk humbly, and to desire and endeavour to excel in holiness to God's glory and the example of others. Though I confess many of the Lord's ministers, and some of the Lord's people have excelled and outshined me, with whom God hath not been at so much cost, nor pains, as he hath been at with me. I am a very unprofitable servant, but yet by grace I am what I am."

Again:—"God was pleased to confirm my call unto that great work; 1. By the conversion of many sinners, who, having declared the dealings of God with their souls, testified God did convince them, and establish many of them by my ministry, through the powerful and effectual operation of his Holy Spirit, and word preached by me unto them. 2. By some healing power of God, put forth upon the sick and infirm bodies of several persons, who were suddenly restored to health, immediately in time of prayer with them, or by and through faith in Jesus Christ, especially in this city of London, and of the sickness called the plague, both in former years, and in the year 1665. Not to me, but to God, be given glory and praise, for in his name, through faith in his name, they were healed. 3. By enabling me, standing by me, and strengthening me, by his Holy Spirit, and sanctifying grace, to preach the gospel in season and out of season with all boldness; neither being ashamed nor afraid to bear my testimony for Christ, his gospel, churches, ministry, worship, and ordinances, against the antichristian powers, ministers, worshippers, and traditions of the beast, the great mystical whore, and the false prophet. Nor have I been terrified by the adversary."

You observe the reference to the healing of diseases, in answer to prayer. Mr. Knollys gives the following account of his own recovery from a dangerous illness. I shall copy it without comment.

"Two learned, well-practised, and judicious doctors of physic had daily visited me, and consulted several days together, and I was fully persuaded that they did what they possibly could to effect a cure, and knew also that God did not succeed their honest and faithful endeavours with his blessing. Although God had given a signal and singular testimony of his special blessing by each of them unto others of their patients, at least sixteen, at the same time, I resolved to take no more physic,